

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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July 6, 2022

Mr. Mark P. Smith
President and Chief Executive Officer
Smith & Wesson Brands, Inc.
2100 Roosevelt Avenue
Springfield, MA 01104

Dear Mr. Smith:

I am writing to request your appearance at an Oversight Committee hearing on Wednesday, July 20, 2022, regarding the crisis of gun violence in America and the gun industry's role in fueling that violence. I am deeply troubled that gun manufacturers continue to profit from the sale of weapons of war, including AR-15-style assault rifles that were used by a white supremacist to murder ten people in Buffalo, New York, and in the massacre of 19 children and two teachers in Uvalde, Texas. Just this Monday, as Americans celebrated our nation's Independence Day, a shooter used a Smith and Wesson M&P 15 semiautomatic rifle to kill at least seven people and wound dozens of others during a Fourth of July parade in Highland Park, Illinois.¹ Products sold by your company have been used for decades to carry out homicides and even mass murders, yet your company has continued to market assault weapons to civilians.

The Committee began examining the firearms industry more than two years ago.² Since then, America's gun violence epidemic has worsened with rising tides of gun sales and gun deaths. Gun-related incidents are now the leading cause of death for children in America.

On May 26, 2022, in the wake of the shootings in Buffalo and Uvalde, this Committee launched an investigation into firearms manufacturers and sent a letter to you seeking information on your company's sale and marketing of AR-15-style semiautomatic rifles and similar firearms.

¹ *Man Accused in Highland Park July 4th Parade Shooting Ordered Held Without Bail; Another Victim is Identified*, Chicago Tribune (July 6, 2022) (online at www.chicagotribune.com/news/breaking/ct-highland-park-parade-shooting-day-three-20220706-m4jhf3zosbhjppq3xtgykiqvi-story.html).

² *See, e.g.*, Letter from Chairman Elijah E. Cummings, Committee on Oversight and Reform, to Acting Deputy Director Regina Lombardo; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (Aug. 9, 2019) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/2019-08-09.EEC%20to%20LombardoATF%20re%20Gun%20Tracing.pdf>).

Your company produced some of the information and documents responsive to our inquiry, but you have refused to produce information specifically regarding semiautomatic rifles based on the AR platform, despite admitting that you keep such records. The information that you did provide has heightened the Committee's concern that your company is continuing to profit from the sale and marketing of weapons of war to civilians despite the harm these weapons cause.

On June 8, 2022, the Committee held a hearing to examine the causes and impacts of gun violence and evaluate measures to prevent further loss of life from firearms. The hearing included testimony from survivors of mass shootings perpetrated by assault rifles, including 11-year-old Miah Cerrillo from Uvalde, and family members of victims, including the parents of Lexi Rubio, a 10-year-old girl who was among the 19 students killed with a Daniel Defense assault rifle in Uvalde.

Dr. Roy Guerrero, a pediatrician who treated victims of the Uvalde shooting, testified to the devastation the AR-15-style assault rifle has on the bodies of children, who were "pulverized" and "decapitated" by the bullets fired at them. Buffalo Police Commissioner Joseph Gramaglia similarly testified that the damage from these weapons "was absolutely devastating." Nick Suplina, Vice President for Law and Policy at Everytown for Gun Safety, testified regarding that AR-15-style rifles are "unique in the damage that is done to the human body when you use one of these."³

In the days following the Committee's June 8 hearing, Congress passed the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, which requires enhanced background checks for buyers under the age of 21, closes the "boyfriend loophole," provides federal grants for states to enact "red flag" laws, and enhances penalties for gun traffickers.⁴ This law is an important step, but it does not ban assault weapons or implement other safety solutions that the gun industry has lobbied aggressively to prevent.⁵

As the next step in our investigation, the Committee is holding a second hearing on July 20, 2022, to examine the role of the firearms industry in the gun violence epidemic, including with respect to the sale and marketing of assault weapons and the broad civil immunity that has been unfairly granted to manufacturers. As the chief executive officer of a major firearms manufacturer that sells millions of assault weapons, your testimony is crucial to understand why your company continues to sell and market these weapons to civilians, what steps your company plans to take to protect the public, and what additional reforms are needed to prevent further deaths from your products.

³ Committee on Oversight and Reform, *Hearing on the Urgent Need to Address the Gun Violence Epidemic* (June 8, 2022) (online at <https://oversight.house.gov/legislation/hearings/the-urgent-need-to-address-the-gun-violence-epidemic>).

⁴ Pub. L. No. 117-159.

⁵ *The Gun Lobby's Growing Divide*, Axios (June 4, 2022) (online at www.axios.com/2022/06/04/gun-control-nra-red-flag-laws); *Gun Rights Groups Mobilizing to Counter Gun Control Bills, Either in the Senate or in the Courts*, Time (June 3, 2022) (online at <https://time.com/6184098/gun-rights-groups-congress-courts/>).

Mr. Mark P. Smith

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Please confirm by Friday, July 8, 2022, that you will appear at the Committee's hearing on July 20, 2022.

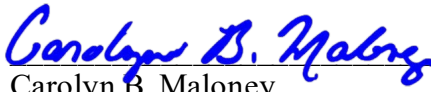
The enclosed Witness Instruction Sheet provides information for witnesses appearing before the Committee. Please note the procedures for submitting written testimony at least two business days prior to the hearing.

For in-person participants, the enclosed COVID-19 guidelines describe the Committee's coronavirus safety protocols. Consistent with these guidelines, all witnesses and their staff must confirm their vaccination status and complete a health assessment before entering the Committee's hearing room and/or office spaces. Witnesses who are not fully vaccinated must also provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test in advance of the hearing in order to enter the Committee's hearing room and/or office spaces.

In addition, the enclosed Zoom user guides demonstrate how to: (1) navigate Zoom features and (2) ensure the best user experience by employing general best practices (e.g., optimal lighting and sound conditions).

The Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact staff at (202) 225-5051.

Sincerely,


Carolyn B. Maloney
Chairwoman

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable James Comer, Ranking Member