



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 1, 2021

Massachusetts' Anti-gun Threats Force Departure of Smith & Wesson

"An Act to Stop Mass Shootings," a bill co-authored by anti-gun Massachusetts State Representatives Frank Moran and Marjorie Decker, and supported by anti-gun Representative Bud Williams, [was the last straw](#). In the news release issued by Smith & Wesson on Thursday, the gunmaker that has been based in Springfield, Massachusetts, for nearly 170 years said it was left "with no other alternative" but to move its headquarters and part of its manufacturing facilities out of the state.



Said Mark Smith, S&W's president and CEO:

This has been an extremely difficult and emotional decision for us, but after an exhaustive and thorough analysis, for the continued health and strength of our iconic company, we feel that we have been left with no other alternative.

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Anti-gun bills "would," said Smith, "prevent Smith & Wesson from manufacturing firearms that are legal in almost every state in America, and that are safely used by tens of millions of law-abiding citizens every day."

Those bills, which are likely to be passed by the anti-gun Massachusetts legislature, would ban the manufacture of the firearms that made up more than 60 percent of the company's gross revenue last year. They would preclude the company, and many of the 24 other gunmakers presently located in the state, from manufacturing so-called assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. The state already forbids its citizens to purchase, sell, or possess such items. The bills would be an extension of the state's anti-gun mentality, applying it to gunmakers as well.

S&W's move, scheduled for the summer of 2023, will end some 550 jobs in and around Springfield. The company will also close operations in Connecticut and Missouri as part of the move.

Said Smith:

We are deeply saddened by the impact that this difficult decision will have on so many of our dedicated employees, but in order to preserve future jobs and for the viability of our business in the long run, we are left with no choice but to relocate these functions to a state that does not propose burdensome restrictions on our company.



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Many gun-friendly locales bid for the opportunity to host the gunmaker's new headquarters, but the winner was Maryville, Tennessee. Key factors included, said the company:

- Support for the 2nd Amendment;
- Business friendly environment;
- Quality of life for employees;
- Cost of living and affordability;
- Access to higher education institutions;
- Availability of qualified labor for its operations and headquarter functions; and
- Favorable location for efficiency of distribution.

It helped that, back in 2019, the Blount County Commission passed a resolution declaring the county, where Maryville is located, a "2nd Amendment Sanctuary." The governor is equally supportive of the move.

Said Smith on Thursday:

The strong support we have received from the state of Tennessee and the entire leadership of Blount County throughout the process, combined with the quality of life, outdoor lifestyle, and low cost of living in the Greater Knoxville area has left no doubt that Tennessee is the ideal location for Smith & Wesson's new headquarters.

Steve Troy, the founder and head of gunmaker Troy Industries, also located in Springfield, Massachusetts, agrees. Back in May, in response to threats from groups such as Stop Handgun Violence to pressure Massachusetts legislators to ban the making of firearms, he announced he was moving his operations to Tennessee.

His move was the first olive out of the bottle. With S&W's announcement, many of the other two-dozen gun makers in the Bay State may be encouraged to make similar moves. At present, the gun industry supports nearly 8,000 jobs in the Massachusetts.

State Representative Bud Williams, the Democrat who represents Springfield, doesn't care. He remarked, "It's unfortunate that [Smith & Wesson has] taken that position. I guess it's in response to the ban on making assault weapons."

Once passed, Massachusetts will join California, New York, and New Jersey in banning the manufacture of firearms. Those states are also suffering an exodus of businesses and citizens tired of oppressive government and who are finding much more friendly locales.



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