



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
DISTRICT *of* SOUTH DAKOTA

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**Department of Justice**

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of South Dakota

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **U.S. Attorney Announces Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative**

RAPID CITY, SD – On August 28, 2018, United States Attorney Ron Parsons announced the formation of a Project Safe Neighborhoods Task Force in Rapid City, South Dakota, and highlighted some of the initiative's early successes.

One of the highest priorities of the Department of Justice is the reduction of violent crime. In the fall of 2017, U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions revitalized the Project Safe Neighborhoods program, also referred to as PSN. The PSN program is a national-scale violent crime reduction program aimed at bringing together all levels of law enforcement and the communities they serve to reduce violent crime and make our communities safer and more secure.

The PSN program utilizes focused enforcement efforts, along with technology and data analysis, to identify enforcement priorities. Since the program began in 2001, PSN has been updated and enhanced, emphasizing the role of U.S. Attorneys, the promise of new technologies, and above all, partnership with local communities. The program is proving to be more effective than ever and is helping fulfill our mission to make America safer.

The primary focus of the PSN initiative in South Dakota is to reduce gun and drug crimes through collaborative law enforcement, proactive investigations, data analysis, and community outreach.

In our communities, the rise of methamphetamine and other drug trafficking presents a clear and present danger to our children, families, citizens, and communities. At the same time, gun crimes and other acts of violence are rising as well. This is not a coincidence.

Make no mistake: drug trafficking is a crime of violence. Illegal drugs are the direct cause of much of the suffering and death in our communities. It has become common for law enforcement to find guns in the possession of drug dealers and users. Often, these guns have been stolen from law-abiding citizens. Over the past several years, there has been a nationwide increase in violent crimes, including robberies and assaults, committed by individuals under the influence of meth and other drugs.

The U.S. Department of Justice is committed to reversing those trends.

In cooperation with state, local, and federal law enforcement agencies, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of South Dakota has targeted Rapid City as a focus location for its Project Safe Neighborhood

efforts. A Rapid City PSN task force has been established, consisting of representatives from:

- U.S. Attorney's Office
- Pennington County State's Attorney's Office
- South Dakota Attorney General's Office
- Rapid City Police Department
- Pennington County Sheriff's Office
- South Dakota Division of Criminal Investigations
- U.S. Marshal's Service
- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives
- Drug Enforcement Agency
- Community partners through our Re-entry Initiative

Making direct use of crime mapping and other data analysis, these state, local, and federal law enforcement agencies are working together to identify and arrest the most significant violent offenders, increase enforcement efforts against illegal guns and drugs, conduct warrant sweeps, and participate in community engagement and prevention programs.

Once cases are developed, the U.S. Attorney's Office, Pennington County State's Attorney's Office, and Attorney General's Office coordinate the prosecution of these cases to determine whether the case is better suited for state or federal court. The PSN task force meets regularly to discuss ongoing investigations, prosecutions, and necessary changes that will help reduce violent crime.

Since the beginning of this year, the U.S. Attorney's Office in Rapid City alone has indicted approximately 45 individuals for firearms offenses and another 43 individuals for drug offenses under the Project Safe Neighborhoods initiative. During that same time period, many more criminal defendants have been charged in state court.

In addition, the Rapid City Police Department, Pennington County Sheriff's Office, and federal ATF agents have collectively pulled at least 209 guns off the street thus far in 2018. All of these firearms were confiscated because they were illegal guns, such as sawed-off shotguns; used in the commission of a crime, including drug crimes; or found in the possession of someone prohibited by law from having firearms, such as those with a prior felony conviction. And this total does not include the 22 stolen guns recently recovered by law enforcement from the burglary at The Rooster Sporting Goods store in Rapid City.

The U.S. Attorney's Office also is committed to prosecuting those who illegally attempt to obtain guns by lying, either directly or by omitting the truth, when seeking to purchase a gun. Federal law requires licensed firearms dealers to perform a background check before transferring any firearm. Those who attempt to thwart the background check process by lying or providing incomplete information on the required forms are likely to find themselves the subject of a federal prosecution.

Nationwide, at least 85 percent of all law enforcement occurs at the state, local, and tribal level. It is our state and local police officers, our sheriffs and deputies, DCI officers, highway patrol officers, federal agents, and tribal police who stand in the breach every day of their lives protecting us from violence and lawlessness. The Department of Justice is dedicated to doing everything it can to support them, including the reinvigoration of Project Safe Neighborhoods by Attorney General Sessions.

"We want everyone to know that we will not tolerate drug dealers in our communities," said U.S. Attorney Parsons. "We won't tolerate the use of guns against our fellow citizens. If you commit these crimes, we will find you. And you will be sent to prison."

Recent federal prosecutions in Rapid City resulting from Project Safe Neighborhoods include:

- **Nathaniel Geiger**, charged with possessing a sawed off shotgun. When arrested, he was found to be high on meth. He was sentenced to 7 years in federal prison for possessing the illegal firearm.
  - **AJ Bradshaw**, charged with possessing firearms while using a controlled substance. He forfeited 41 firearms and explosives and was sentenced to 8 years in federal prison.
  - **William Corbine** and **Tristan Amos**, charged with illegally discharging a firearm during a crime of violence. Corbine was sentenced to 15 years and Amos sentenced to 10 years in federal prison.
  - **Daniel Richards**, charged with conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine in Rapid City. He was sentenced to more than 17 years in federal prison. Numerous co-conspirators were charged and are awaiting trial.
  - **Brandon Dykzuel**, charged with distribution of meth by sending it through the U.S. mail. He was sentenced to almost 6 years in federal prison.
  - **Michael Mamola** and **Timothy Conwell**, charged with conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine. Mamola was sentenced to 8 years and Conwell sentenced to 6 years in federal prison.
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**Topic(s):**

Community Outreach

Project Safe Neighborhoods

**Component(s):**USAO - South Dakota

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