



Whereas, By creating a national database of these unique markings, the BLAST Act would coordinate local law enforcement agencies and help to provide the evidence to link felons to gun crimes in a timely and efficient manner, thereby greatly enhancing the safety of our communities; and

Whereas, Even with the presently limited technology which only enables tracking crime scene bullets and casings to determine whether they derive from the same gun, authorities in Washington, D.C. were able to utilize this minimal data to effectively connect the somewhat geographically dispersed D.C. area sniper shootings as originating from the same single weapon; and

Whereas, The potential effectiveness of a national ballistics fingerprint database is further illustrated by the 2001 ATF study which found that, even the limited ballistic fingerprints on file have enabled law enforcement to make 8,800 matches linked to 17,600 crime scenes over a 15-month period; and

Whereas, The ballistics fingerprint system has been widely and internationally tested and its high rate of effectiveness has garnered the support of numerous law enforcement groups across the country, many of whom have expressed the view that cataloguing these unique markings in a national database would help their work immeasurably; and

Whereas, According to Joe Vince, a former ATF agent and the bureau's former chief of gun crime analysis who helped develop the ballistics system, it is imperative that law enforcement agencies, especially local police departments, have access to a nationwide computerized system of ballistics identification; as Mr.Vince stated, "It's a public safety issue. Law enforcement has to have 21st century technology to operate in today's society"; and

Whereas, On October 16th, 2002, in the midst of the sniper shootings, Senator Tom Daschle called on the Senate to seriously consider the ballistic fingerprinting legislation stating, "The law enforcement community has looked at this legislation and...universally and virtually unanimously have supported this legislation"; experts have said that if such a system had already been in place, it could have advanced the investigation of the sniper shootings in the D.C. area, potentially saving many lives, since the only pieces of evidence available for days were bullet fragments; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the United States Senate to approve S.3096, also known as the "Ballistics, Law Assistance, and Safety Technology Act" to establish a national ballistics fingerprint database.

LS # 1307

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