



Written by [Patrick Krey](#) on March 7, 2023

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## **Exercising the Right**

### **ATF Has “Zero Tolerance” for Gun Stores**

In an ominous sign of things to come, Fox News reported on February 10 about recent guidance from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) that some say indicates aggressive hostility toward those who sell guns.

Fox News Digital obtained internal guidance documents from the ATF that were released in January of last year detailing a new policy the agency is using to shut down gun stores. The guidelines stated that the agency would show “zero tolerance” when dealing with even first-time violations, and that the default course of action would be the “revocation” of the gun seller’s Federal Firearms License (FFL). The guidelines listed the many infractions that might result in revocation of an FFL, and added that the “ATF may also revoke for any other willful first-time violation as it deems appropriate.”

Fox News interviewed Aiden Johnston, director of federal affairs for Gun Owners of America (GOA), who argued that “Joe Biden has weaponized the ATF against gun owners and the firearms industry in an attempt to violate the Second Amendment and expand his illegal gun registry.... Rather than targeting those who display clear negligence and disregard for the law, ATF now revokes licenses without warning at the discovery of a first mistake by honest gun dealers.” Johnston further warned Fox News that when these stores are closed, “the ATF adds their records to its digital gun registry that has nearly a billion gun and gun owner records.”

GOA alleges that the ATF is “maintaining a digital, searchable, centralized registry of guns and gun owners in violation of various federal prohibitions.” The GOA has been critical of the Biden administration for building what it claims is an unlawful database of all gun owners, and has released a report claiming that the “ATF has reached a point where it has converted nearly one billion records (required to be kept by FFLs) into a single, centralized, and searchable national gun registry.”

### **Octogenarian Shoots Home Invader**

NBC Chicago reported on January 30 about an elderly man who survived a violent home invasion because he was armed. The terrifying crime occurred not far from O’Hare International Airport.

The 80-year-old man was home alone in the early afternoon when two strangers — a man and a woman — knocked on his door. The senior citizen did not suspect foul play, so he opened his door and, much to his shock, the two burglars forced their way into the home. The intruders began brutally beating the homeowner, but the victim was able to pull out his firearm and shoot the male suspect in the stomach. Both burglars fled from the scene, and medics soon arrived to take the injured homeowner to a nearby medical facility for treatment. Chicago police told NBC Chicago that the elderly man was “battered and sustained several injuries throughout the body.”

The suspects went to nearby Resurrection Hospital for medical treatment, and were later charged by Chicago police after criminal investigators were able to link them to the crime. CBS Chicago reported on February 2 that 51-year-old Mansfield Wallace was charged with one count of home invasion and two counts of aggravated battery, and 31-year-old Tabitha Hemphill, who was already on probation, was charged with one felony count of home invasion.



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Many neighbors were rattled by the violent crime, and some praised the man for his actions and explained how he set a great example for all homeowners. Neighbor Kenny Vierneisel told CBS Chicago, "I'm glad that he protected himself. If someone breaks into my apartment, I'm going to do the same thing."

Considering how badly he was beaten, the elderly victim is lucky to be alive and, had he not been armed, it seems likely that the violent home invaders would have beaten him to death.

## **"Absolutely Had the Right to Defend Herself"**

The ABC affiliate in Interlachen, Florida, reported on February 15 about a similar story involving an older homeowner fighting back against a violent intruder.

Police investigators are still piecing together all of the details, but they say a 67-year-old woman was fast asleep when a deranged man began shaking her front door handle in the middle of the night. The woman thought it was her husband returning from work, so she went to the door and opened it. Much to her surprise, a stranger armed with a gun burst into her home. The terrified woman ran and retrieved a loaded firearm, pointed it at the intruder, and ordered him to leave. The man refused to comply with her order and raised his gun toward her in a menacing manner. In fear for her life, the woman fired, killing the intruder.

Authorities later identified the suspect, who was pronounced dead at the scene, as 64-year-old Reginald Best. Law enforcement is still conducting an investigation but, based on the known facts, police are fairly confident that the woman's actions were justified. Police say that Best called police shortly before the incident and made bizarre rambling statements about hiding from his neighbors and "people in orange" who were chasing him. A woman who was a resident at the same home as Best later called police to say that Best jumped out of a window of the home armed with a gun and ran down the street.

All this circumstantial evidence led criminal investigators to believe that Best was suffering from some type of mental health crisis. Sheriff H.D. "Gator" DeLoach of the Putnam County Sheriff's Office told WCJB News, "It's unfortunate that Best was struggling with some apparently profound issues and posed a deadly threat to the victim and her family.... She absolutely had the right to defend herself and I'm grateful that her decisive action stopped the threat, and eliminated the risk of further loss of life, making her entire neighborhood safer."



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