



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on June 26, 2023

IRS, ATF Join Forces to Harass Gun Shop Owners

In continuing their acts of defiance against the law, agents of the IRS and the ATF have raided gun stores in [Georgia](#) and [Montana](#). They're just following orders by Joe Biden.

Just months after being inaugurated, [Biden issued his orders](#):

Today [June 23, 2021], the Justice Department is announcing a new policy to underscore zero tolerance for willful violations of the law by federally licensed firearms dealers that put public safety at risk.

Absent extraordinary circumstances that would need to be justified to the Director, ATF will seek to revoke the licenses of dealers *the first time* that they violate federal law by willfully 1) transferring a firearm to a prohibited person, 2) failing to run a required background check, 3) falsifying records, such as a firearms transaction form, 4) failing to respond to an ATF tracing request, or 5) refusing to permit ATF to conduct an inspection in violation of the law. [Emphasis added.]



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On Monday, March 27, 16 heavily armed ATF agents stormed into Adventure Outdoor, one of the largest gun dealers in the southeast, demanding all records pertaining to gun purchases. Agents from around the country were involved in the raid, which extended to other gun stores across Georgia.

Republican Georgia Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene said: "It's unprecedented and unusual for them to have 15 to 16 agents from out of state [Colorado, New York, and Massachusetts] which they have never done before, coming here for an inspection."

"It's suspicious timing," said Georgia Congressman Rich McCormick (R), noting that the raid happened just days before Florida Governor Ron DeSantis was due to make an appearance at Adventure Outdoor.

On June 14, 20 agents from both the IRS and the ATF raided a gun shop in Great Falls, Montana — Highwood Creek Outfitters — closed the place down, and for 10 hours rummaged through the store's records. By the time they were done they had removed more than 20 boxes of Form 4473s, dating back to the start of the business 13 years ago. In all more than 12,000 individual forms (containing buyers' names, addresses, personal information, and photo IDs) were removed.

This far exceeded the terms of the federal search warrant, according to Montana's Attorney General



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Austin Knudsen. He [called the seizure](#) of the 4473s “extremely concerning” because the warrant “limited the scope of the search [just] to financial records.”

Said Knudsen: “These aren’t financial records. They’re records of lawful firearm purchases. What ... does the IRS need with 4473s?”

And why was the ATF there? Knudsen posed the answer: “We know the ATF ... is trying to scoop up as many of these purchase records as possible, and that’s what it looks like they’re trying to do here.”

When asked why it was there along with the IRS, the ATF said it was merely “providing assistance” to the IRS in its raid.

The owner of Highwood Creek Outfitters, Tom Van Hoose, said, “I can only assume it’s because of the style of weapons that we have [for sale] and the press that’s so against them. The current administration seems to be hell-bent on getting these guns out of the hands of average Americans.”

He added:

They’re trying to put mom-and-pop gun shops out of business all across America. They will try to bankrupt me if they can’t find a legal or regulatory reason to put me out of business.

An outraged congressman representing Van Hoose sent [a scathing letter](#) to both the IRS and ATF, demanding answers. Wrote Rep. Matthew Rosendale (R-Mont.):

It has come to my attention that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) abruptly entered and closed Highwood Creek Outfitters in Great Falls, Montana.

Although the ATF [is] a useful resource in crime prevention and firearms theft cases this event is another example of President Biden weaponizing federal agencies to target and harass hard-working Americans for exercising their constitutional rights.

While we wait to hear more details and rational [sic] behind this raid, given the positions of the Biden Administration this raid appears to be an attempt to intimidate firearms dealers and owners.

This is particularly worrying given that it comes just weeks [after] the ATF closed a gun store [Adventure Outdoor] in Cobb County, Georgia without any advance warning.

A pattern of intimidation and harassment seems to be emerging under [ATF] Director [Steven] Dettelbach’s leadership of the ATF. This pattern appears to be orchestrated directly from the White House as evident by the “fact sheet” released by the Biden Administration, where they detail their plans to hassle mom-and-pop gun shops over minor record keeping and paperwork discrepancies.

During my visit to Highwood Creek Outfitters, I learned that the IRS confiscated all the 4473 forms from the store. This means that the sensitive personal information of any customer ever to purchase a firearm at Highwood Creek Outfitters is now in the hands of the IRS.

These background check forms include no financial information, and there is no discernable [sic] reason why the IRS would need these forms.



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The IRS committed an egregious breach of privacy for Montana's gun owners, and I am outraged that the agents involved showed no regard for federal law.

Although there are still some murky details regarding the events at Highwood Creek [Outfitters, there] is no circumstance in which 4473's would be necessary in an investigation spearheaded by the IRS.

Rosendale then demanded answers to these questions:

- What was the purpose of entering and closing Highwood Creek Outfitters?
- What evidence did the ATF and IRS have prior to arriving at Highwood Creek Outfitters and how was this evidence collected?
- Does ATF or IRS have any other plans to conduct similar activities at other firearms related businesses in Montana?
- Why did the ATF and IRS believe such a large armed police presence was necessary?
- Has the Biden Administration expressed support for increasing in-person agency activities at firearms-related businesses?
- How much have the ATF and IRS spent to conduct similar activities at firearms-related businesses?
- Why did the IRS take Highwood Creek Outfitters 4473's and what does the IRS intend to do with them?
- Do the ATF and IRS believe it was within the legal rights of the IRS to take Highwood Creek Outfitter's 4437's?

All good questions, which the agencies are likely to ignore. After all, they have their marching orders from the dictator-in-chief.



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