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**United States Attorney Matthew Krueger's Remarks Regarding  
Operation Legend's Expansion to Milwaukee**

**July 29, 2020**

Following are remarks from United States Attorney Matthew Krueger as prepared for a press conference to announce the expansion of Operation Legend to Milwaukee to reduce violent crime.

"Good morning. We're here to announce a good thing for Milwaukee – specifically, the expansion of Operation Legend to address violent crime. Here with me are some of our key partners, including Robert Hughes, the Special Agent-in-Charge for FBI Milwaukee; Brian Kolar, Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge for the ATF; Paul Maxwell, Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge for the DEA; Thomas Conlon, Acting United States Marshal; Milwaukee County Sheriff Earnell Lucas; and Acting Assistant Chief Paul Formolo of the Milwaukee Police Department.

In the last week, there has been substantial discussion about Operation Legend so I hope to explain clearly what Operation Legend is, and what it is not.

First, what it is. Operation Legend is an initiative to address violent crime. Through Operation Legend, federal law enforcement resources, both funding and investigators, are brought to work in coordination with state and local law enforcement officials to address firearms offenses, violent individuals, and violent drug trafficking organizations.

These resources will help address a spike in violent crime. In December 2019, the Attorney General identified Milwaukee and six other cities as having violent crime rates that were significantly higher than the national average. He announced the initiative then named Operation Relentless Pursuit. Its first phase ran from January to April this year and focused on the apprehension of violent fugitives. The United States Marshal's Service led that effort in coordination the Milwaukee Police Department as well as these federal agencies.

The operation resulted in the arrest of 96 individuals wanted for violent offenses, including homicide, robbery, aggravated assault, and forcible sexual assault. It also provided support for operations that dismantled violent drug trafficking organizations, such as Operation Island Hopper and the charges against the Buffam Meinecke Boys that we announced earlier this year. The second phase of Operation Relentless Pursuit was intended to begin in the spring of 2020, but it was delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since then, Milwaukee has only suffered a greater increase in violent crime. As of yesterday, there already have been 97 homicides in 2020, compared to 52 homicides at this time last year. That's an 85% increase – 45 additional lives lost this year. Those lives are precious. They are sons and daughters, whose families are grieving. Non-fatal shootings in the city also are up 64%.

Milwaukee is not alone in this trend. Other major cities have also seen a spike in violent crime this year, including Kansas City. Early in the morning of June 29, a four-year-old named LeGenD Taliferro was shot and killed while he slept in his bed. And so the Department of Justice is continuing what it started in Operation Relentless Pursuit, now under the banner of Operation Legend. It began in Kansas City, which was one of the seven original Relentless Pursuit cities, but with additional federal resources. It was expanded to Albuquerque and Chicago, which was not originally in Relentless Pursuit. And now today, we're announcing it for Milwaukee, Detroit, and Cleveland.

For Milwaukee, Operation Legend entails bringing to Milwaukee 25 to 30 federal investigators from these four Justice Department agencies: the FBI, DEA, ATF, and United States Marshals Service. In Milwaukee, no personnel from the Department of Homeland Security will participate in Operation Legend.

These investigators from the FBI, DEA, ATF, and U.S. Marshals Service will join the work already underway by existing joint federal, state and local task forces focused on combatting violent crime. Ten of those federal investigators are already assigned to work in Milwaukee temporarily to provide immediate assistance. The others will be assigned over the coming year to Milwaukee permanently to provide long-term assistance. This is a long-term commitment, a sustained effort, to make Milwaukee a safer place to live.

The task forces supplemented by Operation Legend address firearms offenses. This means working directly with the Milwaukee Police Department to analyze the firearms and ballistics used in homicides and other shootings. This also means investigating those who traffick in illegal firearms – those who sell guns to the shooters. And it means prosecuting those who possess firearms illegally. For example, a significant number of homicides involve domestic violence. Under federal law – but not state law, it is a felony to possess a firearm if you are under a domestic violence restraining order or have a misdemeanor domestic violence conviction.

The task forces will also address violent drug trafficking organizations because we know that drug traffickers are often involved in firearms violence, as they protect their illegal activity and rob or war with their competitors.

The case of Earnest Moffett is an example of the type of important work that task forces are continuing to undertake as part of Operation Legend. One week ago, task force agents from the FBI and MPD arrested Earnest Moffett on a criminal complaint that charged him with four counts related to his distribution of cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, and marijuana. When executing a search warrant at Moffett's residence in connection with the arrest, task force agents recovered a loaded pistol, an assault-style rifle with a loaded magazine, a second loaded magazine, a distribution quantity of marijuana, and over \$31,000 in cash. According to public records, Moffett has multiple prior felony convictions, including convictions for cocaine distribution, escape, and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. This is the type of case that will be investigated and prosecuted as part of Operation Legend.

All of those cases will be conducted by federal investigators working side-by-side with state and local law enforcement agencies, as they always do. In this way, Operation Legend is simply an enhancement of the existing law enforcement partnerships, to increase solid, proven crime reduction methods.

Operation Legend also is bringing more than \$12 million in funding to support state and local law enforcement partners in this effort to help Milwaukee. Specifically, through the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Department of Justice will make available \$1.9 million in funding to support Operation Legend's violent crime reduction efforts in Milwaukee. The Justice Department's COPS Office also has made \$10.2 million available to the Police Departments of Milwaukee, Wauwatosa, and Cudahy to fund the hiring of 29 officers to facilitate their assigning of experienced officers to task forces.

The Department has also provided assistance through the Joint Law Enforcement Operations fund to assist reimbursement of local law enforcement serving as federal task force officers with the FBI, ATF, DEA, and U.S. Marshals Service. ATF also has provided \$100,000 to help agencies in the Milwaukee area defray costs associated with installing or maintaining shot detection technology.

I have spent the last week speaking with state and local leaders about Operation Legend, and similar questions arise. So, let me clarify what Operation Legend is not.

First, Operation Legend is not aimed at protest activity or civil disturbances. Operation Legend differs from the federal operation in Portland. In Portland, Customs and Border Patrol agents, working with the Federal Protective Service, were deployed to protect the Federal Courthouse, which had been repeatedly damaged. That is an entirely different mission from investigating violent crime.

That is why Portland is not on the list of Operation Legend cities. You will not see federal agents massing on Milwaukee's streets. Just like all the other Deputy U.S. Marshals and FBI, DEA, and ATF agents who have worked in Milwaukee for decades, the additional agents will investigate crime.

Second, Operation Legend is not aimed at flooding certain neighborhoods. This is not a patrol operation, nor is it aimed at maximizing the number of arrests. Rather, the work of these task forces will be specifically targeted at offenders whose criminal activities pose a danger to the community. A relatively small number of individuals cause most of Milwaukee's violence. They are the focus of Operation Legend.

Third, Operation Legend is not the full solution to Milwaukee's violence. Law enforcement is one piece of the puzzle. To ensure that Milwaukee is a safe, vibrant city for all of its residents, we also need efforts to prevent violence, and to help make quality housing, schools, and job opportunities available to Milwaukee residents, including those returning from incarceration. But make no mistake, well-funded, well-trained, and collaborative law enforcement is an absolutely essential corner piece of the puzzle.

From talking to colleagues around the country, I can say that Milwaukee, and the entire State, is exceptional for its cooperative, professional law enforcement agencies. No one agency can handle all that is asked of it alone. That is why we have a long-standing tradition of federal, state, county, and local partnerships, including to confront the unacceptable levels of violent crime in Milwaukee. Operation Legend should be welcomed by all because it enhances these partnerships, for the good of Milwaukee.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we want to address the murder of Qunyonce Louis-Moore. Qunyonce Louis-More was just 16-years-old when she was shot and killed by unknown individuals in Milwaukee a few weeks ago, on June 30, 2020. SAC Hughes will provide more details on a reward that FBI is offering for information related to her death. I spoke with Ms. Louis-Moore's mother and grandmother recently. They are grieving, and they want whoever killed Qunyonce brought to justice. Of course, nothing will heal the sense of loss that Ms. Louis-Moore's family feels. Every life lost in Milwaukee to violent crime is a tragedy. There have been nearly 100 tragedies so far this year in Milwaukee, and hundreds more individuals injured by firearms. Leaders at all levels in Wisconsin – federal, state, county, and local – should be working together, reaching across divides, to stop firearm violence in Milwaukee. Operation Legend will bring much-needed support to those efforts.

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