



## Exercising the Right

### Tennessee Seeks to Protect Gun Rights

The *Tennessee Star* posted on January 16 about two state legislators who are taking action to prevent anti-gun financial institutions from intruding on the Second Amendment.

This column previously reported about how companies such as American Express, Mastercard, and Visa announced plans to introduce a new merchant category code for the express purpose of tracking the purchases of firearms and ammunition.

Pro-Second Amendment advocacy groups were outraged and warned that the data would be used for state surveillance of perfectly legal activity. The credit card companies ended up abandoning their plan due to the backlash and the actions by multiple state legislatures to pass laws banning such tracking activity. Now Tennessee will be joining Mississippi, Oklahoma, Texas, Florida, West Virginia, Idaho, North Dakota, and Montana with legislation of their own. State Representative Todd Warner and State Senator Joey Hensley have introduced legislation in their respective chambers to “prohibit banks, credit card companies and other financial institutions from tracking purchases of firearms.” The proposed legislation specifically prohibits “an unfair or deceptive trade practice ... [of any] financial institution to require a firearms retailer to use firearms-specific transaction codes.”

### Sheriff Says Gavin Newsom Is “Very Pro-criminal”

California is now considered a deep blue state, and its governor might be the most high-profile Democrat in the country after Joe Biden, but not all of California’s elected leaders are hopelessly liberal, as Riverside County Sheriff Chad Bianco has demonstrated.

Bianco was interviewed by Fox News Digital on January 12 about a recent U.S. Court of Appeals decision that blocked a concealed-carry ban instituted by Governor Gavin Newsom. Bianco told Fox News Digital that he was grateful the court issued an injunction, and explained that “it was definitely a relief because having [the ban on concealed carry] go into effect and the potential of what was going to possibly happen to law-abiding residents was really unacceptable.” Bianco slammed Newsom for being “anti-gun ownership.”

He further explained, “The fact about everything we’re doing taking away the gun rights and ownership and the [concealed-carry] aspect of the whole thing — where you can carry and where you can’t — it flies in the face of what they do with criminals.... They have a very pro-criminal stance in California, and they have for years, all of the laws. Newsom’s goal is to close as many prisons as he can, to not prosecute and to not sentence anyone to state prison. They blame law enforcement. They blame society. So, there’s never a personal responsibility on someone’s criminal behavior. It’s always someone else’s fault.”

It seems that with such a pro-criminal mindset among their state’s leadership, Californians might be left with no other choice than to carry a firearm for their own self-defense.

### Concealed Carry at the Post Office

In other good news involving court rulings, *The Hill* reported on January 13 that the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida held that a federal law prohibiting firearms in U.S. post offices is



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unconstitutional.

The underlying case involved a U.S. Postal Service truck driver who was charged with illegal possession of a firearm in a federal building. “A blanket restriction on firearms possession in post offices is incongruent with the American tradition of firearms regulation,” the Trump-appointed judge wrote in her decision. The defendant in the case had a concealed-carry permit, but was arrested under a federal law first enacted in 1972.

The attorney for the post office employee explained in court filings that his client lawfully carried the gun “primarily for self-defense while he’s on the job and driving on the roadways,” and “most of the time he leaves his fanny pack and concealed firearm inside his parked car off site and grabs it after he picks up his semi-truck for his daily route.... But from time to time, he carries his concealed firearm inside his fanny pack for extra protection on the short walk to work.”

The judge clarified in her ruling that she was only addressing the federal law that prohibits firearm possession while on USPS grounds, not addressing whether the USPS could prohibit the carrying of a firearm as a condition of employment.

Shortly after the ruling, the USPS did send a message to all its employees clarifying that they are still not allowed to possess a firearm while at work, so while they might not get arrested for carrying a firearm, they could still get fired for it.

## **Be Careful When Buying on Facebook Marketplace**

25NewsNow.com reported on January 17 out of Peoria, Illinois, about a shooting that occurred because of a Facebook Marketplace meeting. Two men came to inspect a vehicle that was for sale on Facebook Marketplace and were led by a man posing as a seller into a nearby alley, where they were ambushed by multiple armed assailants. Fortunately, one of the prospective buyers was also armed, and he opened fire on the would-be robbers. In the ensuing shootout, one of the suspects was mortally wounded.

Detectives believe the shooting was justified self-defense. Peoria Police Chief Eric Echevarria took the opportunity to cite what happened as proof that anyone interested in buying something on Facebook Marketplace should take precautions for their safety. He advised people to conduct these transactions in public places where criminals would be scared to commit a crime, such as the parking lot of a local police department.

Echevarria didn’t state it, but this case shows that lawfully carrying a firearm for self-defense is a smart idea as well.



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