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**Burnsville Police Chief Tanya Schwartz and Fire Chief BJ Jungmann
Release Statements Regarding Federal Straw Purchasing Charges in Fatal Shooting of
Matthew Ruge, Officer Paul Elmstrand, Firefighter/Paramedic Adam Finseth, and
Wounding of Sergeant Adam Medicott**

The following statement is attributed to both Burnsville Police Chief Tanya Schwartz and Fire Chief BJ Jungmann

“We are extremely grateful for the collaboration between our law enforcement partners, Dakota County Attorney Kathy Keena, the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and United States Attorney Andy Luger and his team for being swift and aggressive in pursuing charges in this case. We especially want to thank Dakota County Attorney Kathy Keena and her office for their steadfast commitment to offender accountability, protection of the vulnerable, and the support for the challenging work law enforcement does. Dakota County residents and Dakota County law enforcement are fortunate to have her prosecuting crime in a fair and just manner. Special thank you to our Burnsville Mayor, City Council, City Manager, and all Burnsville city staff for their unwavering support of public safety long before this tragedy unfolded.

The loss of Officer Matt Ruge, Officer Paul Elmstrand and Firefighter/Paramedic Adam Finseth is a profound and avoidable tragedy. The families of our lost heroes, our departments and the community are still grieving this horrific loss. Our lives have been changed forever. We believe our partners would be alive today if this woman would not have bought these guns and given them to the murderer who shot our partners on February 18.

We have been clear in our discussions with our law enforcement partners that we expect the full force and power of our county, state, and federal resources to drive forward in a relentless pursuit of accountability and justice for Officer Matt Ruge, Officer Paul Elmstrand, and Firefighter/Paramedic Adam Finseth. We are encouraged by the indictment of Ashley Anne Dyrdaahl as it shows a clear collaboration and first step in that pursuit.

We will never give up seeking accountability and justice for Matt, Paul, and Adam. Today we swing the balance back in protection of our communities, those who protect and serve, and our fallen families who also paid the ultimate sacrifice.”

The following statement is attributed to Burnsville Police Chief Tanya Schwartz

“The assaults and blatant disrespect of police officers and all public safety must end. The women and men in law enforcement who honor their oath and put their lives on the line every day to serve and protect deserve respect and support not just when a tragedy strikes or when it serves political gains. More often than ever before, police officers across the state of Minnesota are forced by someone else’s behavior to make split second decisions to protect the life of another, their partners, or themselves from great bodily harm or death. They do this without the benefit of hindsight, and sometimes they are made out to be criminals. Meanwhile, actual criminals are moving about Minnesota communities terrorizing innocent people, robbing them of their freedoms, rights, property, and lives, with little or no accountability.

Our deep gratitude to the silent majority of public safety supporters who have been unafraid to stand for us and for our fallen families. We need you. Advocate for us when you hear people using the lens that the only accountability required is police accountability. Remind those elected to support public safety and take action that sends clear messages to criminals that they will be held accountable for their actions too. Encourage them to stop making it near impossible for police officers to keep themselves and the public safe.”

The following statement is attributed to Burnsville Fire Chief BJ Jungmann

“This tragedy was horrific for our heroes’ families, our departments, and our communities. We are thankful for all the support we have received over the past month from our public safety partners and the community. I am hopeful that this support continues not only for Burnsville but for all of public safety as the days, weeks, months and years pass since this tragic event occurred. Memories can fade with time. It is important that we do not forget these three heroes who gave up their lives, and the officer who was injured, protecting others they did not even know. It sickens me that this tragedy would have been avoidable by just following current laws. I am hopeful that charges brought against those that helped facilitate this tragedy will be held accountable to the fullest extent of the law.”

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