

Dear Mike Messer
Store Director – Big Y
200 West St.
Pittsfield, Ma. 01201

We concerned citizens are greatly anguished by the ongoing killings from the barrel of a gun. Going back a bit, in 2016, 38,658 Americans died that way while 67,000 Americans were injured by firearms, and such statistics continue to mount. Last year, 2017, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 40,000 people were killed by firearms at a rate not seen in 21 years.

We individuals also find extremely disturbing the many shootings right here in our city. The Pittsfield police department furnished us with the following gun use statistics, starting in 2015.

	Injury	Death
2015	9	2
2016	8	2
2017	11	2
2018 YTD	4	1

According to the Berkshire Eagle there have been two more injuries from shooting completing the year.

What all these events had in common was the use of guns. We are addressing this open letter to you because the store you manage on the corner of West and Center St. carries several magazines, for public viewing, that glorify guns, and thus violence and cruelty. These strike us as just as obscene and as dangerous as it would be to have on public display, magazines highlighting and advertising child pornography.

Responsible gun owners may purchase their guns from appropriate local stores. There is no need to encourage supermarket shoppers to become more aware of the easy availability of a multiplicity of lethal weapons that are being used for shooting fellow human beings, right here in our city.

Please let us know by January 31st by e-mailing us that you have removed these offending magazines from your magazine racks. We will greatly appreciate your cooperation in this public spirited, public health and public safety activity. Any diminishment in gun violence in our area will make it more likely that more people, potential customers of yours, may choose to locate here.

Conversely, continued frequent gun violence will dissuade new people from moving in and increase the likelihood of individuals and families moving away to safer locations.

At our recent observation we found that your store displayed in public view, “Gun Buyers”, “The Complete Book of Reloading”, “American Handgunner”, “Guns and Ammo – Handguns”, “Guns and Ammo - Ruger Custom Shop”, “Shooting Times”, “SWAT - Survival Weapons and Tactics”, and finally, “Guns Magazine –Surplus”. We hope you will discontinue carrying them and others like them.

Sincerely yours,

Tommie L. Hutto Blake, Lenny Kates, Donald Lathrop, Marion Lathrop

e-mail address for your hoped for response: dlathrop@berkshirecc.edu

**Dear Sara Smith
Manager of CVS Pharmacy
West St.
Pittsfield, MA 01201**

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Conversely, continued frequent gun violence will dissuade new people from moving in and increase the likelihood of individuals and families moving away to safer locations.

Thank you very much for considering our request.

Sincerely yours,

Tommie L. Hutto Blake, Lenny Kates, Donald Lathrop, Marion Lathrop

e-mail address for your hoped for response: dlathrop@berkshirecc.edu