

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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### Chairwoman Carolyn B. Maloney Committee on Oversight and Reform Hearing on “Examining the Practices and Profits of Gun Manufacturers” July 27, 2022

Today, we are holding our second hearing on the crisis of gun violence in America.

Seven weeks ago, this Committee heard heart-breaking testimony from witnesses whose lives were forever changed by gun violence, including Miah Cerillo, a fourth-grader who survived the massacre in Uvalde by smearing herself with her classmate’s blood and playing dead.

Gun violence is now the top killer of children in the United States, causing more deaths in children than car accidents. In 2020, more than 45,000 people were killed by gun violence, the highest number ever recorded in our country. And since our [first hearing](#), the evil of gun violence has continued to shatter our communities.

**On the Fourth of July, a gunman rained down bullets on families at a parade in Highland Park, Illinois. He killed seven people and injured dozens more. That shooter—like the killers in Uvalde, Buffalo, Las Vegas, Parkland, and Newtown—used an AR-15-style rifle. This is an ultra-deadly weapon engineered to kill enemy soldiers on the battlefield. Yet the gun industry has flooded our neighborhoods, our schools, and even our churches and synagogues with these deadly weapons—and has gotten rich doing it. That is why I launched an investigation into the gun industry.**

**This morning, I released a [memo](#) with our initial findings—and what we found is appalling. Our investigation shows that five major gun manufacturers collected a total of more than \$1 billion dollars from the sale of assault rifles over the last decade.**

One company, Ruger, made over \$100 million dollars through the sale of AR-15-style rifles in 2021, more than doubling what it made the year before. Another company, Daniel Defense, tripled its revenue from these rifles from 2019 to 2021. And Smith & Wesson brought in over \$125 million dollars from the sale of assault weapons in 2021.

**Our investigation also found that gun manufacturers use dangerous marketing tactics to sell assault weapons to the public. That includes marketing to children, preying on young men’s insecurities, and even appealing to violent white supremacists. Finally, we found that even as guns kill more Americans than ever, none of these companies take even basic steps to monitor the deaths and injuries caused by their products. That is beyond irresponsible.**

At the end of our last hearing, I vowed that this Committee would hold a second hearing so the Committee and the American people can hear directly from the gun industry about why they continue to sell the weapons of choice to mass murderers.

Today, we will hear from the CEOs of two gun manufacturers who sold assault rifles used by mass shooters—Daniel Defense and Ruger. Daniel Defense sold the assault weapon that was used in Uvalde to murder 19 children and 2 teachers, and to wound 18 others. And Ruger is the largest rifle manufacturer in the U.S. Their assault weapon was used to murder more than two-dozen people at a church in Sutherland Springs, Texas.

We also invited Mark Smith, the CEO of Smith & Wesson. His company is the second-leading rifle manufacturer in the country, and is responsible for the weapons used by mass murderers in Highland Park, in Parkland, and in other mass shootings. Mr. Smith promised he would testify. But then he went back on his word—perhaps because he did not want to take responsibility for the death and destruction his company has caused.

**But the time for dodging accountability is over. Today, I am announcing my intent to issue a subpoena for documents from Smith & Wesson’s CEO and other top executives, so we can finally get answers about why this company is selling assault weapons to mass murderers—answers we were hoping to get at today’s hearing.**

After we announced this hearing, the Committee heard from victims, family members, and survivors of gun violence from across the country, who wanted to share their stories—and their questions for the gun industry. I’d like to play some of those now.

**These people are demanding answers and accountability from the gun industry. And I intend to get both today. Following today’s hearing, House Democrats will take bold action to stop the bloodshed. On Friday, we will vote on the first assault weapons ban in nearly 30 years. The House will also vote to end the outrageous legal immunity that has protected the gun industry from lawsuits for far too long. And in the coming weeks, I intend to introduce additional legislation to hold the gun industry accountable for the damage inflicted by their products—just like the car industry, the pharmaceutical industry, or any other American business.**

**Let me close by addressing my Republican colleagues. I know you value the rights guaranteed by the Second Amendment. So do I. But even Justice Scalia recognized that, quote, “the right secured by the Second Amendment is not unlimited”**

Even as we protect this right, we cannot ignore our fundamental obligation to protect the public—especially our children. I hope all my colleagues will join me in finally taking action to end this crisis.

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