



Written by [Paul Dragu](#) on July 7, 2026

Legacy Media Triggered Over Trump Admin's Shot at Gun Regulations

The Trump administration is triggering hysteria in legacy media ranks over its agenda to relax gun rules.

They're rolling back a "tsunami" of gun regulations, Axios [announced](#) over the weekend, adding that "the effect critics fear is more guns moving with less federal scrutiny."

The New York Times [told readers](#) on Sunday, "Trump Administration Rolls Back Dozens of Gun Regulations." The *Times* leads with this opening:

The Trump administration is scrapping more than three dozen firearms regulations, abandoning a crackdown on illegal sales, restoring gun rights to some people with mental illness and loosening oversight of private weapons transactions



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These rollbacks would reportedly "let Americans ship handguns in the mail, gut Biden-era background check rules and make it harder to yank a gun dealer's license."

Rule Changes

Some of these regulatory changes or proposals have been in motion for some time during Trump's second term. Back in April, the ATF [announced](#) changes that would "reduce burdens on law-abiding gun owners and businesses." An ATF spokesperson said the point was to shift focus to "willful violators and criminal actors, not inadvertent compliance issues by responsible owners and licensees." The changes include streamlining rules and regulations on forms to make it easier on gun dealers and owners, and a ban reversal on "non-lethal training ammunition and dual-use barrels." You can read more about the changes [here](#).

Some of the changes are simply reversals of Biden-era rules.

A spokesperson from the anti-gun organization Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence bemoaned the policy shifts. It "takes us back 100 years," Kris Brown told the *Times*. "It's really decimating A.T.F.'s ability to regulate this industry.... This is, to us, absolutely the gun industry's wish list."

Resource Rerout

That might be true (who says that's a bad thing?), but it's also clearing up time and resources for the ATF to better pursue real criminals. [According](#) to a press release from last week, the ATF, in its own



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words, “has recorded significant results since shifting its enforcement priorities in 2025 to refocus on violent crime, transnational criminal organizations, and illegal pipelines supplying them firearms.” In 2025, the ATF

saw substantial increases in criminal referrals and charges compared to 2024. Referrals to the Department of Justice rose sharply across the six firearms-related statutes, including straw purchasing, which increased 182%; trafficking, which rose 129%; and false statements under [U.S. law], which increased 135%. Overall, referrals across all six trafficking statutes climbed from 155% year over year. Criminal charges followed a similar trend, with charges across all six trafficking statutes increasing 57% year over year. Roughly a quarter of all ATF-initiated violent crime cases involve investigating firearms trafficking to Mexico.

Mental Defectives and Mail Guns

As for the part about loosening gun ownership rules for the supposedly mentally ill, that’s referring to proposed ATF rules that aim to change the definition of who is legally classified as mentally unfit to own firearms.

The Gun Control Act of 1968 (GCA) bans anyone “who has been adjudicated as a mental defective or who has been committed to a mental institution” from possessing firearms or ammunition. It also prohibits people from selling or giving a firearm to someone they believe “has been adjudicated as a mental defective or has been committed to any mental institution at 16 years of age or older.” The government lists in the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) who those people are.

The criteria for who is mentally defective includes someone who is a danger to himself, can’t manage his own affairs, or has been found insane by a court. In its enforcement definition, the ATF included definitions from the Veterans Affairs department, which states a “mentally incompetent person is one who because of injury or disease lacks the mental capacity to contract or to manage his or her own affairs, including disbursement of funds without limitation.” So, the ATF added to its list of banned people those whom the VA said were bad at managing their finances.

The ATF says that its definition of who may not have a gun has been, for decades, too broad. “ATF believes its current regulation defining ‘adjudicated as a mental defective’ is overbroad because it encompasses individuals who do not suffer from the kinds of mental disabilities that fell within the term ‘mental defective,’” says the ATF. Moreover:

Those with isolated functional deficits are not the kind of individuals who were understood to be mentally defective as that term was used in the GCA. Nor are such individuals the kind of irresponsible or dangerous persons who Congress sought to prohibit from possessing firearms under [the law].”

Now, the ATF says, some of the people banned shouldn’t have been. The new rule proposal would “make clear that individuals who present solely with isolated functional deficits, such as the inability to manage their government benefits, are not mentally defective.”

The U.S. Postal Service has also proposed a rule that would allow “people to mail handguns under the



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same rules as lawful rifles and shotguns after the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel concluded earlier this year that the roughly century-old ban was unconstitutional," per reports.

Court Challenges

The fact that these entities are in charge of determining gun laws is concerning in itself. All the "rules" should be decided by the people through their legislative representatives. The laws should be clear enough so as not to require an interpretation from an entity that is likely unconstitutional in the first place.

Meanwhile, the Trump administration is also going after anti-gun regulations passed in Democratic strongholds. "It has challenged bans on semiautomatic rifles in Colorado, the District of Columbia and Virginia," according to reports. Last week, "it sued California for its restrictions on the sale of Glock and Glock-style handguns, and Virginia for limits on the sale of semiautomatic rifles, hours after both laws went into effect."

Americans and Their Guns

Unlike with other issues, gun rights have broad support among Republican and Republican-adjacent voters. These people generally believe that we need fewer gun regulations, not more. Americans in general like their guns. To what extent such information can be accurately gleaned, there are up to 500 million firearms in the hands of U.S. civilians. Surveys suggest that up to half of American households own firearms. But as most gun owners know, a common rule is that it's nobody's business if one owns a gun and, especially, how many guns one owns. So it's possible those numbers are an under-representation.

Since 2020, there has also been a surge in gun ownership among Democrats, with more than half becoming first-time gun owners. The Black Lives Matter riots opened the eyes of many hitherto naive leftists who believed the police would always be nearby to save the day. The year 2020 proved on a mass scale that was not true.

Despite decades of propaganda campaigns scripted to fool Americans into believing that America needs more rules and less guns, the agenda simply hasn't worked. Americans like guns, and as much as the national identity has changed, this seems to be an area where we remain stubborn.

Any citizen who lives in a country that won't allow him or her lethal means of self-defense lives in a state of tyranny. Self-defense falls under the umbrella of the right to life. A government that doesn't allow gun ownership wants a monopoly on force, and a government that owns all the means of force is a very dangerous government.



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