

**United States Senate**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 26, 2013

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy  
Chairman  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley  
Ranking Member  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
152 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy and Ranking Member Grassley:

I write to encourage you, as Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, to promptly consider and vote upon the nomination of B. Todd Jones to be the Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). I would then join you and other senators in urging quick action by the full Senate.

As we debate how to keep our communities safe from gun violence, a crucial step is to put someone at the helm of the agency responsible for enforcing the laws on the books. As you are aware, the ATF has been without an official director since 2006. I believe a lack of leadership directly impedes the ability of any federal agency to operate effectively.

While I have questions of my own for Mr. Jones and look forward to sitting down with him, I am inclined to support his nomination based on not only the urgent need for leadership, but on his record as a public servant who works with both political parties to ensure public safety while respecting the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding Americans. I am particularly impressed by the fact that, upon becoming Acting Director of ATF in 2011 after the "Fast and Furious" gun-walking scandal, Mr. Jones led the effort to increase accountability and oversight within ATF, including replacing the special agents in charge of 22 of the 25 ATF field divisions.

I believe any nominee for this position must demonstrate a clear record of defending the Second Amendment. As a pro-gun senator, I have consistently opposed efforts that I believe infringe on the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding Americans. Supporting the confirmation of an ATF director is certainly consistent with my pro-gun record. In fact, effective leadership at the ATF might help prevent future wrongheaded overreach, such as the "Fast and Furious" operation.

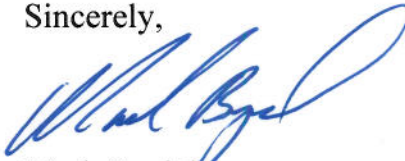
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It is far past time for the full Senate to confirm an ATF director, and we should move expeditiously to do so. While I understand your need to appropriately examine the nominee's record, I hope you will proceed with the confirmation process as quickly as possible. Thank you for your consideration of my views on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Begich", with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Mark Begich  
United States Senator