The analysis comes at a time when Congress is considering legislation to tighten access to guns, and the state Legislature is considering laws to make it easier to get a concealed weapons permit.

"The agency that’s set up to put the screws to the bad guy is almost being cut in half," LaCourse said.

Last month, Wayne County and the City of Detroit sued gun manufacturers and dealers, saying they used a strategy of "willful blindness," looking the other way when guns are sold illegally. A sitting county law enforcement official said that nine of 10 dealers sold guns to people who indicated they were buying on behalf of a minor or felon with them.

Both U.S. Attorney Saul Green of Detroit and Special Agent Michael Morrisey, head of the ATF in Michigan, dispute the numbers from the Free Press study. The reports analyzed for the study came from the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys and are made public by the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC) at Syracuse University.

"The numbers have gone down," Green said. But he said he does not accept the data the Free Press has analyzed as definitive.

Green said that the decline follows a general downward trend in crime.

For example, according to police records, Detroit had 559 homicides in 1993 and 453 in 1998.

The increased use of local-federal task forces may play a role in the decreased federal gun cases, he said. "We have a lot more cooperation than we had in the past and some of the cases developed might go to local prosecution, as opposed to federal.

Morrisey and ATF officials in Washington said the bureau shifted its investigative strategy, targeting more serious violators.

The number of licensed gun dealers in the state has dropped, from about 11,000 in the early 1990s to 2,498 as of earlier this month, and very few are black.

"We’re doing more with less," Morrisey said. "I think we’re doing better quality with less, too.

And a program started in the last two months in Detroit could reverse the downward trend. Operation Countdown hopes to use tough federal gun laws to take felons caught with guns off the streets.

HOMICIDES DECLINED

Between 1993 and 1997, the median prison term for those convicted after investigations by the ATF stayed fairly constant at around 30 months, which suggests if agents were targeting more serious violators, they did not receive greater sentences.

"We gather the facts and present them to the U.S. Attorney for prosecution. It is up to the court to decide the sentence," Morrisey said. "And often times, the sentences fall under guidelines enacted by Congress."

While the number of people prosecuted declined in eastern Michigan, agents in the district reported a peak in 1997 than in any other federal district. The eastern district had a high number of referrals in 1993–1996 as well.

The analysis comes at a time when Congress is considering legislation to tighten access to guns.

The Eastern District of Michigan covers the eastern half of the Lower Peninsula.

In the Western District of Michigan, which covers the rest of the state, the number of federal prosecutions fluctuated but the annual totals were much less than in the east.

If recent undercover investigations in Wayne County are an indication, finding illegal gun sales would not be difficult.

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States, communicating to the Senate the names of certain officials in the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

REPORT ON THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO BURMA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 33

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Burma that was declared in Executive Order 13047 of May 20, 1997.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.


REPORT ON THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO IRAQ—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 34

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

PRESIDENT—PM 33

BURMA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States.
To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1611(c) and section 301(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12170 of November 14, 1979.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

REPORT OF THE NOTICE OF THE CONTINUATION OF THE EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA (SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO)—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the Federal Register and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the Federal Register for publication, stating that the emergency declared with respect to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) is to continue in effect beyond May 30, 1999, and the emergency declared with respect to the situation in Kosovo is to continue in effect beyond June 9, 1999.

On December 27, 1995, I issued Presidential Determination 96-7, directing the Secretary of the Treasury, inter alia, to suspend the application of sanctions imposed on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and to continue to block property previously blocked until provision is made to address claims or encumbrances, including the claims of the other successor states of the former Yugoslavia. This sanctions relief, in conformity with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1022 of November 22, 1995 (hereinafter the “Resolution”), was an essential factor motivating Serbia and Montenegro’s acceptance of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina initiated by the parties in Dayton, Ohio, on November 21, 1995, and signed in Paris, France, on December 14, 1995 (hereinafter the “Peace Agreement”). The sanctions imposed on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) were accordingly suspended prospectively, effective January 16, 1996. Sanctions imposed on the Bosnian Serb forces and authorities and on the territory that they control within Bosnia and Herzegovina were subsequently suspended prospectively, effective May 10, 1996, also in conformity with the Peace Agreement and the Resolution.

Sanctions against both the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the Bosnian Serbs were subsequently terminated by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1074 of October 1, 1996. This termination, however, did not end the requirement of the Resolution that blocked those funds and assets that are subject to claims and encumbrances remain blocked, until unblocked in accordance with applicable law. Until the status of all remaining blocked property is resolved, the Peace Agreement implemented, and the terms of the Resolution met, this situation continues to pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy interests, and the economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force these emergency authorities beyond May 30, 1999.

On June 9, 1998, I issued Executive Order 13068, “Blocking Property of the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Serbia, and the Republic of Montenegro, and Prohibiting New Investment in the Republic of Serbia in Response to the Situation in Kosovo.” Since then, the government of President Milosevic has rejected the international community’s efforts to find a peaceful settlement for the crisis in Kosovo and has launched a massive campaign of ethnic cleansing that has displaced a large percentage of the population and been accompanied by an increasing number of atrocities. President Milosevic’s brutal assault against the people of Kosovo and his complete disregard for the requirements of the international community pose a threat to regional peace and stability.

President Milosevic’s actions continue to pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy interests, and the economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force these emergency authorities beyond June 9, 1999.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON
The WHITE House, May 27, 1999.

REPORT RELATIVE TO THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE OVERSIGHT BOARD—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 36

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Finance.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON
The WHITE House, May 27, 1999.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 9:45 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, signed by Mr. Hanrahan, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, with an amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

S. 249. An act to provide funding for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, to reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, and for other purposes.