

"We're Going To Take A Stand" - Dick's Stops Selling Assault Rifles Permanently

 Profile picture for Tyler Durden

by Tyler Durden

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In the aftermath of the Sandy Hook shooting in December 2012, both Walmart and Dick's Sporting Goods announced [they would stop the sale of assault rifles](#), if only temporarily. Fast forward just over 5 years when moments ago Dick's - one of the nation's largest sports retailers - said that it is **immediately ending sales of all assault-style rifles in its stores**, [according to the NYT](#) which adds that "the announcement, made two weeks after the school shooting in Parkland, Fla., that killed 17 students and staff members, **is one of the strongest stances taken by corporate America in the national gun debate**. It also carries symbolic weight, coming from a prominent national gunseller."

The retailer also said that it would no longer sell high-capacity magazines and that it would not sell any gun to anyone under 21 years of age, regardless of local laws.

Edward Stack, the 63-year-old chief executive of Dick's whose father founded the store in 1948, is deliberately steering his company directly into the storm, making clear that the company's new policy was a direct response to the Florida shooting.

"When we saw what happened in Parkland, we were so disturbed and upset," CEO Edward Stack told NYT in an interview. "We love these kids and their rallying cry, 'enough is enough.' It got to us."

He added, "We're going to take a stand and step up and tell people our view and, hopefully, bring people along into the conversation."

The company also proceeded to tweet a series of statement explaining its stance:

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We at DICK'S Sporting Goods are deeply disturbed and saddened by the tragic events in Parkland. Our thoughts and prayers are with all of the victims and their loved ones.

d.sg/RTC

4:49 AM - Feb 28, 2018

♡ 55.3K 💬 16.2K people are talking about...

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But thoughts and prayers are not enough. We have to help solve the problem that's in front of us. Gun violence is an epidemic that's taking the lives of too many people, including the brightest hope for the future of America - our kids. [d.sg/RTC](https://dickssportinggoods.com/rtc)

4:50 AM - Feb 28, 2018

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We deeply believe that this country's most precious gift is our children. They are our future. We must keep them safe. Beginning today, DICK'S Sporting Goods is committed to the following: [d.sg/RTC](https://dickssportinggoods.com/d.sg/RTC)

4:51 AM - Feb 28, 2018

♡ 179K 💬 66.4K people are talking about ...

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At the same time, we implore our elected officials to enact common sense gun reform and pass the following regulations: d.sg/RTC

4:51 AM - Feb 28, 2018

♡ 96.5K 💬 42.2K people are talking about...

It is unclear what financial impact the decision will have on Dick's business, the NYT notes. Neither Dick's nor its competitor, Cabela's, now owned by Bass Pro Shops, have broken out firearm sales in their financial reports. **But last August, Dick's shares plummeted after it said weak results from its hunting segment resulted in its missing Wall Street's second-quarter earnings estimates.**

The gun department in a Dick's Sporting Goods store in Paramus, N.J., in 2012

Stack said he hoped that conversation would include politicians. As part of its stance, Dick's is calling on elected officials to enact what it called "common sense gun reform" by passing laws to raise the minimum age to purchase guns to 21, to ban assault-type weapons and so-called bump

stocks, and to conduct broader universal background checks that include mental-health information and previous interactions with law enforcement.

Stack said the retailer began scouring its purchase records shortly after the identity of the suspected Parkland shooter, Nikolas Cruz, became known. The company soon discovered it had legally sold a gun to Mr. Cruz in November, though it was not the gun or type of gun used in the school shooting.

"But it came to us that we could have been a part of this story," he said. "We said, 'We don't want to be a part of this any longer,'" said Mr. Stack.

Stack said Dick's remained a staunch supporter of the Second Amendment and will continue to sell a variety of sport and hunting firearms. Although he has never been a member of the N.R.A., Mr. Stack said he is, in fact, a gun owner and enjoys trapshooting clay targets.

But when it comes to selling guns to individuals under 21 years of age or stocking assault-style rifles, Mr. Stack

said his company was done. "We don't want to be a part of a mass shooting," he said.

That decision raised rounds of discussions with top executives inside the company as well as the directors, all of whom backed the decision to take a stance, said Mr. Stack according to the NYT.

As noted above, this is not the first time Dick's has made changes in response to a school massacre. In 2012, after the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School, Dick's removed assault-style rifles from its main retail stores. But a few months later, the company began carrying the firearms at its outdoor and hunting retail chain, Field & Stream.

This time, Mr. Stack said, the changes will be permanent.

As of Wednesday morning, the company said all AR-15s and other semiautomatic rifles would be removed from its stores and websites.

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Stack said he and his company expected there would be mixed response — including fallout — to its new policy.

"The whole hunting business is an important part of our business, and we know there is going to be backlash on this," said Mr. Stack. "But we're willing to accept that." He added, "If the kids in Parkland are being brave enough to stand up and do this, we can be brave enough to stand up with them."

And now we wait to see how much the market will reward Dick's competitors like Cabela's, which *will* continue selling

assault weapons, now that one of their biggest competitors has decided to bow out.