

Do Not Stand Idly By

Take Action • Change the Gun Industry • Save Lives

www.donotstandidlyby.org



DNSIB FAQ *February 2018*

Why did Metro IAF initiate this campaign?

The leaders of the Metro Industrial Areas Foundation network are people of all faiths and backgrounds. From our own lives, and the lives of countless others in our congregations and communities, we know the pain of gun violence all too well – and we know the costs borne by Americans when our corporate and political leaders fail to answer the mandate in the Book of Leviticus: “Do not stand idly by while your neighbor’s blood is shed.” More than 32,000 Americans are killed with firearms each year.

When we began to look for solutions in 2013, we quickly learned that gun manufacturers have the power to prevent thousands of these senseless deaths by improving the way they make and distribute their products. They can take these actions voluntarily, without Congressional action and without the slightest harm to the rights of Americans to own and use firearms lawfully. These actions would reduce gun-related deaths in every major category: suicides, homicides, and accidental shootings.

But the manufacturers are standing idly by. Instead of innovating on safety technologies and distribution practices, they innovate in one area only: greater killing power. We launched *Do Not Stand Idly By* (DNSIB) to change the priorities of the gun CEOs and their investors, so that lives may be saved.

What can gun manufacturers do?

1) They can set standards for the dealers they use as sales outlets, in order to limit the flow of guns to criminals and other dangerous individuals. They can sever ties with the worst dealers in their industry – the 1.2% of dealers that sell 57.4% of the guns used in crimes.

2) They can develop gun safety technologies and bring them to market – particularly user-authenticating guns (AKA “smart guns”), which can only be fired by authorized users. Such guns are child-proof, useless to thieves, and could save the lives of police and civilians alike.

How can we move gun manufacturers to act?

Through the market power of the public sector. Law enforcement agencies buy 15% of the guns and ammunition sold in America; the military buys 25%. Altogether, the public sector buys 40%. Major gun manufacturers depend heavily on this taxpayer-funded business. If enough public-sector customers tell gun manufacturers *what they want* – a greater commitment to safety – forward-looking manufacturers will respond. They will see life-saving innovations in *gun safety* as a way to protect their market share and make more money.

What is DNSIB asking public officials to do?

We are working with mayors, police chiefs, sheriffs, county executives, governors, attorneys general, DA's and other public officials to form a Gun Buyers' Research Group – a diverse group of leaders seeking dialogue with key players in the gun industry and identifying best practices in the industry.

The first step: asking questions of gun manufacturers. Officials are issuing a joint Request for Information (RFI) to major manufacturers asking for specific information on the companies' safety technologies and distribution practices. Manufacturers' responses will help guide future firearms purchasing decisions. We are asking law enforcement leaders and top executive officials of municipalities, counties, and states across the nation to add their names to the RFI.

How are officials responding?

To date, officials from 123 jurisdictions in 18 states have joined the Request for Information. Participating officials are urban and suburban, Democratic and Republican. They include the governor of Connecticut; the mayors of Los Angeles, Boston, Milwaukee, Denver, Miami, Seattle, Atlanta, Pittsburgh, Sacramento, San Francisco, Newark, Durham, Bridgeport and other municipalities small and large; the Attorneys General of Massachusetts, Maryland and Virginia; and county executives, sheriffs, or district attorneys of major counties in Illinois, Ohio, Maryland, New Jersey and New York. The U.S. Conference of Mayors has supported *Do Not Stand Idly By* by asking mayors across the nation to sign on.

How did President Obama respond?

After two years of pressure from DNSIB, President Obama in January 2016 acted on DNSIB recommendations and launched an effort to use the purchasing power of the federal government to encourage the development of smart guns. In June, the Administration invited the CEOs and other executives from major gun manufacturers to the White House to discuss this challenge. Not one of them accepted the invitation. The Trump administration has an opportunity to do far more.

How have the manufacturers responded?

We have targeted seven major gun manufacturers that do significant business with the public sector: Glock, Smith & Wesson, SIG Sauer, Beretta, Colt, Sturm Ruger and Remington (AKA Freedom Group). Each of these companies has declined to respond to the RFI from their public-sector customers. They have, however, stepped up their PR and their outreach efforts to law enforcement. DNSIB has aggressively pursued discussions with the CEOs - in Europe and in the US - and has met with top executives of four companies. Despite their public posture, two of the companies responded somewhat positively on smart guns, telling us that *if* their customers want smart guns, they will make them. On their responsibilities related to distribution, the CEOs have claimed not to have any. "Talk to the ATF," the CEO of SIG Sauer told us. When we asked Glock to sever ties with the worst gun dealers in America, the company responded through an attorney, claiming that the ATF had directed the company not to get involved in such matters. ATF officials have told us that this claim is false. To deflect our requests for meetings, CEOs have repeatedly told us to talk instead with their trade organization, the National Shooting Sports Foundation. We have tried - several times. The NSSF refuses to meet.