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## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## BRAVE Hosts “Gas for Guns” Exchange

**BATON ROUGE, La.** – In an effort to reduce the number of unsecured firearms on Baton Rouge streets, Mayor-President Melvin L. “Kip” Holden, District Attorney Hillar Moore, III, Sheriff Sid Gautreaux and Baton Rouge Police Chief Carl Dabadie are joining forces for a “Gas for Guns” exchange program on Saturday, Dec. 14 from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m. at the Living Faith Christian Center, 6375 Winbourne Avenue.

The “no questions asked” gun buyback program, in partnership with the Circle K Corporation, the Baton Rouge Area Violence Elimination (BRAVE) program and local and federal law enforcement agencies, will offer from \$50 to \$300 in gas coupons for each qualifying handgun and assault weapon.

Mayor Holden said the program will allow residents to safely dispose of firearms and ammunition that they no longer want to keep at their homes.

Unsecured guns can be especially dangerous to children, the Mayor said. He also noted that every year, crimes are committed with unsecured guns that have been stolen or used without the owners’ permission.

Similar Gas for Guns program in Baton Rouge collected 262 unsecured guns in 2010 and 165 firearms in 2011, prompting local officials to bring the program back this year just in time for the holidays.

During the exchange program, any functional, non-replica pistol or revolver smaller than 0.380 caliber can be exchanged for gas cards totaling \$50. Pistols that are 0.380 caliber or greater can be swapped for gas cards totaling \$100 in value. The program will pay \$300 in gas cards for each “Assault Style” rifle, as

long as they are a functional variant of an automatic or semi-automatic rifle that is currently in use by military forces with a caliber of 9 mm, 7.62 mm or 5.56 mm. Any other firearm or ammunition may also be dropped off for safe disposal and destruction by law enforcement without a gas card exchange.

District Attorney Moore said the exchange program is offering the highest incentive for assault rifles because they are the most expensive and are the weapons of choice for many criminals. Likewise, criminals also prefer large-caliber handguns, so the incentives are higher for them compared to the smaller handguns.

This year's gun buyback program was made possible by a donation from the Circle K Corporation and matching funds from local law enforcement drug seizure and asset forfeitures.

At the Living Faith Christian Center, located at 6375 Winbourne Avenue, officers will receive the firearms without asking questions about the donors' identities or how they came to be in possession of the guns. The exchange program assists non-commercial, private citizens and is limited to two firearms per person until all gas cards have been exhausted.

Donors arriving by car should place their firearms in the trunk. Donors arriving on foot should place their firearms in a sealed or closed container, such as a bag, backpack or box.

Donors who are uncomfortable taking a firearm to an exchange site can call the local Police and Sheriff station at any time to make arrangements for unwanted firearm and ammunition collection. However, gas cards will not be provided any other time than the "Gas for Guns" program date.

The East Baton Rouge "Gas for Guns" exchange program is made possible by the following community partners: Circle K Corporation, Mayor-President of East Baton Rouge Parish, East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office, Baton Rouge City Police Department, Baton Rouge City Constable's Office, District Attorney's Office, Louisiana State Police, U.S. Attorney's Office, Baton Rouge Crimestoppers and Living Faith Christian Center.

*About BRAVE:*

*Baton Rouge Area Violence Elimination (BRAVE) is designed to reduce juvenile crime in the 70805 ZIP code through the strengthening of police-community relationships, encouraging the community to unite against violence, promoting school engagement and connecting families to community resources. For more information, please visit our website at [www.bravebtr.com](http://www.bravebtr.com).*

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