



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on June 27, 2012

Obama Admin. Credited with Gun Industry Boom

[According to](#) the National Shooting Sports Federation (NSSF), the trade association that represents nearly 7,000 manufacturers, distributors, firearms retailers, and others involved in the gun industry, the economic impact of that industry has grown by 66 percent since the start of the Great Recession. In 2008 the total impact (direct and indirect) was \$19 billion. Last year it exceeded \$31 billion. Jobs and taxes it generated also jumped a similar amount. Jobs directly connected with the industry increased from 75,000 to nearly 100,000 last year, while federal, state, and excise taxes (which support wildlife conservation) increased from \$3.1 billion to \$5 billion.



So strong has been demand for firearms that Sturm, Ruger & Company saw a 50 percent increase in sales for the first quarter of 2012 over a year ago, forcing the company to stop accepting orders from March until May in order to catch up. Smith & Wesson said last month that they had a firearms-order backlog of almost \$500 million, up an astonishing 135 percent from the same period a year ago.

This [coincided](#) with the FBI's report that 16 million background checks (considered a proxy for gun purchases) took place through its National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NCIS) in 2011, up by more than 11 percent from 2010. The NSSF reported that its members requested 1.2 million background checks in March of this year, up by 20 percent from a year ago and the 22nd straight monthly increase.

At the same time, reported levels of violent crime continue to decline. In June the FBI issued its [Preliminary Annual Uniform Crime Report for 2011](#) which showed a decrease in violent crime of four percent over the previous year. The FBI said that all major categories of violent crime were down: murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. The FBI said property crimes were also down in all categories: burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft. These numbers reflect a years-long trend, with the number of violent crimes dropping for the fifth straight year and for the 18th time in the past 20 years, touching a low last seen in 1971. Furthermore the drops were registered in all four regions of the country.

And here's another statistic: [41 states now allow citizens either to carry concealed](#) or open carry without a permit, up from just a handful of states 25 years ago.

Is all of this coincidental? That would be a stretch, according to Andrew Arulanandam of the National Rifle Association (NRA): "This is not a one-year anomaly, but a steady decline in the FBI's violent crime rates. It would be disingenuous for anyone not to credit increased self-defense laws to account for this decline."

Gary LaFree, a criminology professor at the University of Maryland, tried to explain the coincidence. He said that a weak economy, an aging population, increased immigration, and a more robust police



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presence have all contributed to the drop. He pointed out that as the country's population grows older, there are fewer young people who commit crimes. He added, "We also have a record number of immigrants and, contrary to popular belief, immigrants have lower crime rates than the rest of the country."

But one of the main drivers of the gun industry's continued remarkable growth is the president, Barack Obama, according to Lawrence Keene, senior vice president at NSSF:

There's a concern that in the second term the Obama administration would lead an attempt to restrict gun ownership...

Some people...refer to [Obama] as the salesman of the year for the industry.

Stephanie Samford, a spokeswoman for the National Rifle Association (NRA), agrees: "Obama is a serious threat to the Second Amendment. He has a history of being anti-gun. With a second term, there is a lot he could do to infringe on our rights to keep and bear arms."

The remarkable coincidence of increased private ownership of guns as reflected by the explosive growth of firearms manufacturers, coupled with the increased interest in self-defense and relaxed state rules regarding carrying a weapon with or without a concealed weapons permit, along with the steady decline in violent crime as reported by the FBI, all seem to point to a supreme irony: The most anti-gun president in recent memory, who is trying to stimulate the economy by growing jobs, is in fact increasingly responsible for the growth of the gun industry itself. [As Washington Times columnist Emily Miller put it:](#)

Mr. Obama could honestly take credit for this jobs program, economic boost and the reduction in crime that has followed the spike in gun ownership on his watch.

Instead, he's silent about his greatest positive accomplishment.

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