



SAMUEL DEWITT PROCTOR CONFERENCE, INC.

With Vision...By Faith...Through Action

Strengthening Churches...Empowering Leaders...Transforming Communities



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Senate Judiciary Committee
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

May 20, 2022

To the Esteemed Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I write to you today on behalf of the members and supporters of the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, a national network that serves thousands of pastors, lay leaders and the next generation of those working for social justice. As a faith-based organization that seeks to nurture, sustain, and mobilize the African-American faith community in collaboration with civic, corporate, and philanthropic leaders to address critical needs of human rights and social justice, we believe that gun violence is an urgent and important threat to our society, and one that demands federal attention. One key step is the confirmation of a director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, and we believe that Steven Dettelbach is the man for that job.

As faith leaders, we have seen firsthand the consequences of gun violence. We are the ones who bury the dead, pray for survivors, and counsel those affected. Our houses of worship have been the sites of gun violence, and our churches have been the targets of hate crime.

ATF has been allowed to be without a Senate-confirmed director for the past seven years, even as gun violence has skyrocketed across the country in both urban and rural areas. While gun violence has many drivers, we believe it is imperative to have a Senate-confirmed director at the helm of the nation's primary law-enforcement organization focused on weapons.

We support ATF's designation of ghost guns as firearms, subjecting these assemble-it-yourself kits to the same sorts of regulations as other guns. We think that Dettelbach will continue to work to keep guns out of the hands of those who should not have them.

Dettelbach's reputation as a prosecutor is what has garnered our enthusiasm. He worked to prosecute those responsible for an attack on an African-American church in Conneaut, OH, as well as the attack on a mosque in Toledo and plots against a synagogue and Black church in Detroit. Dettelbach will protect the religious freedom of minorities in our country, while working to keep all of us safe.

We urge you, then, to work for a speedy confirmation of Steven Dettelbach as the next director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives.

Sincerely,

Dr. Iva Carruthers
General Secretary
Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference