



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

January 28, 2026

Deputy Director Robert Cekada
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms
99 New York Ave NE
Washington, D.C. 20226

Deputy Director Cekada,

It has recently been brought to my attention that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) may be in violation of a congressionally mandated prohibition on public dissemination of gun owners' personal information.

Specifically, in two subsequent court cases, case *Gun Owners of America v. BATFE*, No. 25-5309 (D.C. Cir.) and *GOA v. BATFE*, No. 1:21-cv-02919-ABJ (D.D.C.), it has been alleged that documents released by the ATF have violated the Tiahrt Amendment. These policy riders that are passed within congressional appropriations bills strictly prohibit the release of law-enforcement-sensitive firearm trace data.

While the release of this data may have been unintentional, it raises serious concerns regarding the ATF's operational capacity to abide by the law. Congress enacted the Tiahrt Amendment expressly to protect gun owners from harassment, intimidation, and threats to their safety.

In service to We the People, I have taken several actions to protect law enforcement and protect gun owners and federal firearms licensees (FFLs). This includes proposing H.R. 1698, the Law Enforcement Protection and Privacy Act, which would strengthen penalties against politically motivated leaks of law enforcement sensitive trace data.

To ensure that proper oversight is conducted, I respectfully request a full and detailed response to the following questions no later than February 6, 2026:

1. Does ATF believe that Tiahrt protects firearm trace information under FOIA?

2. To which other non-law enforcement entities has ATF produced Tiahrt-protected information?
3. Why did ATF provide material that violates the Tiahrt Amendment as alleged in *GOA v. BATFE*, No. 1:21-cv-02919-ABJ (D.D.C)?
4. Has corrective action been taken concerning federal employees at ATF for violating Congress's clear Tiahrt restrictions in Public Law 112-55 at 125 Stat. 609-10?
5. What actions are being taken to ensure that the ATF prevents future violations of Tiahrt restrictions?

As the Chairman of the Oversight Subcommittee on Federal Law Enforcement, I will use the full authority of my office to ensure the protection of sensitive trace data that affects ongoing law enforcement investigations. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Clay Higgins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Clay Higgins
Member of Congress