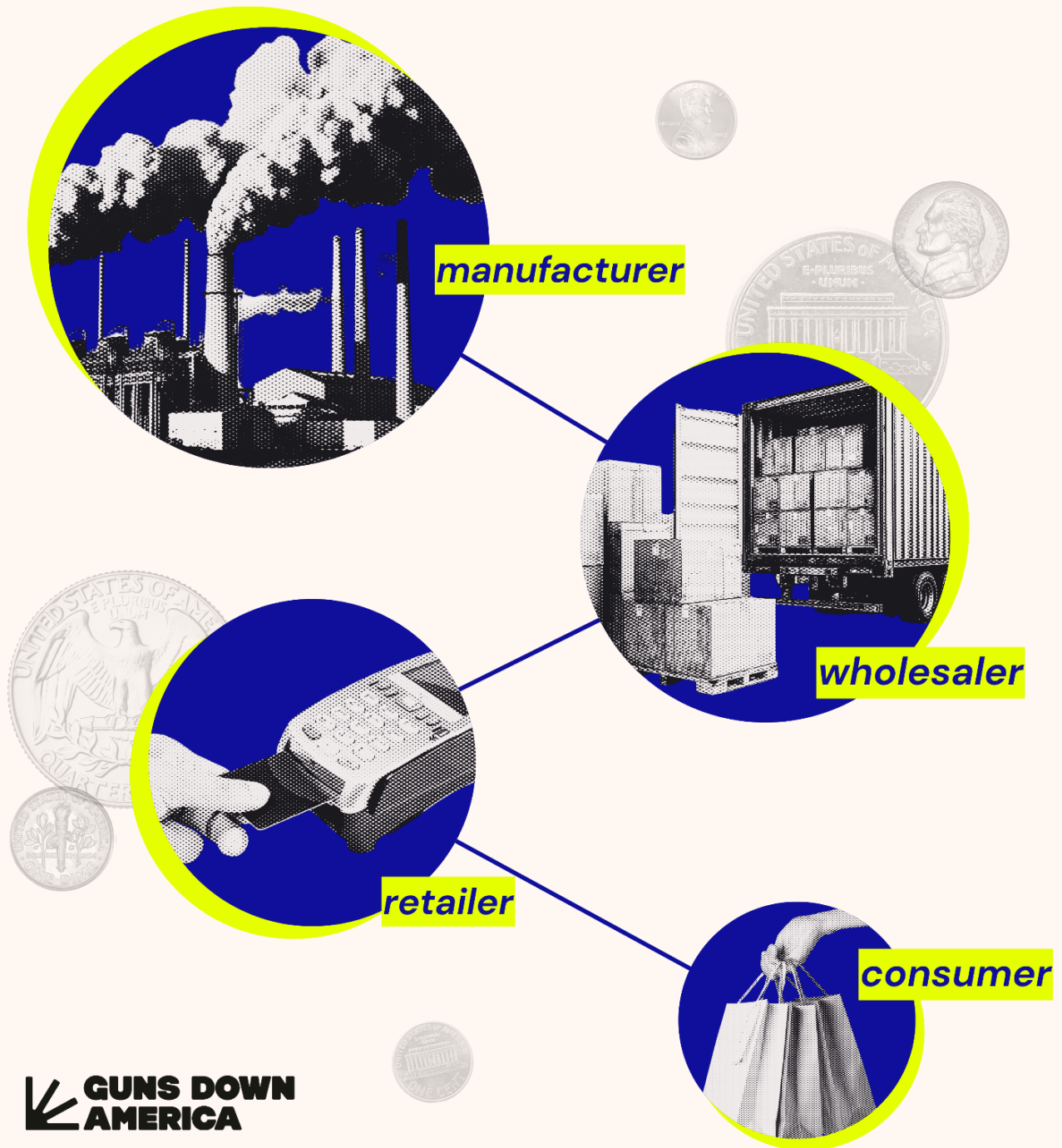


# The Middleman Myth

## The Gun Industry's Selective Use of Retail Sales Control



# Contents

## [Contents](#)

### [Overview](#)

[“We don’t have visibility into those individual dealers”](#)

[External vs. Internal Representations of Gun Manufacture Oversight](#)

[Attempts at Accountability](#)

[Manufacturer Influence: Controlling the Channel to Drive Sales](#)

[Ruger’s “Two-Tier Model”](#)

[Gun Lobbying and Business Groups Facilitate Price Restraints](#)

[NASGW & NSSF—Compliance, Training, and Business Resources](#)

[NSSF’s Failed Suicide Prevention Program](#)

### [Background](#)

[Smith & Wesson](#)

[Ruger](#)

[NSSF](#)

[Court Cases](#)

[CEOs Testify to Congress](#)

### [NASGW Background](#)

[Key Financial Information](#)

[Revenue](#)

[Expenses](#)

[Key People](#)

[NASGW SCOPE Data-Sharing Platform](#)

[NASGW VAULT Data Hub](#)

[NASGW Political/Policy Activity](#)

[Financial Services](#)

[NSSF PAC Donation](#)

[Russia](#)

[Second Amendment](#)

[Taxes](#)

## Overview

This report examines whether gun manufacturers have the ability to control the distribution of their products, despite claims that their business model makes it impossible to implement stronger safety mechanisms. In November and December 2025, Guns Down America searched news databases, SEC filings, and online sources for examples of statements from executives of gun manufacturers and gun industry trade associations discussing their influence and relationships with wholesale distributors and retail gun stores.

Gun makers often claim there is little they can do to keep their products out of the hands of criminals and mass shooters because they don't sell directly to customers. The consumer arms trade operates not direct-to-consumer, but through a multi-tiered model in which manufacturers like Smith & Wesson or Sturm, Ruger & Co. sell to wholesale distributors, who in turn sell to licensed retailers (which include big box chains, independent gun shops and so-called "kitchen table" dealers who sell guns without a traditional storefront).

## Gun Industry Distribution Model

**MANUFACTURER**  
→ **WHOLESALER**  
→ **RETAILER**  
→ **CONSUMER**

The research shows the firearms distribution network is complex, but tightly knit. There is a high level of knowledge sharing between firms and manufacturers who provide plentiful hands-on support for retailers. Makers, distributors, and retailers use this information to control the flow of arms within their network to facilitate gun sales and profits. At the same time, they fail the public by choosing not to apply the same strategies to stem the flow of guns to dealers.

## **“We don’t have visibility into those individual dealers”**

The “two-step distribution” process is an intentionally placed framework that allows gun manufacturers to overlook and evade responsibility for the death and destruction caused by their products. Research shows that a small percent of bad dealers sell a large portion of guns used in violent crime, but distributors have historically continued to sell to those dealers anyway. [One investigation in Philadelphia](#) found just six stores sold over 11,000 guns used in crimes from 2014 to 2020. During a 2022 congressional hearing, Rep. Robin Kelly, an Illinois Democrat who represents parts of Chicago and its southern suburbs, asked gun company CEOs what steps they took to identify gun dealers who sold disproportionate numbers of crime guns.

Ruger CEO Christopher Killoy said, in effect, that there was nothing he could do. Ruger, he explained, only sold guns to a network of 15 large wholesalers, not to retailers directly.

**Gun manufacturers have significant ability to put more safety controls in place to prevent firearms proliferating to criminals, but choose not to assert that control.**

“So, we don’t have visibility into those individual dealers,” Killoy said.

Yet gun makers have demonstrated a remarkable level of visibility into and influence over their wholesale and retail “partners.” Manufacturers have a number of policies in place to control pricing and supply levels, and have enough visibility to monitor those factors to enforce such policies.

Killoy, for example, was asked in 2017 during the company’s second quarter earnings call to comment on how quickly Ruger guns were moving off gun store shelves, or “the retail inventory levels,” as a Wall Street analyst put it.

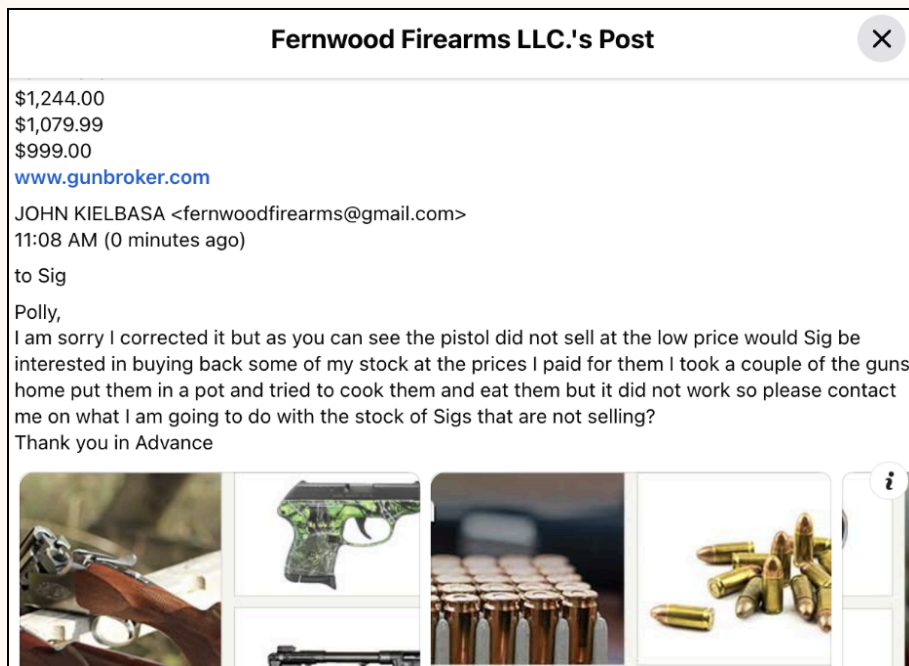
“Any visibility or what your distributors are telling you there?” the analyst asked.

As it turned out, there was.

“Well, I think one thing I’d say is retailers have been pretty savvy in managing their inventory over the last couple of months,” Killoy said. He added, “And anecdotally, we think their inventory levels are down from where they were maybe coming out of the election cycle. They’ve managed that well. They’re waiting for buying opportunities.”

They are also involved enough to enforce minimum advertised price policies, even for very small retailers. Fernwood Firearms LLC., a now-closed gun shop in a small New York town of under 1,000 residents, posted on Facebook after the manufacturer reached out about the retailer violating their minimum advertised pricing policy.

Manufacturers, such as SIG Sauer, Smith & Wesson, and Sturm, Ruger & Co., influence distribution and retail channels to manage inventory, drive consumer demand, and secure market share. This influence is complemented by a structured, cooperative framework facilitated by the industry's powerful trade associations, especially the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) and National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers, which work to align the interests of manufacturers, distributors, and retailers.



It's clear that the level of influence manufacturers exert over distributors and suppliers undercuts those manufacturers' attempts to insulate themselves from accountability for the scourge of gun violence.

## External vs. Internal Representations of Gun Manufacture Oversight

Crime & Violence Prevention	Sales Tactics & Pricing Compliance
<p><b>Claim it's not their place to engage in day-to-day operations, including on distribution practices that could stop crime</b></p> <p><i>"The industry's position has consistently been to take no independent action to ensure responsible distribution practices."<sup>1</sup></i> —Robert Hass, former Smith &amp; Wesson executive</p> <p><i>Taurus "never cut off anybody...for sloppy distribution practices."<sup>2</sup></i> —Robert Morrison, former president of Taurus International Manufacturing Inc.</p>	<p><b>Gun manufacturer representatives have personal relationships with retailers and wholesalers</b></p> <p><i>"Our sales team has been meeting with retailers, ensuring their needs are met during these busy times ... and even occasionally stepping behind the counter."<sup>3</sup></i> —Mark Smith, Smith &amp; Wesson CEO</p> <p><i>"We spend time with every single one of our wholesale partners, and there are some great folks that we deal with, very candid conversations."<sup>4</sup></i> —Christopher Killoy, Sturm Ruger CEO</p>
<p><b>Claim there is no visibility into individual retailers</b></p> <p><i>"We sell through a network of 15 fairly large wholesalers...They then sell to the individual retailers who are also licensees. So, we don't have visibility into those individual dealers."<sup>5</sup></i> —Christopher Killoy, Sturm Ruger CEO</p>	<p><b>Report visibility into individual stores' inventory numbers of their downstream retailers to their shareholders</b></p> <p><i>"Retailers have been pretty savvy in managing their inventory...The good ones had taken advantage of the buying opportunities that are there from both manufacturers and distributors...And anecdotally, we think their inventory levels are down."<sup>6</sup></i> —Christopher Killoy, Sturm Ruger CEO</p>
<p><b>Claim they have no connection to the outcomes from retail sales</b></p> <p><i>"I believe that these murders are local problems that have to be solved locally."<sup>7</sup></i> —Marty Daniel, Daniel Defense CEO</p>	<p><b>Communicate an ability to ensure individual-level prevention of criminal transfers</b></p> <p><i>"We are very good at our ability to make sure that our firearms are transferred legally through legal dealers."<sup>8</sup></i> —Marty Daniel, Daniel Defense CEO</p> <p><i>"We have long supported efforts to better enforce existing laws."<sup>9</sup></i> —Christopher Killoy, Sturm Ruger CEO &amp; Michael Jacobi, Sturm Ruger Chairman</p>

<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup> St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 02/12/99

<sup>3</sup> Smith & Wesson Q3 2021 Earnings Call, 03/04/21

<sup>4</sup> Ruger Q3 2023 Earnings Call, 11/02/23

<sup>5</sup> House Oversight and Reform Committee Holds Hearing on Gun Practices and Profits of Manufacturers, 07/27/22

<sup>6</sup> Ruger Q2 2017 Earnings Call, 08/03/17

<sup>7</sup> House Oversight and Reform Committee Holds Hearing on Gun Practices and Profits of Manufacturers, 07/27/22

<sup>8</sup> House Oversight and Reform Committee Holds Hearing on Gun Practices and Profits of Manufacturers, 07/27/22

<sup>9</sup> Ruger Letter to Shareholders, 03/12/18

## Attempts at Accountability

The question of whether the gun industry has an obligation to keep its guns from getting into criminals' hands spurred a series of lawsuits in the late 1990s and early 2000s brought by cities, states, civil rights groups, and victims of gun violence.

Unlike the landmark tobacco industry lawsuits on which they were based, the cases against the gun companies did not produce the same consumer and public health wins. While Smith & Wesson initially announced a deal with the Clinton administration to pursue crime prevention policies, like technology changes and tighter oversight of malicious distributors and retailers, the company eventually reneged following a wave of backlash orchestrated by gun executives and trade group leaders.

Around that time, Robert Hass, a longtime Smith & Wesson sales and marketing executive, testified that "manufacturers could do more, and their hands aren't clean if they ship totally legally to distributors." In contrast, he said Smith & Wesson would target retailers who discounted the price of guns. "God knows we did that enough," Hass testified while speaking about Smith & Wesson's price monitoring practices in the 1980s.

**"never cut off anybody...for sloppy distribution practices"**

— Robert Morris, Taurus International Manufacturing Inc. President & CEO [1999 Deposition]

Robert Morris, the head of gun maker Taurus International Manufacturing Inc., conceded during a separate deposition that the company had "never cut off anybody...for sloppy distribution practices," the St. Louis Dispatch reported in 1999. Gun makers were found liable in this case for negligent marketing and distribution practices that allowed weapons to flow illegally from states with lax gun laws to stricter jurisdictions. The gun industry immediately lobbied for protection against similar suits. Congress complied in 2005 by giving gun makers a legal shield, declaring they could not be held liable for the "misuse" of their products in the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act (PLCAA).

While PLCAA effectively destroyed the rights of consumers to take gun companies to court, several cases had proceeded to discovery prior to that point – putting executives on the record about what steps they were—or weren't—taking to keep their guns out of criminals' hands.

In 2021, the Mexican government filed a lawsuit against Smith & Wesson, Ruger, several other gunmakers, one distributor, attempting to hold them accountable for the illegal use of their product by drug cartels.

Mexico claimed the gun companies had shirked their duty to keep guns from falling into the wrong hands, including by continuing to sell to dealers suspected of supplying gun traffickers. To support its lawsuit, Mexico cited testimony from former gun industry trade association official Robert Ricker, who acknowledged that gunmakers take a “see-no-evil, hear-no-evil, speak-no-evil approach” to illegal activity by gun distributors and stores.

Mexico argued that the gun companies’ “choice to use distribution and sales policies that supply the cartels violates all of the obligations and duties they have undertaken as manufacturers and distributors of these weapons.”

In response, the companies argued that the case should be dismissed because it was preempted by the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act (PLCAA) and because Mexico did not demonstrate any illegal activity by the manufacturers themselves. “Here, proximate cause is lacking for several reasons,” the companies argued in a joint motion to dismiss. “First, the alleged causal chain is extraordinarily attenuated, consisting of multiple links that make the alleged injuries extremely remote from any of defendants’ actions.”

The gunmakers and distributors argued that Mexico cannot hold them responsible for cartels’ violence “due to the ‘sheer number of steps in its theory of causation.’” Their motion laid out an eight-step process by which guns wind up in the hands of cartels. It begins with manufacturers selling to “independent federally licensed wholesale distributors,” but also requires participation from “straw buyers with illegal intentions” and, of course, the cartels themselves.

**In public, manufacturers and retailers claim independence.**

**In business dealings, they boast their close partnership.**

“To put it mildly, this causal chain is simply too ‘long and torturous’ to sustain liability,” the gun companies argued.

The case ultimately made its way to the Supreme Court, which unanimously held that because “Mexico’s complaint does not plausibly allege that the defendant gun manufacturers aided and abetted gun dealers’ unlawful sales of firearms to Mexican traffickers, PLCAA bars the lawsuit.”

While their ostensible independence from distributors and retailers has proven helpful in court, in other contexts gun companies are eager to boast about the close relationships they maintain with their retail and distribution “partners.”

### **Manufacturer Influence: Controlling the Channel to Drive Sales**

The influence exerted by Smith & Wesson and Ruger over their distributors and retailers is focused on maximizing “pull-through” at the retail counter while maintaining stable channel inventory.

One of the most critical levers manufacturers use is the tight management of wholesale and retail inventory levels, as this directly impacts future orders and market stability. Smith & Wesson repeatedly emphasizes a hands-on approach to controlling this flow in order to align inventory with consumer trends.

CEO Mark Smith would often reference Smith & Wesson’s “distributor and retail partners,” emphasizing the hand-in-hand relationship the company takes to managing its wholesale and consumer sales channels. For instance, in June 2024, Smith pointed out that “despite the outperformance in our out-the-door unit shipments into the channel, inventory levels during the period at our distributor and strategic retail partners remained healthy.”

Smith & Wesson keeps tabs on its distributors and retailers to ensure that inventory levels are properly managed to ensure distributors and retailers remain ready to meet demand.

**“We continue to work closely with key retail partners to ensure the channel is clean and closely aligned with SKU-level demand”**

— Mark Smith, Smith & Wesson CEO

Smith’s goal of a “clean channel” means no excess stock forcing heavy discounting, which protects the brand’s pricing power and the partners’ margins.

**“Our sales team has been meeting with retailers, ensuring their needs are met during these busy times ... and even occasionally stepping behind the counter, to help our retail partners manage the heavy influx of new consumers at their stores,”**

— Mark Smith, Smith & Wesson CEO

Smith & Wesson executives take a hands-on approach to helping their retailers. For example, in 2021, when firearms demand surged in the wake of Covid and social unrest, Smith & Wesson provided extra manpower to help retailers manage the surge of customers.

This cooperative approach provides Smith & Wesson with invaluable first-hand market data but also reinforces the manufacturer’s presence and influence within the retail store itself.

### **Ruger’s “Two-Tier Model”**

Ruger, in particular, adheres to a strict “two-tier distribution model,” which limits its direct contact with the market and elevates the importance of the wholesaler relationship.

As Ruger executives Christopher J. Killoy and C. Michael Jacobi noted in a March 2018 letter to shareholders: “We do not sell firearms directly to retailers or consumers. Rather, we utilize a two-tier distribution model and primarily sell to a limited number of independent, federally licensed wholesale distributors of firearms, some of whom we have worked with for decades.”

This exclusive reliance on wholesalers makes the wholesalers critical gatekeepers, but also renders them entirely reliant on Ruger’s supply schedule and product strategy.

For example, distributors must meet several requirements to sell Ruger firearms, including limiting sales to retailers with “a regular place of business ... where products are displayed to the shooting public,” according to Killoy and Jacobi’s letter.

Ruger also utilizes “special makeups”—exclusive products sold only through certain distributors—to reward and bind partners. The strategy creates a powerful incentive for wholesalers to remain in the manufacturer’s good graces.

“Wholesalers continue to be very important for us,” Killoy said in November 2018. “Unlike some of our competitors, when it comes to those special makeups, we work with our wholesalers in good times and in bad. So when things slow down, we tend to do very well with our wholesalers with some of those particular models that an individual distributor might buy just for themselves.”

## **Distributors must meet several requirements before being allowed to sell Ruger firearms, up to and including the setting in which the guns are sold.**

### **Gun Lobbying and Business Groups Facilitate Price Restraints**

Certain firms in the firearms industry have drawn scrutiny for advertising practices that target vulnerable populations with militarized content. The gun industry has diligently controlled how prices are advertised, but fails to provide any oversight for these advertising practices.

For example, Smith & Wesson has a minimum advertised price (MAP) policy that it describes as unilateral and enforced to protect its brand image in the marketplace. Retailers who violate the policy face suspensions of up to one year, and may be placed on a permanent “Do Not Sell List” after more than three violations.

Retailers interviewed by Shooting Industry Magazine have advocated for MAP policies, saying they protect profit margins when they are properly enforced. Despite corporate claims that MAP policies only restrict advertised prices, in practice these policies create price floors on firearms, showing the extent to which the industry exerts control over those selling its products.

Minimum advertised price policies are pervasive in the firearms industry, with the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW) facilitating price coordination across the industry. The NASGW is a 70-year-old organization that describes itself as “committed to protecting our way of life and bringing together like-minded business, organizations, and service providers.” NASGW also collaborates with other leading gun groups, including the National Shooting Sports Foundation, National Rifle Association and Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation.

**“The more we work together, even in the realm of competition, and share information the better we’re all going to be.”**

– Laurie Aronson, Former NASGW Board Chair on providing consolidated resourcing direction to the gun industry

The NASGW provides a full suite of retailing resources to allow members to share information. At the 45<sup>th</sup> Expo & Annual Meeting, NASGW President Kenyon Gleason said of one such resource launch, “Information is the lynchpin to the future of our industry’s success...You can absolutely count on the NASGW and its members to help the industry’s business succeed.” Touting their SCOPE platform in May 2019, Lipsey’s CEO and then-NASGW Board Chair Laurie Aronson said, “The more we work together, even in the realm of competition, and share information the better we’re all going to be.”

The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), the leading trade association for the firearms industry, provides similar value. The NSSF distributes a unified platform for compliance, business development, and social responsibility, knitting together the commercial interests of the distribution chain with public policy advocacy.

The NSSF and NASGW also partner to produce events and collaborate on these information sharing programs. The NSSF partnered with the NASGW to create a Firearms Industry Retail Development Program, which offers compliance evaluations, legal support, and business growth tools.

NASGW & NSSF—Compliance, Training, and Business Resources

Creator	Name	Function
NASGW	<a href="#">SCOPE CLX</a>	firearm sales information sharing for retailers
NASGW	<a href="#">SCOPE DLX</a>	firearm sales information sharing for distributors
NASGW	<a href="#">Vault</a>	data platform incorporating information from manufacturers, distributors, and retailers has up-to-date MAP, MTP, & MSRP
NSSF	<a href="#">SHOT University</a>	a la carte training courses to help retailers and ranges hone their management skills
NSSF	<a href="#">Operation Secure Store</a>	provides education to enhance operational security and aid in identifying potential risks
NSSF	<a href="#">RealSolutions</a>	promotes responsible gun ownership and keeping firearms out of the wrong hands
NSSF	<a href="#">Project ChildSafe</a>	distributes safety kits and locking devices
NSSF	<a href="#">Don't Lie for the Other Guy</a>	joint effort with the ATF to prevent straw purchases (when a legal gun owner purchases a gun on behalf of a prohibited person)
NSSF	<a href="#">FixNICS</a>	aims to improve the federal background check system
NSSF & NASGW	Firearms Industry Retail Development Program	offers compliance evaluations, legal support, and business growth tools

By providing this compliance and business education, the NASGW and NSSF directly contribute to the operational health and longevity of the retail segment, which in turn secures the sales pipeline for manufacturers and distributors.

The NSSF explicitly endorses and supports the multi-tiered distribution structure preferred by companies like Ruger. In July 2020, NSSF Senior Vice President & CMO Chris Dolnack stated,

“NSSF appreciates our participating member companies and we remain fully committed to supporting our industry’s two-step distribution business model and the key role that wholesale distributors play in helping manufacturers go to market.”

The NSSF itself has endeavored to provide crime-prevention resources, including a safe storage program in partnership with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) for this program.

These programs are overwhelmingly focused on retailers. NSSF President and CEO Joe Bartozzi said retailers become “the first line of defense against criminals and would-be criminals,” by following best practices to reduce theft and improve security. These programs acknowledge the issue while shifting the responsibility again further from manufacturers, despite the great potential they have to influence and improve retailing for crime prevention en masse.

### NSSF’s Failed Suicide Prevention Program

One program stands out from the rest for its inclusion of manufacturers—an April 2024 report highlights how NSSF partnered with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) to work with gun manufacturers and retailers, developing an “education toolkit consisting of posters, cards and displays for gun stores and shooting ranges.”

An NSSF point person claimed the “success” of this initiative is driven by the industry’s collective participation,, “Gun makers are enthusiastically supporting NSSF’s suicide-prevention efforts,” with companies like Ruger and Beretta participating.

The NSSF’s engagement in these social responsibility programs provides a way for the entire distribution channel to act in unison on complex public issues. It also gives them a unified, defensive public relations front, which benefits manufacturers by mitigating political and social risk, while giving distributors and retailers credible tools to engage their communities.

This endeavor is credible, as [guns are the most lethal method of suicides](#) by a significant margin and [suicide makes up the majority of annual gun deaths](#). It was not, however, successful as the NSSF claimed. An investigation by The Trace and Rolling Stone magazine revealed the NSSF’s claims regarding suicide prevention were misleading at best. According to the report, the partnership between NSSF and the AFSP “has failed to reduce gun suicide, an epidemic that has considerably worsened over time, rising from less than 23,000 deaths a year at the collaboration’s start to more than 27,000 nearly a decade later.”

## Background

### Smith & Wesson

**June 2025: Smith & Wesson CEO Mark Smith: “Demand for firearms appears to be normal for the summer based on feedback from our distributor and retail partners.”** “Looking now at the overall firearms market, we continue to see consumers generally being cautious due to macroeconomic factors pressuring discretionary spending. While new product and lower price point offerings are still performing well overall, conditions suggest headwinds will likely persist in the near term. Despite these challenges, we remain well positioned to succeed in this environment. Demand for firearms appears to be normal for the summer based on feedback from our distributor and retail partners. Importantly, while channel inventory fluctuations obviously affect our shorter term out the door shipments, our channel checks and internal data indicate we have continued to maintain our market share leadership position at the retail counter.” [Smith & Wesson, Q4 2025 Earnings Call, 06/18/25]

**December 2024: Smith: “So that -- the proclivity of the retailers and the channel partners to bring on inventory there, that's what they're looking for.”** “I think in this environment, I don't think the firearms market is unique in this for consumer goods, but it's all going to be about innovation and Smith & Wesson, I think we've proven over the last couple of years, we definitely are the leader in the marketplace on innovation and where that's going to continue to be a focus area of ours. So that -- the proclivity of the retailers and the channel partners to bring on inventory there, that's what they're looking for.” [Smith & Wesson, Q2 2025 Earnings Call, 12/05/24]

**September 2024: Smith: “... feedback from our distributor and retail partners supports the view that our disciplined execution of our strategy continues to position Smith and Wesson at or near the top ...”** “It remains cyclical and reflects traditional seasonality throughout the year. While the current environment is more challenging than a few years ago, as we have seen many times before, during these market cycles, underlying consumer demand is above what we saw before the last surge as we now have more consumers who are participating in the category. Through all the ups and downs of the market over time, our leadership position in key categories has endured and feedback from our distributor and retail partners supports the view that our disciplined execution of our strategy continues to position Smith and Wesson at or near the top in the categories in which we compete.” [Smith & Wesson Q1 2026 Earnings Call, 09/04/25]

**June 2024: Smith: “And despite the outperformance in our out-the-door unit shipments into the channel, inventory levels during the period at our distributor and strategic retail partners remained healthy.”** “Breaking those Q4 sales numbers down a little further, for the sporting goods channel, our long gun unit shipments increased by over 14% versus the year-ago period and our handgun shipments were up almost 8%, while the overall market, as measured by NICS checks, was down 6% in long guns and down 7% in handguns. Innovation continued to be a key driver, with new products making up just under 30% of sales, led by the 1854 lever action rifle,

which I'll cover in some more detail in a moment. And despite the outperformance in our out-the-door unit shipments into the channel, inventory levels during the period at our distributor and strategic retail partners remained healthy." [Smith & Wesson, Q4 2024 Earnings Call, 06/20/24]

**March 2024: Smith: "Notably, our inventory levels during the quarter remained healthy with unit inventories at our distributor and strategic retail partners actually decreasing by about 12% throughout the quarter."** "As we've covered many times before, an important factor in comparing our shipments to NICS is fluctuating inventory levels at retailers and distributors. Notably, our inventory levels during the quarter remained healthy with unit inventories at our distributor and strategic retail partners actually decreasing by about 12% throughout the quarter. This indicates strong consumer demand and pull-through at the retail counter for Smith & Wesson products and reinforces our belief that we gained market share in the quarter." [Smith & Wesson Q3 2024 Earnings Call, 03/07/24]

**September 2023: Smith: "We continue to work closely with key retail partners to ensure the channel is clean and closely aligned with SKU level demand."** "I will note again that while monthly NICS trends moderated during the quarter, this is consistent with the normal seasonal pattern during the summer, which typically marks a low point for increasing as we move into the fall hunting season. And in spite of the higher shipments of our products into the channel during the quarter, distributor inventories remained steady during a period which traditionally marks an inventory build due to slower retail and stock up for the busy fall season. And for context, our channel inventories are down over 35% versus this time a year ago. Again, this reflects the strong momentum we are seeing across our newest products and the success of a number of targeted promotional programs. We continue to work closely with key retail partners to ensure the channel is clean and closely aligned with SKU level demand." [Smith & Wesson Q1 2024 Earnings Call, 09/07/23]

**March 2023: Smith: "... we do take a very targeted and long-range approach to promotional activity aimed at maintaining market share and working with our retail and distributor partners to help them optimize sales, profitability, and inventory levels ..."** "However, as I mentioned earlier, we do take a very targeted and long-range approach to promotional activity aimed at maintaining market share and working with our retail and distributor partners to help them optimize sales, profitability, and inventory levels across their full assortment of Smith & Wesson products. Importantly, our strong balance sheet and low fixed-cost base allows us to remain disciplined in maintaining our brand positioning and profitability gains as we consider promotions." [Smith & Wesson, Q3 2023 earnings Call, 03/10/23]

**March 2021: Smith: "Our sales team has been meeting with retailers, ensuring their needs are met during these busy times ... and even occasionally stepping behind the counter, to help our retail partners manage the heavy influx of new consumers at their stores."** "Our sales team has been meeting with retailers, ensuring their needs are met during these busy times, safely, leading classes with consumers to ensure that beginners and experts alike are

increasing their knowledge and skill and even occasionally stepping behind the counter, to help our retail partners manage the heavy influx of new consumers at their stores.” [Smith & Wesson Q3 2021 Earnings Call, 03/04/21]

**December 2020: Dena McPherson: “So as consumers potentially slow down in the future, at some point, we’ll have the opportunity to see the inventory as it moves through the channel and work with the distributors and retailers.”** “DEANA L. MCPHERSON: James, just one other point. If you’re thinking about the way that the marketplace reacted after the 2016 election, that was where inventory was in the channel and consumers stopped buying. In this case, there’s no inventory in the channel and consumers are still buying. So as consumers potentially slow down in the future, at some point, we’ll have the opportunity to see the inventory as it moves through the channel and work with the distributors and retailers. So it should be a softer slowdown, not like it was in ‘16. This is a very different environment.” [Smith & Wesson Q2 2021 Earnings Call, 12/03/20]

**December 2015: James Debney: “And what helps us in that thinking as well, is that as you think about our shipments and a large percentage of those shipments go into our wholesaler partners’ warehouse.”**

“JAMES DEBNEY: Okay. Going back to the first part, so is our performance in terms of our shipments into the channel relative to NICS an indication of share gain? I would say it’s a good indicator of share gain, and we would believe that we did take share. And what helps us in that thinking as well, is that as you think about our shipments and a large percentage of those shipments go into our wholesaler partners’ warehouse. But we didn’t increase inventory in those wholesaler warehouses, we actually decreased inventory because their sell-through to independent retailers was very strong. So it’s not quite all the pieces of the puzzle that you need, but it’s certainly a strong indicator that we took share. By how much, we need to do more analysis. We do our own third-party monthly analytics, and we rely largely on that analytical process, samples at a number of retailers, so statistically relevant in terms of the sample size which is obviously what you need for meaningful results. And that’s what we use as a metric of our success. And then in terms of the second part, was about inventory, and yes, we’re below our eight week threshold. Are we comfortable with that? I would say, yes, but it’s something that we closely monitor. As I said earlier in the prepared remarks, or Jeff said, we prepared ourselves with inventory by building inventory internally as well. So we’re ready for this busy season that we find ourselves in. And by busy, I’m saying that it’s busy as demonstrated by the NICS checks that we saw on Black Friday. So yes, I’m comfortable where we are in inventory. I think we’re in a good position to continue to we believe achieve our goal of share gain overall in firearms.” [Smith & Wesson Q2 2016 Earnings Call, 12/08/15]

**June 2015: Debney: “As always, we work closely with our wholesaler partners to ensure their inventory levels are appropriate for the current period.”** “Distributor inventory of our products declined in the quarter by about 6,000 units to 112,000 units at the end of Q4, which was well below our target threshold of eight weeks of sales cover. Since then, distributor units have increased to above eight weeks of sales cover, which is to be expected since inventories need to

increase in preparation for the busy season of consumer activity that typically commences in September. As always, we work closely with our wholesaler partners to ensure their inventory levels are appropriate for the current period.” [Smith & Wesson Q4 2015 Earnings Call, 06/18/15]

**December 2014: Debney: “We will very actively engage with our distributors and retailers at this year’s shows, as well as our major retailers, to ensure that their inventories fully represent our products.”** “In fact, we would not be surprised to experience some market share loss in the third quarter, as retailers continue to promote and heavily discount their over-inventoried products. We intend to combat this situation and regain in Q4 any share points we may have forfeited in Q3. Gaining market share is core to our strategy, and we are absolutely not willing to yield our leadership position. Therefore, we have planned several aggressive promotions for our coming show season designed to defend and grow our market share in this competitive environment, and here I am referencing the show season in our industry which runs January through February. During that time, distributors and buying groups host shows for their firearms retailers. These are order-writing shows that kick off the upcoming calendar year, and this is where we intend to have a major impact. We will very actively engage with our distributors and retailers at this year’s shows, as well as our major retailers, to ensure that their inventories fully represent our products.” [Smith & Wesson Q2 2015 Earnings Call, 12/04/14]

**December 2014: Debney: “So we meet directly with all our distributor partners. You get a sense for what they’re seeing, versus what we’re presenting, but you get no detail, quite rightly.”** “SCOTT HAMANN: Okay, understood. And then, maybe a question around the distributor shows coming up. Obviously, a lot of manufacturers have inventory out there, and I’m sure a lot of people are going to have a plan to go aggressive into these dealer shows. Do you have some kind of visibility, or have early discussions with some of the distributors, that you get the sense that you’re going to have a pretty good order book coming out of the distributor shows? JAMES DEBNEY: No, not really. Not to that level of detail. Obviously, we have November meetings with them, at what’s called NASTW [NASGW], so where manufacturers present their show specials for the up and coming season, so we participated there. I was there myself. So we meet directly with all our distributor partners. You get a sense for what they’re seeing, versus what we’re presenting, but you get no detail, quite rightly.” [Smith & Wesson Q2 2015 Earnings Call, 12/04/14]

**December 2013: Debney: “What we do do in terms of inventory at retail is obviously monitor bigger boxes so we get a very good feel there with the big boxes. And we do sample the independents as well. And that helps us a lot in terms of understanding what’s happening at retail with regard to foot traffic and sales and where their inventory is”** “CHRIS KRUEGER, ANALYST, LAKE STREET CAPITAL MARKETS: Following up on the last question as far as guidance, just simply looking at your revenue outlook, has your ability to work with your retailers and distributors and to forecast your sales, have you found ways to improve that? I know you’re about halfway through the quarter and you have a pretty good sense of what they’re low on and what you definitely can ship out in the next couple of months rollout? And on that same note, are retailers -- when things all kind of normalize so to speak, do they intend to carry higher levels of inventory going forward than they maybe did a couple years ago just to be ready for the next leg

up? JAMES DEBNEY: In terms of the inventory, I would say there's overall I'm talking -- I'm not just talking about Smith & Wesson here of all the collectors, manufactures, or brands I would say that most retailers are in a very healthy situation and intend to maintain it on the whole I would say. Obviously you're going to have some that are a little heavy on inventory compared to some others and they may look to reduce that over time. But when you're dealing with a customer base that is in the thousands, it's difficult obviously to really understand how each one of those is going to operate their business. What we do do in terms of inventory at retail is obviously monitor bigger boxes so we get a very good feel there with the big boxes. And we do sample the independents as well. And that helps us a lot in terms of understanding what's happening at retail with regard to foot traffic and sales and where their inventory is and what they may be shorter than what they may be heavier on." [Smith & Wesson Q2 2014 Earnings Call, 12/10/13]

**December 2012: Debney "... we will be with our distributor partners at their dealer shows, where we will be facilitating the order intake process ..."** "REED ANDERSON: That is helpful, thank you. One last one, on the backlog, you gave good color, and I think that makes a lot of sense. But essentially, I guess the message is that you are starting to see some normalization, if you will, from your customers. They understand, now, you can deliver a little bit better, scheduling is there, maybe their visibility is better, so we are going to kind of see that normalize. I guess the question is, still though, backlog typically is going to bottom in the third quarter and peak in the fourth quarter, any reason to think that relationship does not still hold? JAMES DEBNEY: I don't really see any reasons, but it really is speculation. Once backlog gets to such a high level, it is really difficult to predict where it will go next. I have had many conversations with our distribution partners, and they openly say -- I don't need to order any more, do I? What's the point of ordering any more, I have a significant amount on order already. So, we closely monitor that. We work with them very, very closely, look at the mix that they have on order to make sure that they are well set for future shipments. Going back to what you are saying, I don't know where it will go, but I will say is we are entering show season. We will be at SHOT launching new products, we will be with our distributor partners at their dealer shows, where we will be facilitating the order intake process with the dealers to the distributor, so there will be a lot of activity around incoming orders, I have no doubt about that. How that will translate to our backlog number, I really do not know yet. It is a wait and see." [Smith & Wesson Q2 2013 Earnings Call, 12/06/12]

Ruger

**November 2023: Killoy: "We had some very good meetings with all of our wholesale distributors out of the NASGW show in Columbus. Great meetings, talked about confidentially with new products we have in the works ..."** "MARK ERIC SMITH: Okay. And the last one for me. Have you seen -- as you talk to your retailers, but really distributor partners, any shift in demand, especially as we think about the last 30 days, we're still kind of waiting on the NICS data, but any updates from your point of view on demand? CHRISTOPHER J. KILLOY: We had some very good meetings with all of our wholesale distributors out of the NASGW show in Columbus. Great meetings, talked about confidentially with new products we have in the works with them that they're very excited about. We also asked the exact same question. Have you

seen an uptick or a change in demand in the last couple of weeks? And certainly, they saw some movement, particularly in the ammunition category. But when it came to the firearms side, there's a little bit of movement, but most of it seemed to be focused on products that we don't make, which included very low-priced MSR rifles. And so most of what we heard was it hadn't really impacted the primary categories that Ruger operates in. May in the future, it remains to be seen. I think it was probably -- it helped move some inventory out at retail level, and that generated some cash, I think, for retailers to perhaps fill in some holes in (inaudible) inventory, which we heard from our wholesale customers. So I think it had a positive effect, but not like we saw say early 2020, the beginning of COVID and things like that. Nothing along those magnitudes." [Ruger Q3 2023 Earnings Call, 11/02/23]

**November 2023: Killoy: "[T]he NASGW show was a good meeting. We typically ... have our whole sales force. We spend time with every single one of our wholesale partners ... very candid conversations."** "ROMMEL TOLENTINO DIONISIO, HEAD OF CONSUMER PRODUCTS AND SPECIAL SITUATIONS, AEGIS CAPITAL CORPORATION, RESEARCH DIVISION: Chris, given the next time we'll chat will be in a few months after a short (inaudible). I wonder if you could just preview the environment going into this critical period of the year where you're going to have distributor meetings and trace -- launching new products. Could you just talk about the overall receptivity that you think you'll be seeing here over the next few months with regards taking on new products and inventories and just sort of in broad picture terms? CHRISTOPHER J. KILLOY: Thanks, Rommel. The -- like I mentioned, the NASGW show was a good meeting. We typically -- we have Tom and I are there. We have our whole sales force. We spend time with every single one of our wholesale partners, and there are some great folks that we deal with, very candid conversations. And one of the things we recognize this is a very -- remains a very promotionally driven marketplace. So that's one of the things we're asking our distributors to see what's working, what's not. We also gave us the opportunity to under an NDA to go through some of the new products that are in the works. And the reception was great for some of the things that are coming down the pipe. Now of course, we never predict exactly when those new products are going to launch. But we've got some great things in the works. Our distributors were pleased to see that. They remain a little cautious in terms of their buying patterns just because they see retailers being cautious and they're watching retailers and the credit situation at retail very closely. So I think as we've seen credit tighten up a little bit for some of those retailers as interest rates have risen, availability to credit may have tightened up a little bit. It's just something that they watch very closely. And that's why even though we sell exclusively to those wholesale distributors, we stay very much in sync with them. Tom talks to their CFOs just to keep a pulse on what's going on with the credit to retail levels. So I think most retailers have been pretty good as far as managing the downturn in demand. There may be a few that have struggled, but for the most part, we heard pretty positive reports on accounts receivables on the part of our distributors. And I think we're in decent shape going into the shot show. I expect there'll be other new products that we'll be competing with. But so far, everything we've done has been well received. And I think our distributors are looking for us to help drive business in 2024 with additional new products and maintain our commitment to the 2-step distribution model." [Ruger Q3 2023 Earnings Call, 11/02/23]

**November 2018: Killoy: “Wholesalers continue to be very important for us. Unlike some of our competitors, when it comes to those special makeups, we work with our wholesalers in good times and in bad.”** “BRIAN RAFN: Yes, got you. In the quarter, the level of kind of your wholesale dealer, your exclusive specials, how important were those in the quarter? CHRIS KILLOY: Well, they continue to be very important for us. Unlike some of our competitors, when it comes to those special makeups, we work with our wholesalers in good times and in bad. So when things slow down, we tend to do very well our wholesalers with some of those particular models that an individual distributor might buy just for themselves. Or one of the collective buying groups like TALO would buy a series of products from us. In fact, our initial offerings on the custom shop are going to go through the TALO distributors and they have been very supportive of that initiative as well.” [Ruger Q3 2018 Earnings Call, 11/01/18]

**March 2018: In a letter to shareholders, Ruger CEO Christopher J. Killoy and Chairman C. Michael Jacobi outlined company policies in several areas, including product distribution.** “We recently have been approached by some shareholders seeking to meet with the Board of Directors and/or management team to discuss Company business. We welcome the opportunity to demonstrate our long and proven track record of promoting the safe and responsible ownership and use of firearms, commitment to regulatory compliance, and history of innovation. Bear in mind that we are a for-profit, commercial enterprise whose fundamental priority is the financial betterment of our shareholders. We also are publicly traded and must strictly follow SEC Regulation FD, which mandates that we disclose material information to all investors at the same time. We therefore have prepared this letter with these goals in mind. While we do not wish to minimize the impact that the criminal misuse of firearms has had on many Americans, the purpose of this letter is to plainly and directly address the concerns raised by our shareholders.” [Ruger Letter to Shareholders, [03/12/18](#)]

- **Killoy and Jacobi: “We do not sell firearms directly to retailers or consumers. Rather, we utilize a two-tier distribution model and primarily sell to a limited number of independent, federally licensed wholesale distributors of firearms, some of whom we have worked with for decades.”** “We do not sell firearms directly to retailers or consumers. Rather, we utilize a two-tier distribution model and primarily sell to a limited number of independent, federally licensed wholesale distributors of firearms, some of whom we have worked with for decades. We also make modest sales to independent, federally licensed law enforcement distributors and international distributors in other countries, but these sales represent a relatively small portion of our business.” [Ruger Letter to Shareholders, [03/12/18](#)]
- **Killoy and Jacobi: “Our sales policy requires the independent, federally licensed wholesale distributors of our products to sell only to federally licensed firearms retailers: (i) having a regular place of business; (ii) with scheduled business hours on premises; (iii) where such business use is permitted by law; and (iv) where products are displayed to the shooting public.”** “Our sales policy requires the independent,

federally licensed wholesale distributors of our products to sell only to federally licensed firearms retailers: (i) having a regular place of business; (ii) with scheduled business hours on premises; (iii) where such business use is permitted by law; and (iv) where products are displayed to the shooting public. As these retailers must have a Federal Firearms License ('FFL'), they are obligated to perform all required background checks and may not sell to prohibited persons." [Ruger Letter to Shareholders, [03/12/18](#)]

- **Killoy and Jacobi: "Before a new Ruger firearm can legally reach a domestic consumer, three federally regulated transactions are typically required."** "Before a new Ruger firearm can legally reach a domestic consumer, three federally regulated transactions are typically required (manufacturer to distributor, distributor to retailer, and retailer to consumer). These requirements are the baseline, as many states and local governments have additional regulations (waiting periods, additional licensure requirements, etc.) that must be satisfied before a retailer can transfer a firearm to a consumer. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives ('ATF') has regulatory authority over federally licensed retailers to ensure that firearm transactions are conducted in accordance with all applicable laws." [Ruger Letter to Shareholders, [03/12/18](#)]
- **Killoy and Jacobi: "We have long supported efforts to better enforce existing laws. In particular, we support FixNICS, a program launched by the NSSF"** "We have long supported efforts to better enforce existing laws. In particular, we support FixNICS, a program launched by the NSSF in 2013 to encourage states to report to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (commonly referred to as 'NICS') all records that establish someone is prohibited from owning a firearm under current law. To date, 16 states have adopted changes advocated by the FixNICS initiative and the number of disqualifying mental health records submitted to NICS has increased by 170% to nearly 4.5 million, up from about 1.7 million in December 2012. The NSSF continues to work with and encourage a number of states to submit appropriate records to NICS so that prohibited transactions can be identified and prevented. Through our participation in the NSSF, we also support Project ChildSafe, which has distributed over 37 million gun locks and safety kits to over 15,000 cities nationwide, making it one of the most comprehensive firearm safety education programs in the United States. As another example, we are fully supportive of the Don't Lie for the Other Guy educational program, which is a joint effort by the ATF and the NSSF, the goal being to assist firearm retailers in the detection and deterrence of 'straw purchases.' These are only a few of the ongoing industry initiatives, and information about them and other industry efforts can be found on the NSSF website at [NSSF.org](#). As a result of these efforts, the firearm accident rate has dropped dramatically and now is at the lowest level since 1903, when record keeping began. According to the National Safety Council's 'Injury Facts – 2017 Edition,' there was a 17% decrease in accidents involving firearms from 2014 to 2015, and firearms-related fatalities account for three-tenths of one percent of accidental deaths from all listed causes. This decrease was the largest percentage decline in any category and occurred during a year of near-record firearms sales." [Ruger Letter to Shareholders, [03/12/18](#)]

**August 2017: Asked about his “visibility” into retail inventory levels, Killoy said “retailers have been pretty savvy in managing their inventory over the last couple of months” and “anecdotally, we think their inventory levels are down from where there were maybe coming out of the election cycle.”** “JONATHAN MUELLER: Okay. And then maybe any color or thoughts on actual -- the retail inventory levels of Ruger inventory? Any visibility or what your distributors are telling you there? CHRISTOPHER J. KILLOY: Well, I think one thing I’d say is retailers have been pretty savvy in managing their inventory over the last couple of months. They’ve -- the good ones had taken advantage of the buying opportunities that are there from both manufacturers and distributors, in some cases. And anecdotally, we think their inventory levels are down from where there were maybe coming out of the election cycle. They’ve managed that well. They’re waiting for buying opportunities. They know -- as they see some of these deals that certain manufacturers are putting out there, they’ve gotten to the point where rather than invest in inventory, they’re going to stay on the sidelines and see how good the deal gets. They also used to -- remember, our retailers also have been through this before. They see the normal seasonality in the summer months. And so again, as I said before, this year in particular, unlike certainly last year, that seasonality kicked in, in large measure, whereas last year we had -- we went through Q2 right into Q3 with some really atypical strength in the marketplace.” [Ruger Q2 2017 Earnings Call, 08/03/17]

**November 2016: Killoy: “Since we only work with wholesale distributors, we don’t sell to buying groups or the big-box stores direct, so they understand that are [sic] inventory is something that they need to stock.”** “CHRIS KILLOY: Brian, we just returned last week from the meetings we hold annually with our distributors at the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers Expo. We were in Kansas City for the week, and we had meetings with all of our key customers at the wholesale level. All of them understand the need to maintain inventory. As a reminder, Ruger is one of the very few -- [there’s truly] two step in terms of manufacturers within our channel. Since we only work with wholesale distributors, we don’t sell to buying groups or the big-box stores direct, so they understand that are inventory is something that they need to stock. They have, by and large, stepped up in the six to eight turns, understanding and execution, so we were pretty pleased with their performance. Just as an aside, at the Expo last week, we received, I think for the 10th year in a row, the Manufacturer of the Year from our wholesalers and also the Innovator of the Year award. Also Mike Fifer earned the Chairman’s Award with some personal recognition, which was also nice to see” [Ruger Q3 2016 Earnings Call, 11/02/16]

NSSF

**November 2025: A former employee of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention told The Trace and Rolling Stone that NSSF’s claims regarding suicide prevention efforts were misleading.** “The gun industry’s trade group, the National Shooting Sports Foundation, claimed on its website in 2024 that through its partnership with the country’s leading suicide prevention organization, ‘more than 800,000’ brochures about preventing gun suicide had been ‘distributed.’ The statistic was presented as evidence of success eight years after the

collaboration was announced, to public acclaim, in 2016. But it wasn't clear who those brochures had been distributed to, and whether they had actually reached their intended audience: gun owners and their loved ones. Sarah Maggied, a former employee of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, tells The Trace and Rolling Stone that the number is at best wildly misleading." [Rolling Stone, [11/06/25](#)]

**Rolling Stone and The Trace: "Hailed as a breakthrough in nonpartisan public health coordination, the NSSF-AFSP partnership has presented their co-branded brochures as the linchpin of their collaboration. ... But the partnership has failed to reduce gun suicide, an epidemic that has considerably worsened over time, rising from less than 23,000 deaths a year at the collaboration's start to more than 27,000 nearly a decade later."** "Hailed as a breakthrough in nonpartisan public health coordination, the NSSF-AFSP partnership has presented their co-branded brochures as the linchpin of their collaboration. The pamphlets, comprising six pages of text, outline warning signs, provide information about helplines, and note that firearms are used in half of all suicides. They also include information about secure gun storage and advise readers to directly ask a person exhibiting concerning behaviors if they're considering suicide. But the partnership has failed to reduce gun suicide, an epidemic that has considerably worsened over time, rising from less than 23,000 deaths a year at the collaboration's start to more than 27,000 nearly a decade later. Born out of an AFSP initiative called Project 2025, a program the group created in 2015 to achieve the 'bold goal' of lowering the nation's suicide rate 20 percent in 10 years, the partnership was used to build goodwill among policymakers and the public, as well as raise money. Over the ensuing decade, a recent investigation by The Trace and Rolling Stone revealed, the partnership has been undermined in essential ways by the prioritization of messaging and the interests of the gun industry. The partnership still exists, but AFSP secretly shuttered Project 2025 some 18 months early, eliminating the bold goal's deadline." [Rolling Stone, [11/06/25](#)]

**April 2024: NSSF Senior VP Lawrence Keane: "ATF knows these retailers are their allies and are on the front lines combatting the diversion of guns into the illegal black market."** "The following information was released by the office of South Carolina Rep. Jeff Duncan: Following the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) releasing a list of federally licensed firearms dealers (FFLs) to gun control groups and the media in violation of the Tiahrt Amendment, Congressman Duncan led the House in exerting oversight on the rogue ATF. ... Duncan and 31 cosigners demand answers from the ATF regarding their illegal disclosure of information, how they will mitigate reputational harm for FFLs impacted, and how the ATF will ensure they do not violate the Tiahrt Amendment in the future. 'ATF's release of protected trace data to Brady United and the media in clear violation of federal law enabled an entirely predictable 'name-and-shame' media campaign of misleading headlines smearing the reputation of law-abiding firearm retailers by suggesting they are engaged in illegal sales,' said Lawrence G. Keane, NSSF Senior Vice President and General Counsel. 'ATF knows these retailers are their allies and are on the front lines combatting the diversion of guns into the illegal black market. ATF's unlawful release of this data to a gun control group damaged its relationship with the industry. It lends credence to the notion that the Biden administration is weaponizing the whole of

government against our industry to score cheap political points. The ATF officials who authorized this unlawful act must be held accountable.” [States News Service, 04/11/24]

**April 2024: NSSF partnered with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention to work with gun manufacturers and retailers to educate gun owners.** “In an effort to reduce these grim statistics, NSSF partnered with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), the nation’s largest suicide-prevention organization, to work with gun manufacturers, retailers, ranges and individuals to educate gun owners and their families. ‘Our role is that of the ‘trusted messenger,’” explained Bill Brassard, NSSF’s point person for the Suicide Prevention Program. ‘We recognized the high percentage of gun deaths by suicide, but it took a while to find the right group to partner with. At the same time, AFSP was looking for a partner who could carry its message to gun owners.’ The direct result of the NSSF/ AFSP partnership was the development of an education toolkit consisting of posters, cards and displays for gun stores and shooting ranges, as well as a take-home brochure for customers, encouraging people to ‘Have a Brave Conversation.’” [Handguns, 04/01/24]

- **In 2023, NSSF distributed about 2,600 suicide-prevention toolkits to retailers, law enforcement agencies and others.** “Demand for these materials is high. Last year, about 2,600 toolkits were shipped to retailers, law enforcement agencies and others. In 2023, NSSF followed up these efforts by launching a new website, BraveConversation.org, a suicide-prevention educational tool.”[Handguns, 04/01/24]
- **“We use the NSSF materials, and they are very helpful,” said Jacquelyn Clark, owner of Bristlecone Shooting Center in Lakewood, Colorado.** ““We use the NSSF materials, and they are very helpful,’ said Jacquelyn Clark, owner of Bristlecone Shooting Center in Lakewood, Colorado. ‘They are two-pronged. There are materials that help us train staff on what to look for and how to respond to a person in crisis, and there are customer-facing materials, including a flyer we make available when people sign in to shoot. NSSF is a trusted resource within the firearms community, and when the message comes from someone they trust, people are open to hearing it.’” [Handguns, 04/01/24]
- **Participating companies included Companies like Ruger, Beretta, SIG, Bass Pro Shops, Sportsman’s Warehouse and GunBroker.** “Gun makers are enthusiastically supporting NSSF’s suicide-prevention efforts, according to Brassard. Several are using the messaging and graphics supplied by NSSF in their websites, e-newsletters and social media to broaden the reach of these initiatives. NSSF and VA have co-hosted an annual suicide prevention roundtable for the gun industry for the past two years. ‘Companies like Ruger, Beretta, SIG, Bass Pro Shops, Sportsman’s Warehouse and GunBroker all came to learn more about suicide prevention,’ Brassard said. ‘The industry has been incredibly supportive.’”[Handguns, 04/01/24]

**March 2023: NSSF: “New ATF Data on FFL burglaries, robberies, and the number of stolen guns confirms the firearm industry’s Operation Secure Store makes communities safer.”**

“New ATF Data on FFL burglaries, robberies, and the number of stolen guns confirms the firearm industry’s Operation Secure Store makes communities safer. Keeping firearms out of the hands of criminals takes a monumental effort. Partnerships between neighborhood gun store retailers, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) are critical and a multifaceted endeavor. The firearm industry’s Operation Secure Store (OSS) is a pillar partnership with ATF and DOJ to provide brick-and-mortar firearm retailers with educational resources and services to better secure their inventory and reduce robberies and burglaries. New data released by ATF confirms once again OSS makes communities safer. The number of FFL burglaries and robberies and the number of stolen firearms are all lower than they were last year. This is great news and the data continues a downward trend since 2017.” [NSSF Press Release, [03/17/23](#)]

- **NSSF President and CEO Joe Bartozzi: “Retailers are the first line of defense against criminals and would-be criminals.”** “Retailers are the first line of defense against criminals and would-be criminals,’ said NSSF President and CEO Joe Bartozzi in testimony to the Connecticut state legislature’s Joint Judiciary Committee. He stated it to members of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee last year, too. When neighborhood firearm retailers use industry tools and resources through OSS to improve their inventory security, they are backstopping against possible criminal behavior that could endanger their communities. No one wants that. The new ATF data, from the report covering 2017 through 2022, shows Federal Firearm Licensees (FFLs) are taking the right steps against would-be criminals. The number of FFL burglaries dropped each year, with the exception of the COVID pandemic year of 2020. In 2017, there were 577 FFL burglaries. In 2018, that figure dropped to 427 and again down to 343 in 2019. And, ATF told NSSF if the months of May and the immediate aftermath of the George Floyd incident in 2020 were exempted from the statistics, it would show a decline over 2019. Last year, the most current year for data, there were only 277 FFL burglaries. For FFL robberies, the high mark of 36 in 2018 has gone down each year, including 2020, to just 21 in 2021.” [NSSF Press Release, [03/17/23](#)]
- **NSSF’s “Operation Secure Store (OSS) is a multifaceted initiative providing Federal Firearms Licensees (FFLs) with education on solutions and services that enhance operational security and aid in identifying potential risks, protecting interests and limiting the disruption of operations.”** Operation Secure Store (OSS) is a multifaceted initiative providing Federal Firearms Licensees (FFLs) with education on solutions and services that enhance operational security and aid in identifying potential risks, protecting interests and limiting the disruption of operations. Central to the OSS initiative is the National Shooting Sports Foundation’s® (NSSF’s®) cooperative partnership with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) in working to deter and prevent thefts from FFLs, leveraging resources to enhance public safety and reducing the impact to communities affected by these crimes. The OSS program focuses on five areas: ‘Education and Awareness,’ ‘Assessment and Risk Analysis,’ ‘Planning and Strategy,’ ‘Engagement’ and ‘Response.’ This approach addresses many of the most common security concerns FFLs

have, with a focus on providing a wide array of solutions that mitigate risk and protect these businesses.” [Operation Secure Store, accessed [11/23/25](#)]

**February 2023: Keane: “NSSF ... is committed to implementing RealSolutions, an umbrella program ‘to promote responsible actions among legal gun owners, to help prevent accidents, and to help keep guns out of the wrong hands.’”** “NSSF, the firearm industry trade association, is committed to implementing RealSolutions, an umbrella program ‘to promote responsible actions among legal gun owners, to help prevent accidents, and to help keep guns out of the wrong hands.’ One such campaign is the NSSF–piloted Project ChildSafe, which partners with 15,000 law enforcement agencies in all 50 states and five U.S. territories. Many of the MAIG chairmen and women love to boast that their administrations work closely with local and federal law enforcement to reduce crimes with firearms—which is exactly what NSSF has done across the country for more than 20 years. Project ChildSafe has distributed over 40 million gun safety kits, including locking devices, over the last two decades. In part due to NSSF’s efforts on this landmark safety program, fatal firearm accidents declined by 38 percent from 2005 to 2015, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). And for decades, manufacturers have been voluntarily providing a free locking device with each new firearm that leaves their factory. In addition to Project ChildSafe, NSSF helps the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) educate retailers to be better able to detect ‘straw purchases’ (Don’t Lie for the Other Guy), deters and prevents firearm theft from store locations (Operation Secure Store), and partners with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to save lives every day. Moreover, NSSF spearheaded the legislative campaign to improve the FBI’s National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), which culminated with the Fix NICS Act of 2017, which was named after NSSF’s state–focused FixNICS campaign.” [Lawrence G. Keane Op–Ed, Newsweek, 02/10/23]

**July 2020: NSSF Senior Vice President & CMO Chris Dolnack: “We’re pleased to once again support our partners at NASGW.”** “The National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW), the association representing shooting sports wholesalers, manufacturers and their trade partners, is pleased to announce that National Shooting Sports Foundation will be sponsoring the NASGW Expo Appreciation Dinner on October 20th in Grapevine, TX. ‘The NASGW Annual Appreciation Dinner kicks off our Annual Expo, a crucial meeting for wholesaler buyers and manufacturers to prepare for the upcoming year,’ said NASGW President, Kenyon Gleason. During this event we also recognize excellence within the shooting sports industry through the NASGW Appreciation Awards and the NASGW–POMA Caliber Awards. This industry event would not be possible without the help and support of our sponsors. NSSF continues to be a great partner and we appreciate their commitment to our organization and the wholesalers, manufacturers, vendors, and media members that make up our membership.’ ‘We’re pleased to once again support our partners at NASGW,’ said Chris Dolnack, NSSF Senior Vice President & CMO. ‘NSSF appreciates our participating member companies and we remain fully committed to supporting our industry’s two–step distribution business model and the key role that wholesale distributors play in helping manufacturers go to market.’” [NASGW Press Release via Contify Retail News, 07/14/20]

**January 2020: NSSF's annual SHOT University educational forum featured sessions on "ATF Inspections and NFA Compliance" and "Retail Showroom Space--Profit Maker or Profit Sinker."** "The 2020 SHOT University™, the annual educational forum that kicks off every SHOT Show(R) the Monday before the show opens, was deemed a tremendous success by attendees and NSSF organizers alike. The National Shooting Sports Foundation(R) (NSSF(R)), the trade association for the firearms industry, owns and operates the SHOT Show. This year's format represented a significant departure from SHOT Universities of years past. Building on the positive response to a series of all-hands afternoon break-out sessions introduced at last year's University, NSSF reorganized the all-day event to expand that experience. NSSF President and CEO Joe Bartozzi kicked off the day with a look at what's in store in 2020 for the crowd of nearly 250 retailers and range owners attending SHOT University, followed by an impactful keynote address on new-shooter recruitment and NSSF's +ONE MovementSM presented by champion shooter, U.S. Army veteran and author Julie Golob. Attendees then had the opportunity to network with the companies and vendors sponsoring the day's learning experience before heading to their choice of four learning tracks--Membership Training & Events, Compliance, Customer Experience and Ecommerce & Social Media. Those learning tracks had undergone a makeover, shifting from four and five sessions each taking place throughout the day to two morning-only sessions that presented a more detailed look at their headlining topics. Those topics ranged from 'Engaging Range Technologies' and 'ATF Inspections and NFA Compliance' to 'Retail Showroom Space--Profit Maker or Profit Sinker' and an 'Instagram Masterclass.' After the mid-day networking lunch hour, attendees took part in three interactive, all-hands seminars that examined issues affecting FFL retailers and firearms range operators across the country. Those seminars included: a discussion of how to work effectively with the mainstream press in 'Media Training;' utilizing key components of Amazon's and Uber's wildly successful business models in 'The Convenience Revolution;' and SHOT Show favorite Maj Toure revealing how our industry can engage new audiences in 'The Business of Freedom.' The day concluded with a cocktail reception for sponsors and attendees." [NSSF Press Release, 01/23/20]

**February 2017: NSSF "partnered with Orchid Advisors, Epicor Software Corporation and the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW) to create a Firearms Industry Retail Development Program."** "The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) announces it has partnered with Orchid Advisors, Epicor Software Corporation and the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW) to create a Firearms Industry Retail Development Program. 'We're pleased to partner with Orchid, Epicor Software and NASGW to help ensure firearms retailers have the very best suite of compliance and business support services available,' said Chris Dolnack, NSSF Senior VP and CMO. 'The value of the Firearms Industry Retail Development Program offering is unrivaled.'" [Shooting Industry, 02/01/17]

- **Shooting Industry: "The Firearms Industry Retail Development Program will provide retailers who sell firearms and other NFA products with an expansive suite of proactive business, technology and regulatory services."** "The Firearms Industry Retail Development Program will provide retailers who sell firearms and other NFA products with

an expansive suite of proactive business, technology and regulatory services. The Program will be supported by the four organizations listed above. Features of this program include:

- \* Compliance Program Services: Onsite ATF/Import/NFA compliance evaluation, digital evaluation of electronic A&D books and access to online state firearms regulatory portal.
- \* On-Call Legal Services: A legal defense fund, an ATF/Import/NFA hotline, onsite inspection support and advisory services, provided by Orchid Advisors.
- \* Business Growth Tools: On-call business consulting, an onsite Process/Systems control evaluation and an annual online POS technology developments conference.
- \* A&D Books and Tools: Paper or electronic A&D software via the Epicor FFL Compliance Manager (designed by Orchid Advisors), Serial Number Inventory Software, Policies and Procedures and self-audit guides.
- \* Education: Enrollment in the online Firearms Compliance University, access to a suite of online business courses and discounted access to both SHOT Show University and the Firearms Industry Compliance Conference.

‘We’re delighted to see industry-leading organizations collaborate on this proactive retailer-focused growth initiative,’ said Jon Rydberg, CEO of Orchid Advisors. ‘Industry sales are strong but very dynamic and modernizing the manufacturer-distributor-retail supply chain will take focus in the coming years. The Firearms Industry Retail Development Program will help to improve efficiency and effectiveness through tools and enable retailers to focus on stocking shelves and selling products.’”

## Court Cases

**February 2022: Families of victims of the Sandy Hook shooting reached a \$73 million settlement of a lawsuit against gunmaker Remington over its marketing practices.** “The historic \$73 million settlement announced Tuesday between the families of the victims of the 2012 shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School and gunmaker Remington could spur more lawsuits against firearms manufacturers and prompt companies to tone down their marketing of lethal weapons, legal experts say. After seven years of litigation that included a key ruling from the Connecticut Supreme Court in favor of the families and Remington’s filing for bankruptcy, the settlement marks an end to a suit that challenged the marketing of the AR-15 rifle used in the shooting. The settlement amount is more than double what Remington offered to pay to settle in July. The families held out so they could obtain more internal documents and take more depositions, Josh Koskoff of Koskoff Koskoff & Bieder PC, an attorney representing the families, said in a Tuesday statement. Those documents will now see the light of day, according to Koskoff, and paint a picture of a company that changed its formerly sober approach to marketing guns into an aggressive campaign that pushed sales through product placements in video games after it was acquired by private equity firm Cerberus Capital Management LP in 2007. That marketing was aimed at a specific audience, Koskoff said at a press conference Tuesday: insecure young men. ‘Tap into their anxieties about masculinity, tap into their feelings of aggrievement or insecurity,’ Koskoff said. ‘Tell them that this weapon conveys power and masculinity.’” [Law360, 02/15/22]

**August 2021: Mexico filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts against Smith & Wesson and several other gun companies.** ‘Plaintiff Estados Unidos Mexicanos (the ‘Government’), a sovereign nation, brings this action to put an end to the massive damage that the Defendants cause by actively facilitating the unlawful trafficking of their guns to drug cartels and other criminals in Mexico. Almost all guns recovered at crime scenes in Mexico—70% to 90% of them—were trafficked from the U.S. The Defendants include the six U.S.-based manufacturers whose guns are most often recovered in Mexico—Smith & Wesson, Beretta, Century Arms, Colt, Glock, and Ruger. Another manufacturer defendant is Barrett, whose .50 caliber sniper rifle is a weapon of war prized by the drug cartels. The remaining defendant—Interstate Arms—is a Boston-area wholesaler through which all but one of the defendant manufacturers sell their guns for re-sale to gun dealers throughout the U.S.’ [U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, Estados Unidos Mexicanos v. Smith & Wesson Brands, Inc. et al, case No. 1:21-cv-11269-FDS, Complaint, 08/04/21]

**Mexico’s complaint cited previous testimony from a former gun industry trade association official, who said manufacturers and distributors choose ‘a see-no-evil, hear-no-evil, speak-no-evil approach’ to illegal activity by distributors and retailers.** ‘For example, a then-top gun industry trade association official, Robert Ricker, stated under oath that gun manufacturers and distributors have long known that their gun distribution system ‘encourages and rewards illegal activity by a few corrupt dealers and distributors,’ but they choose ‘a see-no-evil, hear-no-evil, speak-no-evil approach’ and ‘hide behind the fiction that as long as a retail dealer has a valid federal firearms license to sell guns, no attention to the dealer’s business practices is required by its suppliers.’ Declaration of Robert A. Ricker filed in People v. Arcadia Mach. & Tool, Inc., Judicial Council Coordination Proceedings No. 4095 (Cal. Super. Ct. Feb. 3, 2003) (‘Ricker Declaration’) ¶¶ 9, 11, 12’ [U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, Estados Unidos Mexicanos v. Smith & Wesson Brands, Inc. et al, case No. 1:21-cv-11269-FDS, Complaint, 08/04/21]

**Mexico argued that gun companies could make better use of ATF trace requests to ‘monitor and discipline their distribution systems.’** ‘After a gun is recovered at a crime scene, the ATF’s first step in tracing it is to contact the gun’s manufacturer. See ATF, Commerce in Firearms in the United States 20 (2000) (describing trace procedure). Defendants could use these trace requests to monitor and discipline their distribution systems. 94. In a March 17, 2000 settlement agreement with the U.S. government and various cities (the ‘2000 Agreement’), Defendant Smith & Wesson accepted an obligation to sell to only ‘authorized distributors and authorized dealers’ who abided by a code of conduct, including the requirement that the distributors and dealers store all trace requests and report them to Smith & Wesson. Under pressure from other industry players, Smith & Wesson later reneged on the 2000 Agreement. But its existence and terms—including the use of trace data to monitor and discipline the distribution system—help to define the duty that Defendants assumed when designing and marketing their guns.’ [U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, Estados Unidos Mexicanos v. Smith & Wesson Brands, Inc. et al, case No. 1:21-cv-11269-FDS, Complaint, 08/04/21]

**November 2021: Smith & Wesson and the other defendants filed a joint motion to dismiss Mexico's case.** [U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, Estados Unidos Mexicanos v. Smith & Wesson Brands, Inc. et al, case No. 1:21-cv-11269-FDS, Defendants' Joint Motion to Dismiss Plaintiff's Complaint, 11/22/21]

**Gun companies: 'None of these claims alleges that any defendant made any sale to any person that the defendant knew would commit a crime.'** 'None of these claims alleges that any defendant made any sale to any person that the defendant knew would commit a crime. Instead, the gravamen of the claims is that—despite complying with the panoply of federal, state, and local firearms laws in the United States—defendants were obligated to do more to prevent the cartels from harming the Mexican government.' [U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, Estados Unidos Mexicanos v. Smith & Wesson Brands, Inc. et al, case No. 1:21-cv-11269-FDS, Joint Memorandum of Law in Support of Defendants' Motions to Dismiss, 11/22/21]

**Gun companies: '[I]ndependent third-party actions 'break the chain of causation between' Mexico's asserted injuries and defendants' allegedly unlawful conduct.'** 'Fourth, the lack of fair traceability is especially clear because Mexico's alleged harms stem not only from the independent acts of the third parties illegally using guns, but also from the independent acts of 'numerous [other] third parties' who illegally purchase, resell, and ultimately smuggle those guns across the Mexican border. Wright, 468 U.S. at 757–59. For Article III purposes, all of these independent third-party actions 'break the chain of causation between' Mexico's asserted injuries and defendants' allegedly unlawful conduct. Id.' [U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, Estados Unidos Mexicanos v. Smith & Wesson Brands, Inc. et al, case No. 1:21-cv-11269-FDS, Joint Memorandum of Law in Support of Defendants' Motions to Dismiss, 11/22/21]

**Gun companies: 'There is no question that every manufacturer of dangerous products knows that end users may use those products unlawfully to harm others. But as the Supreme Court has held in many different contexts, 'foreseeability alone does not ensure the close connection that proximate cause requires.''** 'There is no question that every manufacturer of dangerous products knows that end users may use those products unlawfully to harm others. But as the Supreme Court has held in many different contexts, 'foreseeability alone does not ensure the close connection that proximate cause requires.' Bank of Am. Corp. v. City of Miami, 137 S. Ct. 1296, 1306 (2017); Hemi Grp., LLC v. City of New York, 559 U.S. 1, 12 (2010); see also Davis, 670 F.3d at 56 (applying Massachusetts law). This is especially true when the relevant harm results from intervening criminal acts, because the 'mere fact that misconduct on the part of another might be foreseen' does not 'place the responsibility upon the defendant.' PROSSER & KEETON ON THE LAW OF TORTS 305 (5th ed. 1984). After all, car companies know their cars will be used for reckless driving, knife companies know their knives will be used to hurt others, and beer companies know that minors drink, but none of this knowledge makes those companies liable for resulting harms.' [U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, Estados Unidos

Mexicanos v. Smith & Wesson Brands, Inc. et al, case No. 1:21-cv-11269-FDS, Joint Memorandum of Law in Support of Defendants' Motions to Dismiss, 11/22/21]

**Gun companies: '[T]he alleged causal chain is extraordinarily attenuated, consisting of multiple links that make the alleged injuries extremely remote from any of defendants' actions.'** 'Here, proximate cause is lacking for several reasons. First, the alleged causal chain is extraordinarily attenuated, consisting of multiple links that make the alleged injuries extremely remote from any of defendants' actions. Second, the links in the chain, by definition, involve intervening criminal acts by multiple third parties, creating several layers of superseding causation that breaks the chain of liability. Third, Mexico's alleged injuries are wholly derivative of third-party victims. And fourth, given the remote and diffuse harms alleged, apportioning damages and liability here would be impossible.' [U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, Estados Unidos Mexicanos v. Smith & Wesson Brands, Inc. et al, case No. 1:21-cv-11269-FDS, Joint Memorandum of Law in Support of Defendants' Motions to Dismiss, 11/22/21]

**Gun companies: 'Here, Mexico cannot establish proximate cause due to the 'sheer number' of steps in its theory of causation.'** 'Here, Mexico cannot establish proximate cause due to the 'sheer number' of steps in its theory of causation. Id. For the Mexican government to suffer harm: 1. Defendants had to sell firearms to independent federally licensed wholesale distributors. 2. Those distributors had to sell firearms to the separate independent federally licensed retail dealers. 3. Those federally licensed retail dealers had to sell firearms to nonlicensed straw buyers with illegal intentions. 4. Those buyers had to illegally sell those firearms to smugglers or themselves smuggle the firearms across the Mexican border (usually through a string of intermediaries). 5. Cartel members had to buy the firearms. 6. Cartel members had to use the firearms in violent attacks. 7. Those attacks had to injure people and property. 8. Mexico then had to sustain some derivative financial injury.' [U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, Estados Unidos Mexicanos v. Smith & Wesson Brands, Inc. et al, case No. 1:21-cv-11269-FDS, Joint Memorandum of Law in Support of Defendants' Motions to Dismiss, 11/22/21]

**Gun companies: 'To put it mildly, this causal chain is simply too 'long and torturous' to sustain liability.'** 'To put it mildly, this causal chain is simply too 'long and torturous' to sustain liability. City of Philadelphia v. Beretta U.S.A. Corp., 277 F.3d 415, 423 (3d Cir. 2002). The 'causal theory' here 'is far more attenuated' than others that courts have 'rejected' elsewhere. See Hemi, 559 U.S. at 9' [U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, Estados Unidos Mexicanos v. Smith & Wesson Brands, Inc. et al, case No. 1:21-cv-11269-FDS, Joint Memorandum of Law in Support of Defendants' Motions to Dismiss, 11/22/21]

**June 2025: The Supreme Court dismissed the case on a 9-0 vote.** 'Held: Because Mexico's complaint does not plausibly allege that the defendant gun manufacturers aided and abetted gun dealers' unlawful sales of firearms to Mexican traffickers, PLCAA bars the lawsuit.' [U.S. Supreme Court, Estados Unidos Mexicanos v. Smith & Wesson Brands, Inc. et al, No. 23-1141, Slip Opinion, [06/05/25](#)]

**2004: Associated Press: 'A South Charleston pawn shop has agreed to pay \$1 million to two New Jersey police officers who were shot with a gun the shop sold.'** 'A South Charleston pawn shop has agreed to pay \$1 million to two New Jersey police officers who were shot with a gun the shop sold. Kanawha County Circuit Judge Irene Berger on Wednesday approved the settlement between Will Co., doing business as Will's Jewelry and Loan, and Orange, N.J., police officers David Lemongello and Kenneth McGuire. The officers sued the pawn shop alleging negligence after they were shot with a Sturm, Ruger 9-millimeter semiautomatic handgun in January 2001. Both were disabled and have retired. 'There is an obvious problem with some gun dealers being easy touches for gun traffickers. This is the first case in which a gun dealer will pay damages, has paid damages for facilitating the gun trafficking in this way,' said Dennis Hanigan, an attorney for the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence. The center and Charleston attorney Scott Segal are co-counsel for the police officers.' [Associated Press State & Local Wire, 06/23/04]

- **AP: NSSF's 'Keane said there had been other settlements of cases in which stores were sue for negligence by people shot by guns they sold.'** 'Hanigan's claim 'is significantly overstating the case,' said Lawrence Keane, an attorney for the National Shooting Sports Foundation, the trade association for the firearms industry. Keane said there have been other settlements of cases in which stores were sued for negligence by people shot by guns they sold. He did not know if any of those cases involved a 'straw sale.'" [Associated Press State & Local Wire, 06/23/04]
- **The officers also sued Sturm, Ruger and distributor Acusport.** 'The lawsuit is still pending against Sturm, Ruger, and was recently amended to also name Ohio gun distributor Acusport as a defendant. 'Manufacturers and distributors do not require retailers to follow guidelines. That is why they are blameworthy,' Hanigan said.' [Associated Press State & Local Wire, 06/23/04]
- **Keane: 'Manufacturers don't control what goes on inside the store. It's like suing Budweiser if a bartender serves an intoxicated person.'** 'Keane said suing the manufacturer and distributor is 'an attempt to extort a settlement,' especially since the distributor in this case did not sell the gun to the store. Acusport sold the gun to another distributor, who sold it to a Baptist minister. He gave or sold the gun to a friend who was a firearms collector. That person pawned it. 'Manufacturers don't control what goes on inside the store. It's like suing Budweiser if a bartender serves an intoxicated person,' Keane said.' [Associated Press State & Local Wire, 06/23/04]

**2003: Former NRA lobbyist Robert Ricker filed a whistleblower affidavit in a California lawsuit against the gun industry.** 'Talk about a smoking gun. With blood in the streets, a dozen California cities and counties have sued gun manufacturers and dealers, accusing them of keeping quiet about weapons sold to criminals and juveniles. Industry officials naturally deny such charges in the 3-year-old case, even as innocent children get cut down in the cross-fire. I think these guys have photos of tobacco company execs on their walls for inspiration. But now here comes one of their own to rat them out. A whistle-blower with perfect pitch. Robert Ricker, a former lobbyist who collected a paycheck for more than 20 years from the National Rifle Assn. and other big bazookas in the gun industry, holds nothing back in a 16-page whistle-blowing affidavit filed Monday in San Diego County Superior Court.' [Los Angeles Times, Steve Lopez op-ed, 02/07/03]

**Ricker: 'The prevailing view was that if the industry took action voluntarily, it would be an admission of responsibility for the problem'** 'Naming names and citing dates going back more than 10 years, Ricker tells of 'lawyers' meetings' and other gun industry powwows to discuss whether to 'take action to control' the distribution of guns. He says the industry has known for years that guns from its factories routinely fall off the truck, so to speak, and end up flooding the black market in California and elsewhere. You've got shady middlemen -- using easily obtained dealer licenses -- peddling guns to gangsters and kids. Then you've got operations that use straw men -- guys with no criminal record -- to buy large caches of artillery that are passed on to the bad guys. But at meetings to discuss the problem, many of which Ricker attended, the cowboys couldn't find the courage to cut off crooked dealers. 'The prevailing view,' Ricker says, 'was that if the industry took action voluntarily, it would be an admission of responsibility for the problem.' ... We've got hot guns on the street by the thousands, bodies scattered across one city after another, and these cowboys can't bear the thought of losing a single sale. They're sticking with what Ricker calls their 'see-no-evil, hear-no-evil, speak-no-evil' policy.' [Los Angeles Times, Steve Lopez op-ed, 02/07/03]

**Keane said gun manufacturers 'can't play junior G-men.'** 'Lawrence Keane is vice president of the National Shooting Sports Foundation, the outfit that swallowed up Ricker's. Keane dismissed Ricker's claims as 'long on opinion and short on facts.' He also said gun manufacturers 'can't play junior G-men' and investigate corrupt gun dealers, because they'll step on the toes of federal authorities and blow their cases. No one is asking them to play junior G-men. When a gun is used in a crime, manufacturers get a call from the feds and the history of the gun is traced from factory to crime scene. Patterns become clear. It's easy to spot the bad guys. You can find them from the street to the boardrooms, quiet in conspiracy, all of them with blood on their hands.' [Los Angeles Times, Steve Lopez op-ed, 02/07/03]

**2002: New York Times: 'A letter from a federal firearms agent urging a gun manufacturer to help track the illegal use of its weapons has become crucial evidence in a lawsuit by 12 California cities and counties against the gun industry.'** 'A letter from a federal firearms agent urging a gun manufacturer to help track the illegal use of its weapons has become crucial evidence in a lawsuit by 12 California cities and counties against the gun industry. The letter, sent in 2000, suggested that Taurus International Manufacturing, of Miami, install a government computer to help determine whether dealers are helping criminals obtain firearms. 'If your corporation determines that there is an unusually high number of Taurus firearms being traced to certain' wholesalers and dealers, 'we suggest that you look at their business practices more carefully,' the letter said. It was written by Forest G. Webb, a special agent of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms in charge of its National Tracing Center, an agency that tracks guns recovered in crimes. Taurus never acted on Mr. Webb's advice. Yet the letter, and Taurus's inaction, have emerged as major issues in the first lawsuit to reach the trial stage among 30 filed against gun companies by cities and counties around the nation. The plaintiffs include the cities of Los Angeles, San Francisco and Oakland, Calif., and the trial is to begin next spring in San Diego.' [New York Times, 09/30/02]

**NYT: 'The central contention of the California cities is that the gun industry maintains a distribution system that allows many guns to fall into the hands of criminals and juveniles, creating a public nuisance and violating state law on unfair business practices.'** 'The central contention of the California cities is that the gun industry maintains a distribution system that allows many guns to fall into the hands of criminals and juveniles, creating a public nuisance and violating state law on unfair business practices. 'One of the ways the companies do this is to basically sell to anyone with a federal firearms license,' said Dennis Henigan, the legal director of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence and a co-counsel in the California suits. 'They sell guns without getting any information from the distributors or dealers about the number of guns they sell that end up being used in crimes, or when customers make multiple purchases of guns, both tip-offs to problems.'" [New York Times, 09/30/02]

**2002: NYT: 'In the discovery phase of the lawsuit, executives of a number of gun makers have testified that they never check what happens to their guns....'** 'In the discovery phase of the lawsuit, executives of a number of gun makers have testified that they never check what happens to their guns, Mr. Henigan said. 'They make no effort to identify problem dealers, because they want to remain blind so they can deny they know what has happened to their guns,' he said.' [New York Times, 09/30/02]

**Paul Januzzo, general counsel for Glock: 'There would be no reason' to analyze data on guns used in crimes.** 'Paul Januzzo, the general counsel for Glock Inc., of Smyrna, Ga., said in a deposition that Glock had never analyzed firearms bureau data for its guns recovered in crimes. 'There would be no reason to,' Mr. Januzzo said. 'It wouldn't tell us anything.'" [New York Times, 09/30/02]

**NYT: 'Robert Morrison, an executive vice president of Taurus... did nothing to get the Taurus product off the list' of handguns used most often in crimes.** 'Robert Morrison, an executive vice president of Taurus, said in a deposition that after reading in a bureau report that one of his company's handguns was among the 10 most often used in crimes, he did nothing to get the Taurus product off the list. The only thing he did, Mr. Morrison said, was wonder how the bureau classified guns as crime guns. 'I wonder if they found them in the bushes or under a car,' Mr. Morrison said he thought.' [New York Times, 09/30/02]

**NSSF's Keane said the ATF told gun makers not to check tracing data because 'law enforcement does not want the manufacturers to play junior G-men and jeopardize investigations.'** Mr. Keane of the National Shooting Sports Foundation said the firearms bureau had repeatedly told the gun makers not to check the tracing information on crime guns because 'law enforcement does not want the manufacturers to play junior G-men and jeopardize investigations.'" [New York Times, 09/30/02]

**However, the Brady Campaign's lawyer said that gun makers could not point to any such directive in depositions.** 'But Mr. Henigan responded that in depositions, no gun company

executive could pinpoint any such bureau directive. 'This is a myth they have created that they hide behind,' he said.' [New York Times, 09/30/02]

**2002: Boston dropped a lawsuit against gun manufacturers, citing high costs, after obtaining thousands of pages of documents and interviewing executives over three years.**

'On Wednesday, after obtaining thousands of documents from the gun industry, deposing dozens of executives, and spending \$250,000, Boston officials dropped their suit against the gun makers, deciding that the legal battle was too expensive at a time of tight budgets. Legal costs had reached about \$30,000 a month. Like other cities, Boston contended in its suit that firearms makers ignored evidence that gun shops illegally sold to people with criminal records. The city also argued that manufacturers produced unsafe weapons, failed to tell consumers about the risks of gun use, and, among other things, illegally marketed guns to minors. To recoup costs to the police and fire departments, emergency services, schools, and hospitals, the city suit sought \$100 million from the manufacturers. The decision was another legal setback for gun-control advocates. Nine similar municipal cases around the country have been dismissed by judges. And lawyers for the gun industry said yesterday that Boston can serve as a lesson to other cities. 'We certainly hope that other cities who have sued the industry will understand, as Boston does, that the best way of achieving the shared goal of reducing criminal misuse and accidents is through voluntary mutual cooperation and communication - rather than expensive, time-consuming litigation,' said Lawrence Keane, vice president and general counsel of the National Shooting Sports Foundation, a defendant in the Boston case.' [The Boston Globe, 03/29/02]

**1999: A federal grand jury held several gun makers liable for negligent marketing practices.**

'A federal jury found several gun makers liable Thursday in three of seven New York City-area shootings because of negligent marketing practices. Other manufacturers were cleared. Damages were awarded in the case of the sole survivor of the seven shootings, Steven Fox, 19, who was seriously wounded when he was 15. The jurors ordered that he be paid \$ 560,000. Fox and the relatives of six homicide victims sued the gun industry in federal court in 1995. Like some of the lawsuits brought against tobacco companies, this one accused the gun industry of negligently marketing a legal product.' [St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 02/12/99]

**Plaintiffs accused gun makers of over-supplying markets in states with lax gun control laws, knowing that excess guns would be diverted to criminal black markets.**

'During the trial, they argued that handgun makers oversupply some markets, mainly in the South, where gun control laws are weak. The companies are aware that the excess guns reach criminals' hands through black markets in New York and other states with stricter anti-gun laws, the plaintiffs said. The plaintiffs' lawyers accused the 25 defendants of dumping handguns onto the black market like 'toxic waste,' making no effort to identify and discipline dishonest distributors.' [St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 02/12/99]

**The head of gun maker Taurus International acknowledged in a deposition the company had 'never cut off anybody ... for sloppy distribution practices.'** 'The plaintiffs' lawyers accused the 25 defendants of dumping handguns onto the black market like 'toxic waste,' making no effort to

identify and discipline dishonest distributors. In a deposition read to the jury, Robert Morrison, head of one gun company, Taurus International Manufacturing Inc., conceded the company had 'never cut off anybody, cut them off for sloppy distribution practices.' Lawyers for Taurus, Smith & Wesson Corp., Colt's Manufacturing Co., Sturm, Ruger and Co. and other defendants insisted their responsibility ends once they sell to licensed distributors. They said the job of policing traffickers should be left to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, which has never required gun makers to track their products to the street. James Dorr, attorney for the companies, told the jury it was unfair to 'hold the manufacturers of a lawful, legitimately sold product responsible for acts of outlaws who are totally outside their control. . . . The case is simply wrong.' The gun makers also asserted that in most of the shootings the plaintiffs never gave evidence conclusively linking the weapons used to harm their relatives to specific defendants. The plaintiffs countered that the 'chain of title' is irrelevant, instead accusing the entire industry of creating a widespread risk with negligent marketing -- a concept known as collective liability.' [St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 02/12/99]

**January 1999: Former Smith & Wesson Executive Robert Hass testified in a deposition for the landmark case known as Hamilton v. Accu-Tek.** 'FOR MORE THAN A DECADE, Robert Hass was a Smith & Wesson trigger man. As the vice president in charge of sales and marketing for the world's largest handgun manufacturer, Hass figured out new and innovative ways to sell the company's weapons. Armed with a Harvard MBA, Hass helped boost Smith & Wesson's market share during the 1980s and launched a successful campaign to sell more guns to women. But in 1989 Smith & Wesson was sold to an English company, Tomkins, which cleaned house and forced Hass into retirement. Sitting around the house, he began to have second thoughts about his old job--thoughts that weighed on his conscience. Then he read in a trade magazine about a group of New York families--victims of gun violence--who were suing dozens of gun makers and distributors, including Smith & Wesson. The families claimed that the industry should share blame for their tragedies because it negligently allowed guns to fall into the hands of criminal gun traffickers--a charge the gun makers vehemently deny. One day in 1996 Hass called directory assistance and got the number for Elisa Barnes, the lawyer for the families. He told her he might be able to help. As the landmark trial known as Hamilton v. Accu-Tek got underway in a Brooklyn courtroom this month, no one would say whether the mysterious Robert Hass would actually testify in person. What is clear is that he has ricocheted on the gun industry. In a sworn affidavit and at a contentious deposition, Hass claimed under oath that he and other gun executives didn't lift a finger to stem the underground flow of guns into American cities, even though they could have. That doesn't make for an open-and-shut case. But as several cities, beginning with Chicago and New Orleans, prepare to file similar lawsuits against the gun industry, their lawyers are already seizing on Hass's testimony to bolster their claim that the gun manufacturers are at fault. Having modeled their assault on the massive legal campaign against the tobacco industry, anti-gun activists hope that Hass--or someone who follows his example-- could turn out to be their Jeffrey Wygand, the Brown and Williamson turncoat who helped singe Big Tobacco. So far, however, the ornery 68-year-old Hass won't talk to other lawyers or the press, and he may not willingly appear in front of the Hamilton jury, either. Lawyers say he is concerned about his privacy and his safety. "I said everything I had to say in the affidavit," Hass told a reporter on the

doorstep of his suburban Connecticut home. "I guess I'm not that courageous." [Newsweek, [01/24/99](#)]

**Hass: 'The manufacturers could do more, and their hands aren't clean if they ship totally legally to distributors.'** 'The gun industry has long maintained that because of its two-tier distribution system--first to distributors, and then to retailers--it has no way of knowing where its guns wind up, or who buys them. But now comes Robert Hass--and he says that isn't true. He charges that companies like Smith & Wesson know they could keep records that would show them where criminals are getting their guns, and enable them to take action to stop it. But that, he says, would be bad for business. 'The manufacturers could do more, and their hands aren't clean if they ship totally legally to distributors,' Hass said at his deposition.' [Newsweek, [01/24/99](#)]

**Hass: Smith & Wesson never bothered to check on whether dealers were selling its guns legally but cracked down on dealers selling guns at a discount.** :While Smith & Wesson never bothered to check on whether gun dealers were selling its guns legally, he said, the company was more than willing to get tough with dealers who tried to sell guns at too low a price. "God knows we did that enough," he said.' [Newsweek, [01/24/99](#)]

**Hass: "The Industry's Position Has Consistently Been To Take No Independent Action To Ensure Responsible Distribution Practices.** "Another insider, Robert Hass, a former Smith & Wesson executive, testified that 'the nature of the product demands that its distribution be handled in such a way as to minimize illegal and unintended use.' And yet, he said in an affidavit, 'the industry's position has consistently been to take no independent action to ensure responsible distribution practices.' When Smith & Wesson voluntarily adopted a set of safeguards, including requirements that its dealers limit multiple sales of firearms, it was ostracized and boycotted, forcing it to abandon the changes." [The New York Times, [05/27/13](#)]

### CEOs Testify to Congress

**July 2022: The CEOs of Sturm, Ruger & CO. Inc. and Daniel Defense Inc. testified at a hearing of the House Oversight Committee in the wake of mass shootings using their assault-style rifles.** 'Executives from large American gun companies appeared before a House committee on Wednesday, facing aggressive questioning from lawmakers about their organizations' responsibility for recent devastating mass shootings in the US. The hearing marked the first time in nearly two decades that the CEOs of leading gun manufacturers testified before Congress and comes after a wave of deadly attacks including at a Fourth of July parade in Illinois, a school in Texas and the racist massacre of Black shoppers at a supermarket in Buffalo, New York. The witnesses included Christopher Killoy, president and CEO of Sturm, Ruger & Company, and Marty Daniel, CEO of Daniel Defense. Mark Smith, president and CEO of Smith & Wesson Brands, had been invited to appear but refused to do so.' [The Guardian, [07/27/22](#)]

**Daniel Defense CEO Marty Daniel: Mass shootings are 'local problems that have to be solved locally.'** 'CAROLYN MALONEY: How many more American children need to die before your

company will stop selling assault weapons to civilians and children, the weapon of choice in most mass murders in our country? MARTY DANIEL: Congresswoman Maloney, I believe that these murders are local problems that have to be solved locally. But I believe that –' [CQ Transcriptions, House Oversight and Reform Committee Holds Hearing on Gun Practices and Profits of Manufacturers, 07/27/22]

**July 2022: Rep. Robin Kelly asked Killoy whether Ruger took 'any steps to identify problematic patterns of dealers and stop shipments of firearms to dealers who sell a disproportionate amount of crime guns.'**

“ROBIN KELLY: ... Gun manufacturers are often contacted by the ATF to aid in their tracing investigations following the path of a gun from the manufacturer to the crime scene. Mr. Killoy, does Ruger take any steps to identify problematic patterns of dealers and stop shipments of firearms to dealers who sell a disproportionate amount of crime guns?’ [CQ Transcriptions, House Oversight and Reform Committee Holds Hearing on Gun Practices and Profits of Manufacturers, 07/27/22]

**Killoy: 'We sell through a network of 15 fairly large wholesalers.... So, we don't have visibility into those individual dealers.'**

CHRIS KILLOY: Congresswoman, in the case of Ruger, we distribute our firearms in what we call a two-step distribution process. We sell through a network of 15 fairly large wholesalers who, in turn, that they are all federally licensed firearms licensees. They then sell to the individual retailers who are also licensees. So, we don't have visibility into those individual dealers. We sell to that much smaller network of our 15 wholesalers.’ [CQ Transcriptions, House Oversight and Reform Committee Holds Hearing on Gun Practices and Profits of Manufacturers, 07/27/22]

**Daniel Defense CEO Marty Daniel: '[W]e are very good at our ability to make sure that our firearms are transferred legally through legal dealers. If there is a pipeline ... the people who bring those in illegally ... should be prosecuted.'**

ROBIN KELLY: Thank you. Mr. Daniel. Does Daniel Defense take any steps to identify problematic patterns of dealers to stop shipments of firearms to dealers who sell a disproportionate number of crime guns? MARTY DANIEL: Congresswoman, we -- Congresswoman, we are a federally licensed -- federally licensed by the ATF to manufacture firearms. And we sell our products through federally licensed dealers. And we are very good at our ability to make sure that our firearms are transferred legally through legal dealers. If there is a pipeline of -- of guns coming into your district, the people who bring those in illegally -- that's a crime. And those people should be prosecuted.’ [CQ Transcriptions, House Oversight and Reform Committee Holds Hearing on Gun Practices and Profits of Manufacturers, 07/27/22]

## **NASGW Background**

**The National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers 'is committed to protecting our way of life and bringing together like-minded business, organizations, and service providers.'**

'For 70 years NASGW has been helping wholesalers and manufacturers in the shooting sports industry. As the world around our industry continues to tighten its grip, we must work collectively

to find new business solutions. This includes insurance, banking, data, credit, and so much more. NASGW is committed to protecting our way of life and bringing together like-minded business, organizations, and service providers to solve these challenges. This is the new NASGW.' [About NASGW, accessed [5/7/25](#)]

**NASGW members account for approximately 65% of sales in the shooting sports industry.**

'The National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers ('NASGW') is the leading organization in the shooting sports industry for product distribution, accounting for approximately 65% of sales. NASGW's members are primarily wholesale businesses (buyers) and manufacturers (sellers) of firearms and other sporting goods.' [Amicus Brief for National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers, Garland v. VanDerStok, [8/20/24](#)]

**NASGW 'maintains an active liaison with' the NSSF, NRA and Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, and organizes an annual expo for the industry.**

'NASGW aims to promote the common interest of the sporting goods industry and to be the indispensable partner for the U.S. shooting sports trade. To that end, NASGW maintains an active liaison with the trade associations of all other segments of the industry (including the National Shooting Sports Foundation, the National Rifle Association, and the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation), and organizes an annual expo that provides educational, marketing, and communications opportunities for hunting and shooting sports professionals.' [Amicus Brief for National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers, Garland v. VanDerStok, [8/20/24](#)]

**The National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers is a 501C6 trade association based in Ankeny, Iowa.**

According to NASGW's tax filings, it is located at 1255 SW Prairie Trail Pkwy, Ankeny, Iowa, 50023. The principal officer of NASGW is Kenyon Gleason, of the same address. [NASGW 2023 IRS 990, [9/6/24](#)]

**Mission statement: 'To service our membership through strong, trusted relationships between shooting sports buyers and sellers.'**

'To service our membership through strong, trusted relationships between shooting sports buyers and sellers. The National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers objectives include promoting the common interest of the sporting goods industry, encouraging the highest standards of merchandising practices, maintaining an active liaison with the trade associations of all other segments of the industry, collecting and distributing information as to all matters or things pertaining to sporting goods wholesalers and, conducting and participating in sporting goods shows and exhibitions.' [NASGW 2023 IRS 990, [9/6/24](#)]

**NASGW's governing body has seven members.** [NASGW 2023 IRS 990, [9/6/24](#)]

**NASGW has 10 volunteers.** [NASGW 2023 IRS 990, [9/6/24](#)]

Key Financial Information

**2023: NASGW raised more than \$3.2 million in revenue and incurred more than \$2.6 million in expenses.** According to its most recent publicly available tax return, the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers total revenue in 2023 was \$3,273,578. NASGW's total expenses were \$2,620,149. [NASGW 2023 IRS 990, accessed 5/7/25]

National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers Key Financial Information				
Year	Total Revenue	Total Expenses	Net Revenue	Net Assets
2023	\$3,273,758	\$2,620,149	\$653,609	\$6,700,029
2022	\$2,846,000	\$2,647,880	\$198,120	\$5,409,276
2021	\$2,833,809	\$2,107,096	\$726,713	\$6,418,481
2020	\$1,154,415	\$1,419,918	-\$265,503	\$5,504,923
2019	\$2,476,501	\$2,024,340	\$452,161	\$5,348,311

NASGW IRS 990s 2019-2023, via ProPublica, accessed 5/7/25]

### Revenue

**NASGW Revenue is derived primarily from its Annual Meeting & Expo, subscriptions to its SCOPE data-sharing platform and annual dues paid by its members.** [NASGW 2018 -2023 IRS 990s, accessed 5/9/25]

NASGW Revenue Breakdown			
Year	Revenue Source	Amount	% of Total
2023	Expo & Annual Meeting	\$1,378,865	42.1%
	SCOPE Subscriptions	\$757,700	23.1%
	Membership Dues	\$766,550	23.4%
	Investment Income	\$312,486	9.5%
	Other	\$58,157	1.8%
<i>2023 Total</i>		<i>\$3,273,758</i>	
2022	Expo & Annual Meeting	\$1,433,962	50.4%
	SCOPE Subscriptions	\$552,485	19.4%
	Membership Dues	\$517,075	18.2%

	Investment Income	\$313,249	11.0%
	Other	\$29,229	1.0%
<i>2022 Total</i>		<i>\$2,846,000</i>	
2021	Expo & Annual Meeting	\$1,342,154	47.4%
	SCOPE Subscriptions	\$444,251	15.7%
	Membership Dues	\$498,255	17.6%
	Investment Income	\$500,384	17.7%
	Other	\$48,265	1.7%
<i>2021 Total</i>		<i>\$2,833,309</i>	
2020	Expo & Annual Meeting	\$22,930	2.0%
	SCOPE Subscriptions	\$360,053	31.3%
	Membership Dues	\$331,070	28.8%
	Investment Income	\$406,735	35.4%
	Other	\$29,702	2.6%
<i>2020 Total</i>		<i>\$1,150,490</i>	
2019	Expo & Annual Meeting	\$1,470,050	59.4%
	SCOPE Subscriptions	\$303,665	12.3%
	Membership Dues	\$408,532	16.5%
	Investment Income	\$274,995	11.1%
	Other	\$19,259	0.8%
<i>2019 Total</i>		<i>\$2,476,501</i>	
2018	Expo & Annual Meeting	\$1,237,995	63.7%
	SCOPE Subscriptions	\$5,544	0.3%
	Membership Dues	\$392,555	20.2%
	Investment Income	\$298,768	15.4%
	Other	\$8,459	0.4%
<i>2018 Total</i>		<i>\$1,943,321</i>	

## Expenses

**NASGW President Kenyon Gleason received \$360,000 in compensation, which was routed through a Connect Consulting, LLC, a firm Gleason owns.** The organization has a contract with Connect Consulting, LLC for management services, including supervising, planning and executing the financial operations and exempt functions of the organization. Connect Consulting, LLC employs Kenyon Gleason, who is the president for National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers. For calendar year 2023, Kenyon's portion of compensation and benefits from

Connect Consulting, LLC that related to his services for national association of sporting goods wholesalers totaled \$360,000.' [NASGW 2023 IRS 990, [9/6/24](#)]

**NASGW spent more than \$1.3 million on independent contractors in 2023.** [NASGW 2023 IRS 990, [9/6/24](#)]

<b>NASGW Independent Contractors 2023</b>		
<b>Name and business address</b>	<b>Description of Services</b>	<b>Compensation</b>
AMPLIFY ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT  1255 SW PRAIRIE TRAIL PARKWAY ANKENY,IA 50023	ADMIN, OPER, CONSULT. SERVICES	\$561,833
CONNECT CONSULTING LLC  5232 NW KENDALL DRIVE TOPEKA,KS 66618	EXEC & MGMT SERVICES	\$360,000
BUSINESS INSIGHTS INC  2310 PEPPERWOOD AVENUE LONG BEACH,CA90815	ONLINE DATABASE	\$249,600
KERRY CONSULTING EVENTS LLC  5067 SWITCH GRASS LANE NAPERVILLE,IL60564	MEETING MANAGEMENT	\$175,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$1,346,433</b>

**2023: NASGW gave a total of \$100,000 to four firearms-related nonprofit organizations.** [NASGW 2023 IRS 990, [9/6/24](#)]

<b>2023 NASGW Grants to Other Nonprofit Organizations</b>	
<b>Name and address of organization</b>	<b>Amount</b>
WALK THE TALK AMERICA INC  10620 SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS STE 110-188 LAS VEGAS,NV 89141	\$25,000
AMERICAN SUPPRESSOR ASSOCIATION  6085 LAKE FORREST DRIVE SUITE 200A ATLANTA,GA 30328	\$25,000

CONGRESSIONAL SPORTSMEN'S FOUNDATION	
110 NORTH CAROLINA AVE SE WASHINGTON,DC 20003	\$25,000
YOUTH SHOOTING SPORTS ALLIANCE	
PO BOX 936 ELKHORN,NE 68022	\$25,000
Total	\$100,000

## Key People

**NASGW's Board of Directors includes seven executives from leading distributors.** [[NASGW, IRS990s, LinkedIn, SGBOnline, accessed 5/7/25]

National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers Board Members		
Name	Title	Other Affiliations
Bill Sumner	Chair	President at Chattanooga Shooting Supplies
Ryan Link	Vice Chair	VP of Merchandising at Big Rock Sports
Laurie Aronson	Director	Chairwoman and CEO at Lipsey's
Malcolm Getz	Treasurer	Principal CEO at Camfour Inc
Chris Means	Director	President at Countrywide Sports
Wayne Tumlin	Director	President at Davidson's
Jeff Pugh	Director	VP of Sales for Bangers USA
Kenyon Gleason	NASGW President	Owner of Connect Consulting, LLC

[NASGW, IRS990s, LinkedIn, SGBOnline, accessed 5/7/25]

**January 2015: Kenyon Gleason began his tenure as NASGW president.** 'It was January 2015. I just started as president of the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW). My first official workday was the opening day of the 2015 SHOT Show.' [Kenyon Gleason op-ed, Shooting Industry, 10/1/22]

**Before joining NASGW, Gleason was a vice president with the American Road and Transportation Builders Association.** 'Prior to taking over at NASGW, Gleason was the vice president of development and field operations for the American Road and Transportation Builders Association in Washington, D.C., focused on U.S. transportation-related issues, legislation, and advocacy. He also has more than 30 years of media, communications, marketing,

public and government relations experience in a variety of industries including healthcare, education, transportation, agriculture and the shooting sports.' [AmmoLand, 10/14/24]

**January 2019: NASGW announced Laurie Aronson, president and CEO of Lipsey's LLC, was elected as chairwoman of the board, the first woman to hold the position.** 'In January the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW) announced Laurie Aronson, president and CEO of Lipsey's LLC, was elected as chairwoman of the board during the 2018 NASGW Expo (held Oct. 16-19 in Pittsburgh). Stefanie Zanders, VP and COO of Zanders Sporting Goods, joined Aronson on NASGW's leadership team--ascending to NASGW vice chair. A historic development for NASGW, Aronson is the first woman to lead the association in this capacity.' [Shooting Industry, 5/1/19]

- **Aronson: '...NASGW is very much a team--involving a board-driven decision-making process...'** "I love the fact we've got two strong women in top leadership roles at NASGW, but at the end of the day, it doesn't change NASGW any more than it has over the years,' she said. 'Leadership is more of an individual perspective, and NASGW is very much a team--involving a board-driven decision-making process. It's just a change, something a little different and fresh for the organization.' Aronson emphasized NASGW's structure ensures a sense of continuity. 'Stefanie and I sit on a board with seven other NASGW wholesaler members. What's really nice is we see the continuity on our board--we have new, fresh faces as well as people who have been around to give us their perspective. It makes for a good mix, all of us together,' she said.' [Shooting Industry, 5/1/19]

**January 2024: Bill Sumner became chairman of NASGW.** 'NASGW is an organization that brings unity within competitors, supports our manufacturers, and advocates for our God given freedoms. I'm truly honored to serve as your Chairman of the NASGW over the next couple of years and look forward to working alongside so many great companies and individuals.' [NASGW, Chairman's Message, [1/2/24](#)]

## **NASGW SCOPE Data-Sharing Platform**

**NASGW: 'SCOPE is a suite of data-driven tools designed in partnership with manufacturers, distributors and retailers to benefit industry businesses.'** 'NASGW is a leader in data collection and business analytics for the shooting sports industry. Our mission is to grow the industry by strengthening businesses with better information. SCOPE is a suite of data-driven tools designed in partnership with manufacturers, distributors and retailers to benefit industry businesses. ... With this suite of solutions, users will be able to access a deeper level of data that hasn't been previously available to the industry. Users can track product distribution, plan efficient production schedules, compare sales and inventory information, and plan targeted marketing strategies.' [NASGW Scope, accessed [5/7/25](#)]

**2023: SCOPE generated more than \$750,000 in revenue.** On its most recent tax return, NASGW said it generated \$757,700 in revenue from SCOPE. According to the tax filing, 'THE

ASSOCIATION HAS A SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE CALLED SCOPE, WHICH WAS BUILT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NASGW WHOLESALERS TO PROVIDE AN INTEGRATED SOURCE OF SALES AND INVENTORY DATA. THIS DATA IS ACCESSIBLE ONLY BY NASGW MEMBERS. UTILIZING TWO-STEP DISTRIBUTION.' [NASGW 2023 IRS 9990, [9/6/24](#)]

**2022: NASGW incurred nearly \$290,000 in expenses related to SCOPE.** On its 2022 tax return, NASGW included a line explaining its other expenses that indicated 'SCOPE BUSINESS INSIGHTS' were responsible for \$288,865 in reported expenses. [NASGW 2022 IRS 990, [11/2/23](#)]

NASGW SCOPE Financial Performance			
Year	Revenue	Expenses	Net
2023	\$757,700	n/a	
2022	\$552,485	\$288,865	\$263,620
2021	\$444,251	\$205,883	\$238,368
2020	\$360,053	\$185,392	\$174,661
2019	\$303,665	n/a	
2018	\$5,544	n/a	

[NASGW IRS 990s 2018-2023, accessed 5/12/25]

**October 2018: NASGW launched its SCOPE data program at its 45<sup>th</sup> Expo & Annual Meeting.** 'The 45th NASGW Expo & Annual Meeting--held Oct. 16-19, 2018, at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pa.--hosted a business-building forum for wholesaler, manufacturer and sales rep members to kick start 2019 sales and initiatives.... During the Expo, NASGW launched its SCOPE data program.' [Shooting Industry, 1/1/19]

- **Shooting Industry: SCOPE 'represents over 51 percent of all new firearm sales, with data provided by 21 participating NASGW wholesaler members.'** 'Two years in the making, this new program for NASGW members provides a comprehensive look at the sales and inventory within the wholesale distribution channel. It represents over 51 percent of all new firearm sales, with data provided by 21 participating NASGW wholesaler members.' [Shooting Industry, 1/1/19]
- **Gleason: 'Information is the lynchpin to the future of our industry's success.... You can absolutely count on the NASGW and its members to help the industry's business succeed.'** "Information is the lynchpin to the future of our industry's success,' said Kenyon Gleason, NASGW president. 'This is a critical program, coming at a critical time. It's one more way NASGW is living up to its 'Wholesale Trust' tagline. You can absolutely count on the NASGW and its members to help the industry's business succeed.' In its initial iteration, SCOPE is organized into three product categories: firearms, ammunition and optics. (An accessories package will be released later this year.)' [Shooting Industry, 1/1/19]

- **Easton Kuboushek, SCOPE program manager: ‘Overwhelmingly, manufacturers who’ve seen the demo praise SCOPE’s ability to ... provide the most robust source of sales and inventory data.’**

‘According to NASGW, sales and inventory data is focused into six dashboard reports: an overall market report, company performance, market share, inventory share, inventory depletion and timing/trends. This data, provided down to a UPC level, offers an in-depth resource for manufacturers. ‘SCOPE is a powerful program and prolific step for shooting sports industry data,’ said Easton Kuboushek, SCOPE program manager. ‘Overwhelmingly, manufacturers who’ve seen the demo praise SCOPE’s ability to streamline reports from distribution and provide the most robust source of sales and inventory data.’ [Shooting Industry, 1/1/19]

**November 2018: Coreware partnered with NASGW to expand ‘SCOPE CLX, a retail sales data platform designed to analyze consumer buying trends.’** ‘Coreware has partnered with NASGW to expand SCOPE CLX, a retail sales data platform designed to analyze consumer buying trends. As a point-of-sale provider, Coreware’s support of SCOPE CLX will help NASGW advance its goal to grow the shooting sports industry by collecting, standardizing and analyzing data. The addition of Coreware will add anonymous sales from over 300 stores, making SCOPE CLX the largest sample of the independent FFL market.’ [Shooting Industry, 11/18/18]

- **NASGW President Kenyon Gleason ‘Adding Coreware is a game-changer.’** “Adding Coreware is a game-changer for us,’ said NASGW President Kenyon Gleason. ‘They are such a major player in our industry and we couldn’t be more excited to be working with them to expand data analytics in the shooting sports industry.’ [Shooting Industry, 11/18/18]
- **Coreware integration was expected by spring 2022.** ‘Coreware integration is expected by spring of 2022. ‘We are extremely excited about our partnership with NASGW,’ said Ezra Weinstein, CEO of Coreware. ‘Our mission is to help small businesses survive and thrive. By integrating into the SCOPE CLX platform, our customers will have access to better tools and data to help them make better buying decisions. The data offered by the SCOPE CLX platform will become an integral part of helping our customers increase sales, cut costs and increase profits.’ [Shooting Industry, 11/18/18]
- **Other partners including including Celerant, AIM and Orchid POS contributed anonymous sales data to NASGW.** ‘Coreware joins other point of sale partners including Celerant, AIM and Orchid POS in contributing anonymous sales data to NASGW for the benefit of the industry. In the past five years, NASGW has taken up the mission of providing the industry a more comprehensive platform for sales, inventory and distribution data -helping businesses make smarter decisions and strengthening the relationships in the two-step distribution channel. / nasgw.org / coreware.com’ [Shooting Industry, 11/18/18]

**May 2019: Lipsey’s CEO and then-NASGW Board Chair Laurie Aronson: ‘The more we work together, even in the realm of competition, and share information the better we’re all going to be.’** “It’s all about data,’ Aronson stated, ‘and you’ll be left behind in any industry if you’re not on top of technology and data. The development of SCOPE as a data-sharing program provides a value-added benefit to equip both wholesale and manufacturer members. The more we work

together, even in the realm of competition, and share information the better we're all going to be.' On the ever-changing landscape of the shooting sports, Aronson highlighted the influential role distributors play in the supply chain. 'As wholesalers, something we need to be asking is: What are other people doing to make their industries better, and when do we need to step out of our comfort zones and try something different for the betterment of everyone? On the distribution side, it's in our best interest to make sure the wholesale network stays alive and well. We're in a unique position as a distributor--by sitting in the middle, with a direct touch to both retailers and manufacturers--to lead change and share important insights with everyone in the industry,' she shared.' [Shooting Industry, 5/1/19]

**July 2019: NASGW President Kenyon Gleason: 'Each distributor sharing data in the system can now see--at a moment's notice--what types of products are moving, and where.'** 'The new SCOPE data initiative, currently gathering statistical information from 20 of our member distributors, is giving us a revealing window into the marketplace. Each distributor sharing data in the system can now see--at a moment's notice--what types of products are moving, and where. Manufacturer subscribers can likewise compare their own data to the rest of the marketplace. It's a powerful tool to help the distribution channel better understand buying and production decisions. Because we're still pretty new in the development of SCOPE, specific statistics are not available--yet. Before the year is over, we'll provide members, and the industry at large, with a recurring snapshot of specific products and statistics to help everyone better understand trends and success from the distribution channel.' [Kenyon Gleason op-ed, Shooting Industry, 7/1/19]

**October 2019: Gleason told the NASGW Expo & Annual Meeting: 'We've made some amazing adjustments forthcoming to our NASGW SCOPE business data and analytics tools.'** 'As NASGW's signature event of the year, the Expo gives the association a platform to update members on new opportunities to improve business. The NASGW SCOPE data program was formally unveiled last year, and has been further refined. 'The new SCOPE data initiative, currently gathering statistical information from 20 of our member distributors, is giving us a revealing window into the marketplace,' Gleason informed. 'Each distributor sharing data in the system can now see--at a moment's notice--what types of products are moving, and where. Manufacturer subscribers can likewise compare their own data to the rest of the marketplace. It's a powerful tool to help the distribution channel better understand buying and production decisions.' Gleason provided an update for those who subscribe to the program. 'We've made some amazing adjustments forthcoming to our NASGW SCOPE business data and analytics tools,' he said. 'We'll be launching these enhancements to our existing subscribers, and any new subscriber will get access to the tools as well.'" [Shooting Industry, 10/1/19]

**March 2020: NASGW and NSSF launched the SCOPE CLX platform, 'a comprehensive retail sales database to benefit shooting sports businesses,' at the annual SHOT Show.** 'During the 2020 SHOT Show, NASGW announced it had acquired CustomerLink Exchange (CLX), a cloud-based, easy-to-use reporting solution (originally developed for AcuSport Corporation) that makes point-of-sale information available to partners in the supply chain. Subsequently, NASGW has launched SCOPE CLX, a comprehensive retail sales database to benefit shooting

sports businesses as part of its larger SCOPE data platform--which tracks shipments and inventory from more than 20 leading distributors. 'SCOPE CLX is an industry-led program backed by NASGW distributors,' said Kenyon Gleason, NASGW president. 'At its peak with AcuSport, CLX captured data from roughly 400 dealers. We look forward to scaling the number of retailers contributing data to new heights and supporting our industry with data they can use each and every day to make better business decisions.' NSSF will be working with NASGW to help retailers realize the benefits SCOPE CLX provides and how it can help them obtain improved consumer-demand intelligence. Powered by Florida-based eComSystems, SCOPE CLX will integrate with all major retail POS systems, including preferred providers like Celerant and Epicor. 'CustomerLink Exchange successfully altered the way industry members conducted business and the way their customers did business, by effectively addressing the needs of today's firearms buyers through the hard numbers that only today's advanced point-of-sale systems can deliver,' said Joe Bartozzi, NSSF president and CEO. 'In taking that technology, expanding its depth and making it available to all firearms industry members, NASGW and NSSF have seized an unprecedented opportunity to make meaningful, positive, profitable change across the industry spectrum and made it a reality.' [Shooting Industry, 3/1/20]

**April 2020: AmmoLand: SCOPE data showed record sales of firearms and ammunition in the early weeks of the Covid-19 pandemic.** 'As we pass the 15-day mark, in the U.S.'s Flattening the COVID-19 Curve timeline, the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW) SCOPE data platform reports another record week in firearms and ammunition shipments. Ammunition sales nearly doubled for the week ending March 21. When we look at year-to-date (YTD) numbers for 2020, ammunition sales are up 49% compared to the three-year average (3YR AVG), and 188% and the week-over-week, growing from \$9.9m to \$18.6m.' [AmmoLand, 4/2/20]

- **AmmoLand: 'SCOPE DLX ... unparalleled industry tool helps distributors and manufacturers.'** 'All in all, SCOPE DLX revealed that it was another massive week for the ammunition market and our distributors, as COVID-19 continues to have a widespread impact on our industry. This unparalleled industry tool helps distributors and manufacturers by providing them with easy to understand data and information about real market situations so they can make better decisions. 'Our partners continue to navigate the uncharted waters of COVID-19 with SCOPE DLX as a 'compass,' says Easton Kuboushek, NASGW Director of Data Programs. 'It's rewarding to see members ask questions and engage in SCOPE more frequently.' [AmmoLand, 4/2/20]

**May 2020: Shooting Industry: 'Real-time insights into COVID-19's impact ... are available thanks to NASGW SCOPE data platform.'** 'Real-time insights into COVID-19's impact on the wholesale distribution channel are available thanks to NASGW SCOPE data platform. 'The COVID-19 virus is having an overwhelmingly negative impact on the entire country, but if there is any silver lining, it is the boost it's provided to our industry,' said Kenyon Gleason, NASGW president. 'SCOPE has allowed us to correlate trends with what's happening in the real world with trustworthy data and measure just how impactful this period is in comparison to previous years.' SCOPE reported multiple sales spikes in the days following the onset of COVID-19. March 8-14, firearm and ammunition shipments experienced increases of 13.74% and 168%. (In some states, SCOPE DLX showed up to a 600% jump in ammunition shipments.) The following week ending

March 21 ammunition sales nearly doubled, while firearms continued to climb (67%) compared to the previous three-year average. From Jan. 1 to Apr. 4, both firearm and ammunition shipments posted increases over the corresponding timeframe in 2019 and the previous three-year average. Firearms shipments were up 28.85% over the same period in 2019 (from \$658.9 million to \$849 million) and 5.3% over the previous three-year average (\$806.2 million). In the same span, ammunition sales totaled \$91.3 million, increases of 99.88% and 61.15% over 2019 (\$45.7 million) and the prior three-year average (\$56.7 million), respectively. (The optics segment has also achieved gains in 2020, reporting increases of 23.58% and 2.71% over 2019 and the three-year average.) SCOPE DLX (Distributor Link Exchange) collects weekly shipment data from 20 leading distributors that represent demand from thousands of FFLs across the U.S. / [nasgwscope.org](http://nasgwscope.org)' [Shooting Industry, 5/1/20]

**July 2020: NASGW offered retailers free access to its SCOPE CLX platform.** The NASGW announces it is inviting shooting sports retailers to get free access to SCOPE CLX reports. SCOPE CLX is an industry-owned, distributor-led initiative to collect and analyze data that helps businesses in the shooting sports industry. FFL holders can use the reports to understand which products are in demand based on anonymous data from brick-and-mortar stores across the country. Through SCOPE CLX, retailers can keep tabs on the market, get a sense of new product performance and maximize assortment decisions. 'SCOPE CLX is built in partnership with retailers, distributors, manufacturers and associations. Ultimately, our goal is to help our industry grow, and that starts with retailers moving the products consumers demand,' said Easton Kuboushek, NASGW director of data programs.' [Shooting Industry, 7/1/20]

- **Gleason: 'SCOPE CLX is the culmination of everyone in the supply chain coming together to help the industry.'** "SCOPE CLX is the culmination of everyone in the supply chain coming together to help the industry," said NASGW president Kenyon Gleason. "Distributors are spearheading this program, but this is truly going to benefit the entire industry in a big way. NASGW and industry distributors are perfectly positioned to bring everyone together for this crucial program." [Shooting Industry, 7/1/20]

**July 2020: Gleason: 'The COVID-19 virus is having an overwhelmingly negative impact on the entire country, but if there is any silver lining, it is the boost it's provided to our industry.'** "The buying surge impacted every sector of the industry, especially the wholesale distribution channel. NASGW's SCOPE data platform revealed significant sales spikes in the opening days of the pandemic--which has persisted in these uncertain times. 'The COVID-19 virus is having an overwhelmingly negative impact on the entire country, but if there is any silver lining, it is the boost it's provided to our industry,' said Kenyon Gleason, NASGW president." [Shooting Industry, 7/1/20]

**November 2020: Celerant Technology announced more than 100 customers had contributed sales data to support NASGW's SCOPE CLS data-sharing platform.** 'Celerant Technology announced more than 100 opt-in customers have contributed point-of-sales data in support of NASGW's SCOPE CLX data-sharing program for FFL dealers. Managed by NASGW, SCOPE CLX collects and aggregates point-of-sale data from FFL retailers across the country. The aggregated data, which is completely anonymous, provides information about product

performance, consumer demand and market trends. 'We're excited to offer this free information on product sales for the benefit of FFL dealers, and to begin a new chapter of market analysis in our industry,' said Easton Kuboushek, NASGW director of data programs. 'Thank you to already over 100 opt-in Celerant clients for your partnerships--we wouldn't be here without your trust and support!' As a preferred point-of-sale vendor for NASGW, firearm retailers can participate in SCOPE CLX through Celerant's point-of-sale solution (both Cumulus Retail and Stratus Enterprise integrate with the data-sharing program) enabling them to share retail data, and obtain valuable analytics in return. 'By integrating with SCOPE CLX, Celerant is able to provide FFL retailers with a great deal of analytics to help them keep a pulse on the market and compete,' stated Michele Salerno, Celerant director of marketing. 'The strength of the analytics is based on both the quantity and quality of the retail data shared with SCOPE CLX. We're excited Celerant dealers already account for over 50% of the point-of-sale data collected for analysis. Access to SCOPE CLX is offered to our FFL retail clients at no cost, and we are confident this program will provide tremendous value to our dealers and the industry, especially as the project grows.'" [Shooting Industry, 11/1/20]

**June 2021: NASGW launched updated versions of its SCOPE platforms, including a 'completely new tool allowing manufacturers to manage and distribute product information to distributors.'** 'NASGW has launched two new data products for its members and a brand-new version of the original SCOPE platform. \* SCOPE DLX is the updated distributor data platform allowing users to review inventory and compare their product performance against the rest of the industry. \* SCOPE CLX is the all-new retail sales platform providing sales information from retailers and dealers from around the country. \* SCOPE PLX is a completely new tool allowing manufacturers to manage and distribute product information to distributors and the greater industry. This serves as a single input for product information, eliminating the need for sending specs out to every distributor and retailer. 'The 2021 enhancements to SCOPE build on high data integrity to offer shooting sports businesses greater flexibility,' said Easton Kuboushek, NASGW director of data programs. 'NASGW members are now able to pull data into native BI systems or simple pivot tables to inform business decisions.'" [Shooting Industry, 6/1/21]

**July 2021: NASGW President Gleason: 'This 'industry-owned' and 'distributor-led' program continues to grow in influence and capability.'** 'If you're just flying by the seat of your pants and aren't using sales data and information to help guide your business decisions, then you're probably--more often than not--flying through the clouds with no instruments. This is why the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW) created the SCOPE data analytics program. It's why the SCOPE team has worked so hard over the past four years to collect, compile and create reports that are now being made available to retailers who want to share store transaction data while also learning from hundreds of other stores across the country. This 'industry-owned' and 'distributor-led' program continues to grow in influence and capability. NASGW started with the collection of nearly 20 distributor data feeds, eager to understand and prove data could make an impact. Plus, the team wanted to make sure they would 'get right' the herculean task of cleaning and normalizing data from across the industry.' [Kenyon Gleason Op-Ed, Shooting Industry, 7/1/21]

- **Gleason: ‘Manufacturers are exceptionally appreciative of the accuracy standards implemented with the data and as we expected, all partners appreciate the anonymous, aggregated information.’** ‘Even though the CLX retail data effort is still in its initial growth period, the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Manufacturers are exceptionally appreciative of the accuracy standards implemented with the data and as we expected, all partners appreciate the anonymous, aggregated information. Celerant’s retail clients, for example, don’t allow the sharing of their data without permission. But after focus groups and conversations with their subscribers, Celerant said dealers are anxious to take part and are already seeing value in the benchmark reports they receive. ‘Dealers tend to have limited visibility into what is selling--or not--at other gun shops across the country,’ said Salerno. ‘Having access to this data helps them make better buying decisions. Using industry-wide data to guide buying decisions can only help dealers be more competitive.’” [Kenyon Gleason Op-Ed, Shooting Industry, 7/1/21]

**July 2021: Gleason: ‘Several other industry point-of-sale software providers are working with NASGW on this initiative ... AIM, EPICOR, BLUEDOG and Orchid...’** ‘Several other industry point-of-sale software providers are working with NASGW on this initiative and will soon be offering solutions and access to their network of retail partners as well. AIM, EPICOR, BLUEDOG and Orchid point-of-sale systems are all in various stages of integration with the data team at NASGW.’ [Kenyon Gleason Op-Ed, Shooting Industry, 7/1/21]

**October 2021: NASGW official: ‘We had a great turnout at our SCOPE Update Event’ at the Expo & Annual meeting.** ‘In addition to the meetings between the exhibitors and their wholesale partners, NASGW also held meetings for their Board of Directors, their wholesale members, and CEDEX Program participants and an update for their SCOPE Data program. ‘We had a great turnout at our SCOPE Update Event,’ said Easton Kuboushek, Director of Data Programs for NASGW. ‘We were able to introduce our newest team member, Tom Hopper, formerly with Sig Sauer, who brings decades of experience analyzing data in the shooting sports industry. He is going to be a huge asset to the continued growth of the SCOPE program. We were also excited to announce and share SCOPE PLX, which will standardize product fields across all manufacturers and make product information management and distribution a much simpler process.’” [NASGW Press Release, via= Contify Retail News, 10/31/21]

**December 2021: Payment technology provider Orchid LLC announced it would begin providing Orchid POS data to support NASGW Scope.** ‘Orchid LLC, provider of FFL technology, payment and compliance services, announced a partnership with the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW). The company will provide Orchid POS data in support of NASGW SCOPE, a data-sharing program for the shooting sports industry. Orchid clients will contribute non-confidential sales data to provide the firearms industry with a better understanding of product performance and sales trends. ‘The evolution of the firearms industry demands a data-driven supply chain. Such data has been a well-publicized focus of NASGW SCOPE, and we’re pleased to support their initiative. The development of Orchid POS and this partnership underscore our commitment to drive integrated solutions specific to the firearms industry for everyone, from manufacturer to consumer,’ said Jon Rydberg, Orchid CEO. Designed

for individual, multi-store and mobile firearm retailers, Orchid POS combines the functionality of an integrated point-of-sale system, electronic bound book and firearms-friendly merchant processor in one comprehensive, user-friendly platform.' [Shooting Industry 12/1/21]

**December 2021: Gleason interviewed two distributors, Chris DiCenso, president of Camfour Inc., and Jeff Pugh, VP of sales at Iron Valley Supply Co, about their expectations for the coming year based on SCOPE data and other factors.** 'Well, in truth, we can't be certain about anything, but we can make some educated estimates. There are many things industry members can look at and evaluate in making predictions about the future. I asked two of our distributor members to use some gut instinct, intuition, their many years of experience--along with any and all data available to them, including NASGW's own SCOPE data--to share some insights with readers about what they see on the horizon for 2022. Interviewed for this article were Chris DiCenso, president of Camfour Inc., and Jeff Pugh, VP of sales at Iron Valley Supply Co.' [Kenyon Gleason Op-Ed, Shooting Industry, 12/1/21]

- **Gleason: 'As distributors get ready for a more normal, or possibly slower year ahead, they're pivoting to focus on thinking very strategically about what to do to be prepared.'** 'When we analyze our NASGW SCOPE data from late 2021, it's evident the channel is starting to catch back up to demand--DiCenso could be on to something. As distributors get ready for a more normal, or possibly slower year ahead, they're pivoting to focus on thinking very strategically about what to do to be prepared.' [Kenyon Gleason Op-Ed, Shooting Industry, 12/1/21]

**December 2021: Gleason said SCOPE was NASGW's No. 1 priority.** 'Launched at the 2018 NASGW Expo in Pittsburgh, NASGW's SCOPE initiative has grown in its ability to provide real-time data of sales and inventory trends across the industry. According to Gleason, investment in SCOPE represents NASGW's 'number-one' priority. 'We firmly believe NASGW is in the perfect place to help this industry with data--to understand what's moving in the distribution channel, what consumers are asking for out there and what we have available to provide to them. We're 100% committed to its future and we plan to continue pushing forward as hard and as fast as we can to make it better for our members and the industry,' he said. Attendees were able to attend an NASGW SCOPE Update event on the second day of the Expo, hosted by Easton Kuboushek, NASGW director of data programs and new team member Tom Hopper, NASGW senior data analyst. SCOPE PLX, a product information management system, represents the next phase of development--which will be spearheaded by industry manufacturers. More information will be available in 2022 as it comes online.' [Shooting Industry, 12/1/21]

**January 2022: Point of sale platform Coreware partnered with NASGW to expand the SCOPE CLX platform.** 'Coreware, a leading point of sale platform in the shooting sports industry has partnered with NASGW to expand SCOPE CLX, a retail sales data platform designed to analyze consumer buying trends. Coreware's support of SCOPE CLX will help NASGW advance its goal to grow the shooting sports industry by collecting, standardizing and analyzing data. The addition of Coreware will add anonymous sales from over 300 stores, making SCOPE CLX the largest sample of the independent FFL market.' [NASGW Press Release, via Contify Retail News, 1/17/22]

- **Gleason: ‘Adding Coreware is a game-changer ... such a major player in our industry.’** “Adding Coreware is a game-changer for us,” said NASGW President Kenyon Gleason. “They are such a major player in our industry and we couldn’t be more excited to be working with them to expand data analytics in the shooting sports industry.” Coreware FFLs clients will benefit from a direct integration of SCOPE CLX which will offer insight into weekly sales by region, category, caliber and more from anonymous stores across the country. The data will help dealers understand sales trends, track popular products, make assortment decisions and manage overall inventory levels. Coreware integration is expected by spring of 2022.’ [NASGW Press Release, via Contify Retail News, 1/17/22]
- **Ezra Weinstein, CEO of Coreware, joined the SCOPE Advisory Board.** “We are extremely excited about our partnership with NASGW,” said Ezra Weinstein, CEO of Coreware. “Our mission is to help small businesses survive and thrive. By integrating into the SCOPE CLX platform, our customers will have access to better tools and data to help them make better buying decisions. The data offered by the SCOPE CLX platform will become an integral part of helping our customers increase sales, cut costs, and increase profits.” Weinstein will also contribute more than two decades of expertise by serving on the SCOPE Advisory Board. Tasked with defining data standards and industry best practices, this board of manufacturers, distributors, service providers and industry leaders is an integral part of SCOPE’s success.’ [NASGW Press Release, via Contify Retail News, 1/17/22]

**March 2022: NASGW released its first annual SCOPE Report compiling distributor sales and inventory data.** The National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW), the association representing shooting sports wholesalers, manufacturers and their trade partners, and the creator of the industry-leading SCOPE data platform, has released the first annual SCOPE Report compiling distributor sales and inventory data from throughout 2021, at no cost. ‘NASGW has been compiling data for the last few years and reporting is something we’ve wanted to provide for a long time,’ said Kenyon Gleason, NASGW president. ‘With the addition of some key new team members, we are excited to provide a standard to measure trends in our industry.’ The 2021 SCOPE Report is also available with regional breakdowns for a more granular analysis. In the future, the national report will be available for purchase on a quarterly and annual basis from NASGW. Data compiled from this report is sourced directly from SCOPE DLX (distributor sales and inventory). In addition, quarterly and annual reporting from SCOPE CLX (retailer sales) will be available in the future as NASGW continues to bring on more POS partners and retail stores. ‘We’ve got big things happening with SCOPE right now,’ said Easton Kuboushek, NASGW director of data programs. ‘We’re currently adding some significant partners, expanding our reach, growing our users and delivering on the vision we laid out years ago to be the standard for data in the shooting sports industry. This first report is just the beginning of what we plan to provide on a consistent basis.’ [Shooting Industry, 3/1/22]

**March 2022: NASGW announced the launch of SCOPE PLX, ‘the first-ever standardized database of shooting sports products.’** The National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW), the association representing shooting sports wholesalers, manufacturers and their trade partners, takes one big step toward product standardization across the industry with its launch of SCOPE PLX (Product Link Exchange) this week. SCOPE PLX is the first-ever standardized database of shooting sports products. With PLX, shooting sports manufacturers can easily enter detailed UPC data for each product, including images and brochures, to be

shared with all participating distributors at once. This new database will create consistent naming conventions for all firearms, optics and ammunition, setting a standard that allows for better communication across the industry. PLX will also expedite and improve the two-step distribution process by making the most accurate product information readily available to all NASGW members. From shipping and logistics to detailed information needed for compliance, PLX makes it easy for distributors to find the information they need to do business. It also puts manufacturers in control of their products, allowing them to be the single source of truth when it comes to product specifications. 'We are excited to be at the forefront of this movement to standardize the shooting sports industry,' said Easton Kuboushek, Director of Data Programs at the NASGW. 'As a nonprofit association, we're always looking to pioneer new technologies that advance the success of our industry, and PLX has the potential to be a gamechanger for all of our members.' SCOPE PLX is a free benefit to all NASGW members as a part of their membership. PLX is one of a suite of data tools developed by the NASGW, including SCOPE DLX (Distributor Link Exchange) and SCOPE CLX (Customer Link Exchange).' [NASGW Press Release, via Contify Retail News, 3/9/22]

**June 2022: NASGW began releasing quarterly SCOPE Reports compiling data on distributor sales and inventory data for firearms, ammunition and optics.** 'The National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW), creator of the industry's SCOPE Data Platform, has released the Q1 SCOPE Report, compiling distributor sales and inventory data from Jan. 1 through Mar. 31, 2022. 'Building upon the release of our annual SCOPE report, our quarterly reports will provide a consistent, ongoing update of the shooting sports distribution channel. The data and insight in this report are unparalleled in our industry, and we are excited to put this information to work for businesses and organizations across the shooting sports industry,' said Kenyon Gleason, NASGW president. Released in February, the 2021 annual report encompassed firearms only. The Q12022 SCOPE Report has expanded to also include optics and ammunition, as well as NICS data as a familiar benchmark. Data compiled from this report comes directly from SCOPE DLX (distributor sales and inventory). The NASGW plans to release a report for each quarter of 2022, and a year-end report that combines data from the entire year. 'The release of our 2021 annual report was widely successful. It's clear the industry has been hungry for something like this for a long time. The data compiled across all the SCOPE platforms is very powerful, and we're looking forward to sharing with a wider audience on a regular basis,' said Tom Hopper, NASGW senior data analyst.' [Shooting Industry, 6/1/22]

**September 2022: NASGW released its Q2 SCOPE Report.** 'The National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW) has released the 2022 Q2 SCOPE Report compiling distributor sales and inventory data from January 1, 2022 through June 30, 2022. 'The data in our SCOPE platform is becoming more and more valuable to businesses and organizations across our industry,' said Kenyon Gleason, NASGW president. 'Our Q2 report is a good high-level snapshot of existing trends with some deeper analysis by Tom Hopper, NASGW senior data analyst.' The 2022 Q2 Report marks the third report published by NASGW. Others include the 2021 Annual Report and the Q1 Report. These reports offer a regular review of current marketing conditions through distributor shipments, a level of insight previously unavailable to the industry. 'For businesses

looking for a better way to understand what's actually happening in today's market conditions, the SCOPE quarterly reports are a great tool,' Hopper added. 'The data we're using to analyze the market is the largest data sample available across the industry and paints a realistic picture about what's happening. The insight is invaluable.' NASGW has published a free, basic version of the report, as well as a full version of the report (available for purchase).' [Shooting Industry, 9/1/22]

**October 2022: Gleason: 'Hundreds of conversations throughout the first 12 months of my time at NASGW made one thing abundantly clear--there was a disconnect between manufacturers, distributors and the customers we serve over how to clearly see what's happening in the marketplace.'** 'Hundreds of conversations throughout the first 12 months of my time at NASGW made one thing abundantly clear--there was a disconnect between manufacturers, distributors and the customers we serve over how to clearly see what's happening in the marketplace. There was a hunger for data and information to better prepare companies for both the good and the not-so-good times that are common in any industry. 'Data in any industry is extremely important as it allows individuals the ability to review information in order to gain an understanding of trends and outliers or anomalies,' said Brian Gendron, Smith & Wesson manager of planning, allocation and marketing analytics. 'Without data, it would be very difficult to make educated decisions to benefit and grow the business. It would almost be irresponsible to not be analyzing data daily.' By the time SHOT Show 2016 came around, NASGW leadership was talking about creating something new and different. And by October 2016, we promised the industry 'big things' were coming. We'd been laying the groundwork for a comprehensive effort to gather, collect and share industry related data. That's when the real work began on what would become NASGW's suite of SCOPE data programs.' [Kenyon Gleason Op-Ed, Shooting Industry, 10/1/22]

- **Gleason: 'In an industry very used to independence and protecting the 'secret sauce' they use to do business, it wasn't easy getting our distributor members to share their data.'** 'In an industry very used to independence and protecting the 'secret sauce' they use to do business, it wasn't easy getting our distributor members to share their data. (In some cases, technology upgrades were necessary for them to even be able to share the data.)' [Kenyon Gleason Op-Ed, Shooting Industry, 10/1/22]
- **Gleason: 2/3 of NASGW distributor members share data; \$5.2B transactions tracked in 2021.** 'I'm proud to say: Today, about two-thirds of NASGW's distributor members--18 individual companies--are sharing data, with others continuing to slowly join the SCOPE DLX program. It has allowed us to build and track sales and inventory for \$5.2 billion in firearms transactions in 2021. SCOPE also collects shipment data for ammunition, optics and all accessory data as well. This represents a huge swath of the shooting industry landscape and allows us, and SCOPE subscribers, to aggregate, analyze and understand--down to individual product UPCs--what's moving in the sales channel, what's popular and what might not be so popular. Companies can compare their performance to the market benchmarks at large, and gain incredible insights about how they stack up against the rest of the industry.' [Kenyon Gleason Op-Ed, Shooting Industry, 10/1/22]
- **Gleason: 'Align BI in Utah--the company responsible for building SCOPE dashboards and aggregating the data--has done an incredible job achieving over 95% accuracy in many verticals.'**

‘The amount of time, energy and resources put into just cleaning the data is staggering. Fortunately, Align BI in Utah--the company responsible for building SCOPE dashboards and aggregating the data--has done an incredible job achieving over 95% accuracy in many verticals.’ [Kenyon Gleason Op-Ed, Shooting Industry, 10/1/22]

- **Gleason: SCOPE CLX collected data from over 600 retail locations.** ‘Now, through the extensive partnerships we’ve forged with industry point-of-sale providers like Celerant, Coreware, Orchid and AIM, NASGW is launching a full version of retail transactional information through the SCOPE CLX product. We floated a ‘beta’ version of the data to our subscribers for about a year. As of September 1, we have comprehensive data feeds flowing into our SCOPE CLX platform from over 600 retail locations with more added daily. This information is now available, in some format, to anyone in the industry with an interest in seeing greater detail about the shooting sports marketplace. The genuine and understated beauty of the system is for every company using SCOPE PLX to manage and share product information, the system and the data, get more and more detailed and more accurate. It’s truly an industry partnership.’ [Kenyon Gleason Op-Ed, Shooting Industry, 10/1/22]

**October 2022: NASGW Board Member and Zanders Sporting Goods COO Stefanie Zanders: ‘NASGW works on behalf of the wholesalers to liaison with manufacturers and institute various initiatives and business processes. One example is the new SCOPE program....’**

‘Celebrating 60 years in business in 2022, Zanders’ diverse product portfolio of more than 40,000 SKUs--combined with its new, streamlined warehouse--gives the Sparta, Ill.-based wholesale distributor an enviable one-two punch to serve dealers and exceed their expectations on a daily basis. This drive to excel is embodied by company President and Chief Operations Officer Stefanie Zanders, who shared four ways Zanders Sporting Goods stands out in the two-step distribution space. ... Being a part of the NASGW’s board of directors showcases Zanders’ willingness to support and strengthen the two-step distribution model. ‘One of the NASGW’s primary goals is to support and promote the importance of two-step distribution,’ Stefanie said. ‘Additionally, NASGW works on behalf of the wholesalers to liaison with manufacturers and institute various initiatives and business processes. One example is the new SCOPE program which analyzes and collects data from the complete supply chain--allowing us greater visibility to market conditions and ultimately gives us the tools to better serve our customers.’ Speaking of SCOPE, Zanders Sporting Goods is one of the leading distributors that has signed on to support the SCOPE DLX (Distributor Link Exchange) program. SCOPE DLX is a reporting and analytics tool that showcases distributor shipments and inventory--giving manufacturers real-time insights into how their products are moving throughout the distribution channel.’ [Shooting Industry, 10/1/22]

**November 2022: NASGW announced the launch of SCOPE CLX with more than 500 participating stores submitting data.** ‘The NASGW announced the full launch of SCOPE CLX, a platform that analyzes retail sales to empower shooting sports businesses. SCOPE CLX is a weekly sample of more than 500 stores reporting anonymously through leading point-of-sale software partners, including Coreware, Celerant, AIM and Orchid POS. ‘Our industry has been craving deeper insight into consumer buying behavior and competitor performance. SCOPE CLX is a great complement to NASGW existing programs that offer shooting sports businesses a macro and micro look at product performance. Most importantly, this initiative has brought our

industry together around a common mission to improve data standards and access,' said Easton Kuboushek, NASGW director of data programs. SCOPE first launched five years ago as a source of distributor sales and inventory data, now known as SCOPE DLX. In 2021, DLX tracked approximately 65% of the firearms market through distribution shipments. In the past two years, SCOPE has expanded to include an industry-wide product data standardization and distribution tool in SCOPE PLX, now adding the full launch of the consumer data platform in SCOPE CLX. The CLX data sample of 500 stores is the largest available, and represents a nearly identical geographic distribution to NICS checks and SCOPE DLX shipments, making it a trusted source. 'SCOPE CLX is truly a huge step for NASGW and the SCOPE platform,' said Kenyon Gleason, president of NASGW. 'Now users can follow industry trends from the distribution channel right through to the retail level, creating a powerful way to analyze the market. Users will certainly have more insight on their product performance, market share and consumer demand.'" [Shooting Industry, 11/1/22]

**December 2022: Gleason: 'SCOPE CLX is only going to grow.'** 'To help navigate this period of 'discovery' in the marketplace, NASGW has developed a reliable tool to empower decision-making: The SCOPE data initiative. The NASGW SCOPE data initiative, which tracks sales and inventory data across the firearms industry, recently launched SCOPE CLX. SCOPE CLX utilizes data from point-of-sale providers (currently Celerant, Coreware, Orchid Advisors and AIM) to aggregate sales from 500+ retail locations throughout the U.S. 'SCOPE CLX is only going to grow; we're going to continue getting a bigger and bigger sample size--making it more valuable for all of our customers,' Gleason said. During the Expo, NASGW hosted its annual SCOPE update, which was well received by attendees. 'We have a lot of new interest in the program, especially with the expanded capabilities of reporting data from retail,' Gleason said. 'The mission of NASGW is to help the buy/sell process, and what better way to do that than to understand what's actually being bought and sold down to the retail level. The more information we have, the better it will be for everyone--we won't be satisfied until there are well over 1,000 stores reporting data.' Currently, SCOPE tracks the sales of firearms, ammunition and optics. Gleason shared additional categories will be tracked in the near future, including holsters, magazines and suppressors.' [Shooting Industry, 12/1/22]

**February 2023: NASGW Senior Data Analyst Tom Hopper predicted, based on SCOPE data, that 2023 ammunition shipments would shrink but still be above 2019 levels.** 'On Wednesday morning during SHOT week, Jan. 18, I attended the SHOT Show Research Breakfast, which put the current market in context. NSSF, Southwick Associates, NASGW SCOPE and GunBroker.com each provided data and a preview of research to come that will benefit the industry. ... NASGW Senior Data Analyst Tom Hopper shared 5 trends to watch for in 2023--one of them caught my attention, and others sitting next to me. Hopper, through data obtained via NASGW SCOPE CLX and DLX, predicts centerfire ammunition shipments will shrink in 2023 but will still be double 2019 levels. This was an underlying point made during the research breakfast: Yes, things are forecasted to be 'down' year over year from 2022, but by pre-COVID metrics, the industry is still in a strong position.' [Shooting Industry, 2/1/23]

**September 2023: Shooting Industry: 'NASGW has added three additional distributor data feeds' to SCOPE DLX.** 'NASGW has added three additional distributor data feeds to its distribution sales and inventory analytics platform, SCOPE DLX. Updates to the platform, which had already tracked more than 65% of all new and imported firearms, went live Aug. 16, 2023. 'The industry's most accurate and expansive data set keeps getting better,' said Kenyon Gleason, NASGW president. 'This update will add more distributor data and inventory to our DLX platform as well as continue to enhance our robust data tagging matching nearly 99% of the available firearms UPCs.' Distributors that are now contributing data include new members Primary Arms and 2nd Amendment Wholesale--as well as longtime member MGE Wholesale, which was previously limited in its ability to share data. Manufacturers will also be able to automate reports for their products from all 21 distributors.' [Shooting Industry, 9/1/23]

- **The update 'will include an update of UPC tagging, resulting in the most current and accurate categorization of products.'** 'In addition to increased distributor data, the Aug. 16 update will include an update of UPC tagging, resulting in the most current and accurate categorization of products. This round of data attribute enhancements has been an ongoing effort to catalog and map existing UPCs that were missing standardized attributes most products across the industry include. These attributes help with data segmentation, reporting and product comparisons. Accurate attribute tagging is one of the key features that sets SCOPE apart from other industry data platforms. Accuracy of the data is crucial to creating quality reports that users and the industry can rely on. When the products are not cataloged consistently it makes it difficult, if not impossible, to collect accurate data. This attribute update is a big step forward in SCOPE'S progressive development.' [Shooting Industry, 9/1/23]

**December 2024: Gleason said SCOPE data showed an uptick in demand following the assassination attempt on then-presidential candidate Donald Trump.** 'The NASGW SCOPE data initiative is a suite of data-driven tools that collect, analyze and distribute information to strengthen businesses in the shooting sports--using data from manufacturers, wholesalers, point-of-sale providers and dealers. It has evolved into a vital source of information for industry companies to reference. At the NASGW Expo, the SCOPE team hosts an annual update to share the trends they've observed in the market. 'It's the one time of year where we can share what's happening in the market to non-subscribers,' Gleason said. 'The numbers we showed were a little surprising to some people. At that time, we had already observed a shift in the market in August and September. We're still down overall compared to last year, but it's not as 'doom and gloom' as people thought it was.' Gleason pointed out the first assassination attempt on President-Elect Donald Trump in Butler, Pa., July 13, created a noticeable uptick in sales in the SCOPE data. 'This sales bump carried into August and September, and then the start of the fall hunting season further elevated sales,' he said. 'We're not going to be breaking any records this year by any stretch, but there are still segments in the market--even in a down market--that are doing well.'" [Shooting Industry, 12/1/24]

## **NASGW VAULT Data Hub**

**March 2025: NASGW President Kenyon Gleason: 'One of the greatest challenges in our industry has been, and remains, finding accurate product information and data .... Lucky for**

**us, technology has come a long way in the last two decades and it's given our organization the opportunity to solve this problem once and for all.'** 'One of the greatest challenges in our industry has been, and remains, finding accurate product information and data, including photography assets and product attributes. A casual search of the internet could lead you to multiple photos with multiple color backgrounds, sizes and descriptions for a product that's actually supposed to be the same exact thing. Though often you'd be hard pressed to know it based on what you discover. Worse yet, a customer might order an item relying on an image they see only to realize when the product arrives, it's absolutely not what they thought they were ordering. This is true in business-to-business (B2B) relationships and business-to-consumer (B2C) sales too. It can lead to upset customers and certainly to extra cost and confusion. About 20 years ago, NASGW tried to solve this ongoing problem by creating a digital product information catalog. Unfortunately, that effort never saw the light of day. Lucky for us, technology has come a long way in the last two decades and it's given our organization the opportunity to solve this problem once and for all. Other industries have already implemented similar solutions. Now, it's our turn.' [NASGW Press Release, [03/14/25](#)]

**Gleason: 'VAULT is your ultimate digital platform for standardized, accurate product data.'** 'Enter VAULT, a digital product information exchange exclusively for the shooting sports community. VAULT is your ultimate digital platform for standardized, accurate product data. With VAULT, you'll be able to enhance efficiency and reduce errors with consistent descriptions, specifications, and imagery for manufacturers, distributors, and retailers. VAULT is going to revolutionize how product information and data are distributed throughout the shooting sports industry.' [NASGW Press Release, [03/14/25](#)]

**Gleason: 'We've been meeting with distributors, manufacturers and retailers and all of them tell the same story, getting accurate and dependable visual and descriptive assets can be a crap shoot. ... VAULT aims to solve all of that.'** 'We've been meeting with distributors, manufacturers and retailers and all of them tell the same story, getting accurate and dependable visual and descriptive assets can be a crap shoot. The current system we have is simply not efficient and there's a massive amount of duplication. This can make it exceptionally challenging for a major manufacturer to protect their brand, it certainly makes it challenging for a distributor to keep track of the thousands and thousands of products and for a retailer trying to build customer traffic, it's a nightmare finding accurate photos and details to use in their promotional efforts. VAULT aims to solve all of that.' [NASGW Press Release, [03/14/25](#)]

**Gleason: 'By creating an online warehouse of these items, all in one location ... the entire industry can be singing from the same songbook.'** 'By creating an online warehouse of these items, all in one location, all accessible in real time, with standardized information and image sizes, the entire industry can be singing from the same songbook. What this means is that ultimately, customers win. VAULT allows for a base set of facts, figures and photos to be available to everyone. Lifestyle and other photos can also be added if a company chooses to do so, or those can be alternative marketing efforts for specific purposes and specific campaigns.

Meanwhile, there will be one, true source for basic accurate and needed information, the stuff most everyone uses every day.' [NASGW Press Release, [03/14/25](#)]

**NASGW: 'VAULT is the shooting sports industry's shared product database. By centralizing product information, we save time, reduce errors, and give your business the tools to operate smarter.'** [Vault, accessed [01/05/25](#)]

**'VAULT was created to solve one of the shooting sports industry's biggest challenges: product data chaos.'** 'VAULT was created to solve one of the shooting sports industry's biggest challenges: product data chaos. By uniting manufacturers, distributors, retailers, and rep groups on a single, standardized platform, VAULT ensures accuracy, efficiency, and trust at every stage of the supply chain.' [Vault, accessed [01/05/25](#)]

**October 2025: NASGW Vice President Brandon Roper delivered a webinar explaining the benefits of the VAULT platform.** [YouTube, [10/15/25](#)]

**Roper: With VAULT's 'pricing module ... you'll always have up to date MAP pricing, MSRP and MTP. So that way you always know the MTP price. You always know what MSRP is, and you're always going to know what MAP is.'** 'All right, so this is your pricing module. So another thing, not only the specs and the images, but you'll always have up to date MAP pricing, MSRP and MTP. So that way you always know the MTP price. You always know what MSRP is, and you're always going to know what MAP is. You know that that minimum that they're asking you to sell it for.' [YouTube, [10/15/25](#)]

## **NASGW Political/Policy Activity**

### Financial Services

**December 2023: NASGW was among the organizations supporting a letter from Republican senators calling on the Biden administration to delay FinCEN reporting requirements for small businesses.** 'U.S. Senators Mike Crapo, Jim Risch (both R-Idaho) and Rick Scott (R-Florida) with U.S. House of Representatives Financial Services Chairman Patrick McHenry (R-North Carolina) and 76 of their colleagues wrote U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and Director of the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) Andrea Gacki urging the administration to delay the implementation of new reporting requirements for small businesses. 'On behalf of the millions of small businesses in our states, we write to you today with significant concerns regarding the implementation of the beneficial ownership reporting requirements under the Corporate Transparency Act (CTA),' wrote the elected officials. '... While the goal of this new law is to target shell companies involved in illicit financial transactions, the CTA defines covered entities as those having 20 or fewer employees and under \$5 million in revenue. In other words, not just shell companies, but nearly every small business in America.'... The letter is also supported by numerous organizations, including: ... National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers' [Press Release, Sen. Mike Crapo, [12/21/23](#)]

**December 2021: Gleason said NASGW was working with industry organizations to confront challenges related to banking, financing and insurance.** 'Gleason shared the NASGW is currently engaged with other industry organizations to confront the very public challenges industry businesses face in banking, financing and insurance. 'In meetings over the past few months and at Expo, there's a large desire from our members to continue to come together and spitball ideas for how we as an industry can collectively fight those challenges,' he said. 'It's going to take cooperation, partnership and a lot of grit and determination from across the industry to work together and make it happen.'" [Shooting Industry, 12/1/21]

#### NSSF PAC Donation

**May 2024: NASGW contributed \$25K to NSSF's Protect Liberty PAC.** 'The NSSF's Protect Liberty Political Action Committee (PAC) has announced several donations from other industry organizations. March 11, the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW) contributed \$25,000; April 8, Silencer Central committed \$50,000 in support of the PAC; and April 15, Grasso Holdings contributed \$10,000. These gifts will be utilized to help identify and support the election of candidates who are dedicated to preserving and protecting liberty, freedom and the Constitutional rights of all Americans. The funds will help the Protect Liberty PAC ensure voters in key battleground states and congressional districts across the country are informed about candidates who will fight for their Constitutional rights rather than carry out a far-left political agenda that threatens those rights.' [Shooting Industry, 5/1/24]

- **NASGW does not have a PAC of its own, and it has not made any other political contributions as an organization, according to FEC records.** [Federal Election Commission Receipts, accessed [5/12/25](#)]

#### Russia

**2015: Alleged Russian spy Mariia Butina was in frequent contact with Brownell's Inc. CEO Pete Brownell, who was serving as NASGW chairman at the time.** 'On January 11, 2015, Butina emailed Brownell offering to provide him information on Russian firearms manufacturers.<sup>256</sup> Brownell responded: Maria – it was a good chance to have a more substantive discussion. I hope there are more of them. I believe David Kean (sic) first introduced us on your trip a couple years back, now that I have had time to think about how long we have had chances to talk. When regulations are favorable, Russia and surrounding countries have always been a great source for firearms, ammunition and product. We will be at shot show, IWA and NRA show in the very near future. We will do a review of product needs for Brownells and our wholesale companies, Crow Shooter a Supply and Gamaliel in preparation. AND As NASGW (NASGW.org) national association of sporting goods wholesaler) chairman it would be very good to connect our organizations to facilitate commercial connections where it makes sense.<sup>2</sup>' [U.S. Senate Committee on Finance Minority Staff Report, The NRA and Russia, [September 2019](#)]

**Senate Finance Committee Minority Report: ‘Butina connected with multiple Brownells employees throughout 2015.’** ‘Additional emails show Butina connected with multiple Brownells employees throughout 2015. Brownells acquired Crow Shooting Supply in 2011. Steve Crow, the General Manager for Crow Shooting Supply, reached out to Butina in February of 2015 about her ‘contacts for Russian made ammo.’<sup>260</sup> Later that year, they met in person at the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW) Convention (for which Brownell served as Chairman).<sup>261</sup> In a November 2, 2015, email, Butina confirmed she asked her Russian contacts about a manufacturing facility in Barnaul, Altai Krai, Russia, and explained she would ‘have an answer and options soon’ for him’ [U.S. Senate Committee on Finance Minority Staff Report, The NRA and Russia, [September 2019](#)]

**Butina was invited to speak to the NASGW board and participate in a VIP Reception and Awards Dinner.** ‘Following the visit to Brownells, Butina emailed one of the company’s employees to thank her for organizing a tour of the facilities and to ask for help attending the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW) Expo, which took place later that month in New Orleans.<sup>343</sup> The Brownells employee responded the following day, providing Butina with a schedule of events and an agenda for the organization’s upcoming board meeting. According to the email, Butina was invited to speak at the board meeting and to participate in a VIP Reception and an Awards Reception and Dinner.’ [U.S. Senate Committee on Finance Minority Staff Report, The NRA and Russia, [September 2019](#)]

**Brownell ‘emailed ... to confirm that he had set up Butina with access to the organization’s board.’** ‘Weeks later, Brownell, who then was serving as Chairman of the NASGW, emailed Erickson to confirm that he had set up Butina with access to the organization’s board:<sup>345</sup> Paul – quick update on Marie. We have her plugged into the national association of sporting good wholesalers board and annual meeting this week. These are all the big importers, wholesalers and manufacturers of firearm stuff in America.<sup>346</sup> A pair of January 2016 emails show that after Brownell returned from Russia, he and Butina discussed another upcoming meeting in Iowa in which she proposed they attend a debate watch party together at Trump or Cruz campaign offices. Butina even suggested they could ‘attend anonymously’ if they attended a watch party in a public space.’ [U.S. Senate Committee on Finance Minority Staff Report, The NRA and Russia, [September 2019](#)]

## Second Amendment

### **October 2024: NASGW President Gleason elected to Second Amendment Foundation Board of Trustees.**

‘Kenyon Gleason, president and secretary of the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW), has been elected to the Second Amendment Foundation (SAF) Board of Trustees. ‘Second Amendment Foundation’s work in the Second Amendment space is second to none, and I am honored to now be an integral part of the organization,’ Gleason said. ‘NASGW came on board as a SAF corporate partner earlier this year, and it’s a privilege to now be able to

donate my time and lend my expertise to help guide the organization as they continue to fight for our constitutional rights across the country.” [AmmoLand, 10/14/24]

**August 2024: NASGW filed an amicus brief in opposition to the ATF’s regulation of ‘frames or receivers.’** ‘Regulating items that can be readily transformed into something else is hardly beyond Congress’ ken. Congress knows how to do it, and did not do it here. In the firearms context in particular, Congress has made clear beyond cavil that some items capable of conversion do count as ‘firearms’ under the GCA and related laws. But Congress did so by using very explicit language that is conspicuously absent from the ‘frame or receiver’ provision. Congress’ decision to use those words elsewhere but not here must be respected. ATF’s effort to rewrite a decades–old statute—and, in the process, not only unsettle decades–long expectations, but displace various states’ approaches to the issues—eviscerates the separation of powers and tramples over the liberties that our Constitution secures. That ATF has done so in the context of a criminal statute governing constitutionally protected conduct makes its effort that much more beyond the pale, as that is the absolute last context in which an agency should have leeway to stretch the text. Accordingly, even if there were any statutory ambiguity here—and there is not—the rule of lenity and the canon of constitutional avoidance would both militate against blessing ATF’s late–breaking maximalist reading of the statute.’ [Amicus Brief for National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers, [Garland v. VanDerStok](#), [8/20/24](#)]

## Taxes

**January 2025: NASGW signed a letter in support of the proposed ‘Main Street Tax Certainty Act of 2025,’ which would make permanent a 20% deduction for small and family–owned businesses.** ‘The undersigned business groups strongly support your Main Street Tax Certainty Act of 2025, legislation to make permanent the 20–percent deduction for small– and family–owned businesses (Section 199A). This legislation would provide certainty to the millions of S corporations, partnerships and sole proprietorships that rely on the Section 199A deduction to remain competitive.... Sincerely, ... National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers....’ [Letter from Business Groups to Sen. Steve Daines and Rep. Lloyd Smucker, [1/22/25](#)]