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Mass Shooting

## Smith & Wesson is accused of marketing guns to 'disturbed young men' in suit by July 4 victims

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Several lawsuits filed Wednesday seek to hold Smith & Wesson accountable for the July 4 mass shooting in Highland Park, Illinois, during a parade.

The suits allege that Smith & Wesson violated Illinois consumer law through its deceptive marketing practices for its M&P 15 assault rifle, which was used by the gunman who killed seven people and injured 48 others during the parade, according to press releases [here](#) and [here](#).

“Smith & Wesson knowingly sought to place its weapons in the hands of disturbed young men by targeting and exploiting the risk-seeking—and often troubling—desires of these consumers,” says one of the lawsuits. “The shooter and other would-be mass shooters are highly susceptible to the disturbing promotional messages from Smith & Wesson, which foreseeably feed the desires of these young men to act out their militaristic fantasies on a civilian population.”

The lawsuit says Smith & Wesson misleadingly implies that its rifles are used or endorsed by the U.S. military, partly because of the weapon line’s name “M&P,” which stands for “Military & Police.”

The lawsuit follows the playbook of litigation against gun-maker Remington Arms, which made the semiautomatic rifle used in the 2012 shooting at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut. The plaintiffs had contended that a 2005 federal law, the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, did not protect Remington Arms from liability because its marketing violated Connecticut consumer law. That case settled for \$73 million in February.

[Read more here.](#)