

# The Epoch Times

## ‘Far More Complicated Than I Expected’: Reporter Tries To Buy Gun At Virginia Walmart

Tom Ozimek

August 23, 2019

A journalist for Business Insider recently tested the ease of buying a gun at a Walmart store, and after being denied during the background check, concluded it was “far more complicated” than she expected.

Business Insider reporter Hayley Peterson said in an Aug. 21 report that she tried to buy a gun at a Walmart store in Virginia to test “the placement, selection, marketing, and security of firearms in Walmart’s stores, and to learn more about the retailer’s processes governing gun sales.”

Peterson noted that Walmart’s lack of firearms product advertising and the fact they only sell guns in certain stores was the first hurdle that frustrated what she assumed would be a quick and easy acquisition.

“After hours of Googling and calling, I finally had a breakthrough and found a Walmart store that sold guns,” she wrote.

The second obstacle was that Peterson failed to pass the background check after her home address did not match the one on her license. The clerk told her that she would have to bring in another document with the correct address to clear this hurdle.

“She apologized, told me the rules were strict around background checks, and asked me to come back another time to finish the purchase,” Peterson noted in the report. “At this point, I decided to give up on buying a gun at Walmart.”

Peterson’s conclusion is that “overall, the experience left me with the impression that buying a gun at Walmart is more complicated than I expected, and that Walmart takes gun sales and security pretty seriously.”

She said the fact that Walmart also refused to sell her a gun when an authorized seller was not present—and that the authorized seller called for backup to ensure the background check was carried out correctly—were additional factors that led her to conclude that buying a gun is not, as has been infamously claimed, easier than buying cold medicine.

“It is harder in America to buy two packs of Sudafed than 10 assault rifles,” comedian D.L. Hughley said on his radio show in October 2017, the day after a gunman opened fire on a concert crowd in Las Vegas.

Peterson’s investigation came amid claims that background checks fail to adequately prevent gun violence. Some politicians have explicitly called for Walmart to stop selling firearms, including

half-a-dozen Democratic presidential candidates, including Sens. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Bernie Sanders of Vermont.

The availability of guns at Walmart has come firmly into the spotlight following two deadly shootings at two of its stores—one in El Paso, Texas, and another in Southaven, Mississippi. In total 24 people were killed.

In the wake of the shootings, more than 136,000 people have signed a petition urging Walmart to stop selling firearms and take a stance against guns.

The company has said it has no plans to stop selling firearms.

Followers of Business Insider on Facebook reacted to the post, with one person commenting: “Wow! A liberal that actually tried to do something they think is easy. I think alot more need to do that instead of listen to the liars and propagandists on tv.”

Another wrote: “What Ms Peterson FAILED to tell the reader is that she would also have been sent away empty-handed at any gun shop when the address on her ID didn’t match what she put on her Form 4473.”

“Just go to a gun show. They’ll sell you anything,” another commenter contended, to which someone replied, “by federal law gun sellers must do background checks regardless if at a gun show or not. Trust me I’ve actually been to one.”

### The Moral Right to Self-Defense

David Kopel, an Adjunct Scholar at the Cato Institute and author of the book “The Morality of Self-Defense and Military Action: The Judeo-Christian Perspective,” recently wrote an op-ed for the Epoch Times on the moral right to self-defense.

In his article, Kopel argues that the right to bear arms should be protected. He cites Cicero, the great Roman lawyer and orator of the first century B.C., in support of the case that self-defense against criminals is an application of the natural “instinct of self-preservation.” So “if our life be in danger from plots, or from open violence, or from the weapons of robbers or enemies, every means of securing our safety is honorable,” Kopel writes, citing Cicero.

Kopel also cites a study of defensive arms use, authored by professors Jongyeon Tark and Gary Kleck, who found that “[a] variety of mostly forceful tactics, including resistance with a gun, appeared to have the strongest effects in reducing the risk of injury.” Thus, “the best available evidence indicates that victim resistance to crimes is generally wise.” Further, “armed and other forceful resistance does not appear to increase the victim’s risk of injury.”

While acknowledging different perspectives on gun control, he argues fundamentally that policies undercutting the right to bear arms are best construed as a human rights violation.

“The sanctity of the home against violent and unexpected invasion is a widely expressed fundamental human right all over the world,” Kopel writes. “Accordingly, the self-defense right and its auxiliary right to arms are at their apex in the home. Laws that impede home defense are especially egregious violations of human rights.”