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Cummings to hold hearing on nation's gun laws in wake of nephew's death

By Jordy Yager - 06 15 11 10:50 AM ET

Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-Md.), whose nephew was killed in a shooting Friday, sympathized with the family of a slain federal agent during Wednesday's hearing on a gun-tracking program.

Cummings, as the ranking Democrat on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, also announced plans for a separate, minority-led hearing on the nation's gun laws with witnesses of his choosing.

The move came in the opening remarks of Wednesday's hearing, which is set to examine the controversial Fast and Furious gun-tracking operation, which oversaw the sale of more than 1,300 firearms to known and suspected straw purchasers for drug cartels.

Cummings said he had hoped that the issue of gun laws would be addressed in committee Chairman Darrell Issa's (R-Calif.) hearing that day.

◆No legitimate examination of this issue will be complete without analyzing our nation's gun laws, which allow tens of thousands of assault weapons to flood into Mexico from the United States every year, including .50-caliber sniper rifles, multiple AK variants and scores of others,◆ Cummings said.

◆In order to explore these issues further, today I am exercising my right under the rules of the House for a minority day of hearings with several witnesses who will testify about these issues in detail. I did not think it was necessary to call these witnesses for today's hearing, but I will work with Chairman Issa on scheduling this hearing in the near future.◆

Cummings offered his condolences to the family of ATF Agent Brian Terry, who was killed in a gun battle with suspected members of a drug cartel in Arizona last December. Cummings's nephew was shot and killed in his Virginia apartment last week.

<http://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/news/166545-cummings-to-hold-hearing-on-nations-gun-laws-in-wake-of-nephews-death>

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