

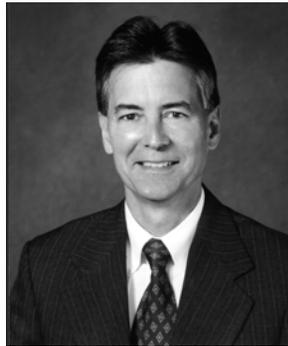
Guns in the hands of criminals present a continuing danger to all members of the community, especially those in high crime areas and in law enforcement.

VIRGINIA EXILE – A SUCCESS STORY

Virginia Exile's success has attracted wide attention from other states, major cities, and in Congress, which approved a National Exile Law based on Virginia's model. Virginia Exile also helps communities create public awareness campaigns to put violent criminals on notice and enlist community support. If your business would like to partner with our office in getting this important information out to our community, please call our office at 514-4365.

Recent statewide statistics show that over 88% of all murders and over 51% of all robberies were committed with a firearm. Particularly startling is the fact that a teenager is more likely to die from a gunshot than from all natural causes of death combined. This is unacceptable, and for our children's sake, we must reclaim our neighborhoods and streets.

Our office is acutely aware of the devastating effect that illegal guns have on the lives of victims, perpetrators, their respective families and the quality of community life. There are many potential sources of crime and tragedy in our society, but none parallel illegal guns in their capacity to inflict instant, lethal and irreparable harm to so many.



C. PHILLIPS "PHIL" FERGUSON

Commonwealth's Attorney
150 North Main Street
Suffolk, VA 23434
Phone (757) 514-4365
Fax (757) 514-4400

Please visit our website:
www.suffolk.va.us/cwatty

**TO REPORT AN ILLEGAL
GUN CALL 1-888-LOCK-U-UP**

Targeting the Illegal Possession of Guns

**SUFFOLK
EXILE
VIRGINIA**

Approach to Reducing Gun Violence

WHAT IS SUFFOLK EXILE?



Launched in 2001, the Suffolk Exile Program has been an invaluable tool in taking illegal guns off our city's streets. This program was designed to break the link between guns and drugs, guns and felons, guns in schools, and between guns and crime in general. When the same program has the backing of both Handgun Control, Inc. and the National Rifle Association (NRA), it's got to be doing something right!

Just like our slogan states, ***"It's Simple... You Do the Math!"*** Under Exile legislation, anyone faces a mandatory minimum sentence of ***five (5) years in a Virginia prison*** who:

- ❖ Has a prior conviction for a *violent felony* such as murder, rape, robbery, felonious assault or certain types of burglary and is convicted of possessing a firearm; or
- ❖ Is convicted of possessing a firearm within school property with the intent to use it, or displaying the weapon in a threatening manner; or
- ❖ Is convicted of possessing a firearm and an illegal drug, such as cocaine or heroin, with the intent to distribute.

Anyone who is convicted of possessing a firearm and an illegal drug such as cocaine or heroin faces a mandatory minimum ***two (2) to five (5) years in a Virginia prison.***

Additionally, anyone who possesses a firearm and has a prior conviction for a *non-violent* felony such as larceny or drug possession will be exiled for ***two (2) years*** in addition to any other sentence imposed.

The new law presumes that people charged with Exile-type gun crimes will not be eligible for bail while awaiting trial.

And, because Virginia abolished parole over five years ago, people convicted of these gun crimes will be behind bars "exiled" for the full two to five years. This is in addition to any other sentence imposed.

THE HISTORY OF EXILE

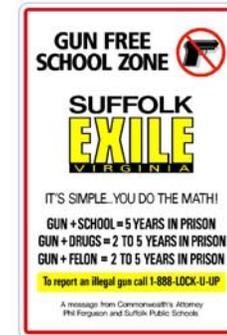
Project Exile was launched in Richmond, Virginia in 1997. The aim of the Exile program was to give prosecutors, law enforcement agencies, and the courts more tools to get gun-wielding criminals off of our streets and out of our neighborhoods. By prosecuting illegal gun offenses in federal court, Project Exile has helped to reduce homicides in Richmond, Virginia by 40 percent, according to federal and city officials.

Virginia Exile also helps communities mobilize to get the word out that gun violence won't be tolerated.

VIRGINIA EXILE

Following on the success of Project Exile in Richmond, in July 1999 a package of legislation was passed by the Virginia General Assembly that made the laws penalizing the illegal possession of firearms the toughest they have ever been. Along with these changes in state law, Virginia Exile helps prosecutors and police by providing financial resources, training and technical assistance so they can take full advantage of the enhanced penalties and bail restrictions. Currently there is an outstanding partnership between the Federal and State Authorities in the handling of these gun crimes thereby ensuring the greatest success possible in the prosecution of these cases.

GETTING THE EXILE MESSAGE OUT



Suffolk's Exile Program has been praised throughout the state and has been a model for other jurisdictions due to our innovation in getting the message out on the street.

Criminals must know about the program for it to work, and the community must be aware of it, too. This program truly gives people a voice against crime and loudly sends the message ***THAT THE ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF GUNS AND GUN VIOLENCE WILL NOT BE TOLERATED IN SUFFOLK!***