

August 3, 2021

Senator Dick Durbin, Chairman
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Chuck Grassley, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Durbin and Grassley:

We are writing to you today as career ATF agents and investigators who have committed their professional careers to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, believe deeply in its vital and unique law enforcement mission, and have worked at the Bureau during David Chipman's time there. Having been at the Bureau with David we are unfortunately brought to the conclusion that he is the wrong man for the job and should not be confirmed to lead the Bureau.

Having been at the Bureau at the same time as Mr. Chipman and having followed his career after he left the Bureau, we are very familiar with his leadership style and his approach to leading the agency. While an agent, David did not exhibit the collaborative and respectful type of leadership required of an agency Director that must manage a diverse workforce with challenging issues. While we can say without hesitation that David is very smart, we can also say without hesitation that he was very often not a team player and had a troubling tendency to think he was always right.

We are also concerned about his ability to lead a large organization like the ATF. ATF has over 2000 sworn agents, over 700 investigators, a workforce of over 5000, and a budget of over \$1.4 billion. David has never led an organization anywhere near that size and scope. While in the Bureau he never progressed to the Senior Executive Service or to senior leadership within the agency. Putting David in charge of ATF would be like asking a small business owner to lead a Fortune 500 company. Even though he was an ATF agent, David would be the least qualified individual to lead the agency in its history.

Finally, David's strong personal beliefs on firearms issues will create serious and long-lasting problems for the Bureau and the effective execution of its law enforcement mission. We relied on effective partnerships with industry, stakeholders, and other law enforcement agencies to execute our missions. Unfortunately, if David were confirmed, ATF partners would see someone who is coming to the agency with his top priority being to implement a divisive gun control agenda. The suspicion and hostility his leadership will bring will destroy those partnerships, and the prosecution of gun crimes and other violent crimes, will suffer.

As career ATF employees we saw the Bureau neglected because it lacked a Senate Confirmed Director to advocate for our agency. We want a Senate Confirmed Director. Unfortunately, David Chipman is the wrong person for that job, and brought us to the unenviable position of having to ask you reject Mr. Chipman's nomination and find a less-controversial leader.

ATF needs a Director whose personal beliefs about gun ownership would not be a distraction from the critically important work of the men and women of ATF. A nominee with a proven track record of leadership, fairness, and diplomacy is not only needed for the Director's position, it is necessary to ensure that ATF can execute on its mission - David Chipman is not that nominee.

Sincerely,

Tim Buns
Retired ATF Special Agent
27 Years of Service

Gregory Alvarez
Retired Special Agent (25 years)
Houston Field Division

Mike Meadows
Retired ATF Special Agent
25 years of service

Wadene Musgrave
BATF Investigator, RET.
25 years Federal Service, 13 years ATF

Pamela Potaczek
Retired ATF Agent
25 Years of Service

Judith M Bender
Retired ATF Investigator
42 years of service with ATF

Larry Luckey
Retired ATF Agent
28 years of service