



Levi's CEO Asks: Please, No Guns in Our Stores

At the very peak of this year's Christmas shopping season (during which most Americans do a quarter of their yearly shopping) Chip Bergh, the CEO of Levi Strauss & Co., [asked his customers](#) to turn his stores into gun-free zones:



As CEO ... I feel a tremendous responsibility to share our position on the issue [of gun rights and gun safety], now, at a time when clarity is paramount.... So, while we understand the heartfelt and strongly-held opinions on both sides of the gun debate, it is with the safety and security of our employees and customers in mind that we respectfully ask people not to bring firearms into our stores.... It boils down to this: you shouldn't have to be concerned about your safety while shopping for clothes or trying on a pair of jeans. Simply put, firearms don't belong in either of those settings.

Since many of his stores are located in shopping malls, what Bergh is asking is that people who have firearms leave them at home, or in their vehicles — turning those malls, as well as his stores, into gun-free zones.

Gun-free zones are just what unhinged criminals are looking for: places with lots of people present who are unable to defend themselves. John Lott's Crime Prevention Research Center (CPRC) published a report two years ago showing that 94 percent of mass public shootings between January 2009 and 2014 took place in gun-free zones.

That report was followed by a similar study, this time from Stanford University, that confirmed the CPRC study: Going back to the beginning of 2002, of the 54 mass shootings (involving a shooter targeting people at random), the shooter chose gun-free zones 37 times. Of the 17 times a shooter choose a location where guns were legally allowed, a third of the attacks were ended when the shooter was confronted by an individual legally carrying a firearm.

Perhaps Bergh can be forgiven for his ideological, knee-jerk reaction to the single incident he referred to in his letter where someone in one of his stores injured himself when his firearm accidentally discharged. That same reaction occurred earlier this month when the shooter in the Ohio State University attack was assumed to be using a firearm. This included Senator Tim Kaine (Hillary Clinton's running mate) and Shannon Watts with Michael Bloomberg's Everytown for Gun Safety. It was later learned, of course, that the attacker used a vehicle and a knife during the attack.

If Bergh wants "clarity" and is sincere about his employees' and customers' safety, perhaps his letter



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on December 27, 2016

should have read:

Dear Customers:

As studies have continued to show, our customers and employees are safer working where responsible citizens are exercising their Second Amendment-protected rights. Rather than turn our 2,800 stores into high-risk “gun-free” zones, putting at risk our 15,000 valued employees and our millions of loyal customers, we publicly ask those customers responsibly carrying concealed to feel free to shop and try on a new pair of jeans.

Merry Christmas!

Chip Bergh,

President and CEO, Levi Strauss & Co.

An Ivy League graduate and former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at LightFromTheRight.com, primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at badelman@thenewamerican.com.



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