

# Firearm Marketing Bans Are Really About Erasing The Next Generation's Gun Rights



By NSSF National Shooting Sports Foundation

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**California** and **Illinois** laws that have banned advertising lawmakers in those two states consider to be targeted at minors doesn't have anything to do with increasing public safety. It doesn't have anything to do with fighting the criminal misuse of firearms. The laws are intended to do one thing – convince the next generation of Americans that the **Second Amendment** doesn't exist.

Lawmakers in those two states passed, and Govs. Gavin Newsom and **J.B. Pritzker** signed, laws that ban firearm-related advertising that could be attractive or be considered to target children. NSSF has filed legal challenges to both laws in **California** and **Illinois**. Those laws violate not only the First Amendment-protected right of commercial speech but also work to eliminate the Second Amendment from the conversation with the next generation of gun owners and outdoorsmen and women. These lawmakers believe that if they can erase imagery and advertising that shows youth learning safe and responsible firearm ownership and ethical hunting traditions, the next generation will never understand that the Second Amendment is their right to exercise when they become of legal age to purchase firearms on their own.

If the next generation of Americans don't learn about Second Amendment freedoms, they won't know. If they don't know, gun control politicians would have an easier avenue by which to eliminate the right altogether. It's a devious plan and one the firearm industry is fighting against.

## Target: Youth

California's and Illinois' laws are targeting advertising for youth-model firearms that parents could purchase to teach youths to safely and responsibly handle firearms. The rifle and shotguns are simply the latest in a long series of youth-model firearms designed to fit younger marksmen learning to safely shoot.

Many of today's adult shooting sports enthusiasts will recall learning the fundamentals of shooting on youth-model firearms. This is **nothing new**. Manufacturers have been offering smaller caliber and smaller gauges for those learning responsible firearm handling for decades. None of that, however, changes how firearms are purchased.

Every firearm purchased at retail is only sold to adults over 18 and after signing the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives Form 4473 that attests the purchaser is not a prohibited individual and is confirmed with the **FBI's** National Instant Criminal Background Check System (**NICS**). Since firearms can't be purchased by youths, it negates the accusations that firearm manufacturers are targeting children with advertising. Instead, the bans on advertising eliminate depictions that firearm safety and hunting traditions can be passed down to the next generation of Americans who would value their rights and the hunting memories made with adults closely supervising them.

## Disastrous Effects

That's not hyperbole. USA Clay Target League suspended activities in California after the law banning advertising "attractive to minors" was signed there. That carries a \$25,000 civil penalty for any and each instance of firearm-related marketing to persons under the age of 18.

"Some parents and students say this law could end up costing them their sport," **Reason.com reported**.

## Growing Interest

These laws are intended to squelch the conversation of youths learning safe and responsible firearm ownership and it's coming at a time when youth shooting sports are experiencing a renaissance of sorts. USA Clay Target League President John Nelson **said** that Minnesota's statewide clay shooting competition drew nearly 8,000 student competitors from 340 teams this year. When he started in 2009, there were 10 in the competition.

The Reload **reported** that it's not just a regional phenomenon. Nationwide, there are more than 1,500 teams and nearly 45,000 athletes, according to USA Clay Target Shooting's **annual report**. The Chicago Tribune **reported** in 2021, that Illinois had 55 teams. Arkansas' Game and Fish Commission **recently announced** the creation of its new Shooting Sports Division,

elevating the shooting sports from a program to a full-blown department within the agency that will have a concentration on growing the youth shooting sports.

The effort to erase responsible firearm ownership from the minds of youth is getting a boost from the federal government too. The **Biden administration's** Department of Education stripped funding for hunter education and archery programs after deliberately misinterpreting the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA). **Congress** is up in **arms** over that maneuver. U.S. **senators** and **representatives** from both parties are blasting the decision to defund classes that teach safe and responsible firearm ownership. So are **governors** and state **attorneys general**. NSSF supports **H. Res. 615**, a resolution introduced by Rep. Glenn Grothman (R-Wis.) condemning the Biden administration's attack on schools that educate students on responsible firearm handling.

None of these legislative or policy attacks are designed to curb the criminal misuse of firearms. They only stop the ability for parents and guardians to pass along their passion for shooting sports and value for their fundamental Second Amendment freedoms. The antigun attacks were never designed to stop **crime**. They only stop the respect for safe and responsible firearm ownership and diminish Second Amendment rights to the point where the next generation won't know that their rights were taken from them.

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