

Citigroup Shareholder Meeting Question
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I'm Justin Danhof of the National Center for Public Policy Research.

Last March, the company announced that it will prohibit clients from selling guns to anyone under the age of 21, require business customers to run background checks for all firearm sales, and cease selling high-capacity magazines and bump stocks.ⁱ

Because of the company's anti-Second Amendment stance, Citi was denied the chance to be involved with a \$600 million road project in Louisiana.ⁱⁱ Furthermore, members of Congress have threatened to cancel Citi's federal contracts.ⁱⁱⁱ Senator John Kennedy (R-LA) noted, "Citigroup has no business threatening law abiding business owners for exercising their Second Amendment rights. The only reason that Citigroup is even in business today is because American taxpayers bailed them out during the Great Recession."^{iv}

So, to be clear – the company is impinging on the constitutional rights of the very Americans who bailed Citi out after you all made a series of poor business decisions. Perhaps you should have just said thank you instead.

And in thumbing your nose at the Constitution, the company is willfully giving up money. That's an odd choice for a bank.

The company joins a list of corporations following the liberal whim of the moment and not looking out for the best interests of long-term shareholders. CNBC talking head Andrew Ross Sorkin has been pressuring banks and credit cards to take a stand against gun rights.^v But you don't work for the interests of a liberal journalist.

Let's take a look at how an investor with a good track record for generating return on investment answered when he was asked if his company would make similar policy decisions regarding the Second Amendment. Last year, CNBC asked Warren Buffett about corporations distancing themselves from the National Rifle Association and gun manufacturers and how Berkshire Hathaway would respond to such pressure. Buffett replied: "I don't believe in imposing my views on 370,000 employees and a million shareholders. I'm not their nanny on that... I don't think that Berkshire should say we're not going to do business with people who own guns. I think that would be ridiculous."^{vi}

Buffett went on to explain that corporations that make in-the-moment political decisions are subject to the fickle nature of politics and are reacting to events rather than standing on consistent principles.

Can you tell us – your investors – exactly how much money we stand to lose because of this decision, and explain why you have this right while Warren Buffett has this wrong?

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ⁱ <https://insider.foxnews.com/2018/03/22/tucker-carlson-left-colluding-companies-roll-back-gun-rights>

ⁱⁱ https://www.nola.com/politics/2018/08/louisiana_banks_gun_sales.html

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/04/09/citigroup-faces-gop-backlash-on-gun-policy-464518>

^{iv} <https://www.kennedy.senate.gov/public/2018/4/sen-kennedy-slams-wall-street-banks-over-gun-control-efforts-targeting-pro-second-amendment-businesses>

^v <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/19/business/banks-gun-sales.html>

^{vi} <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/02/26/buffett-slippery-slope-to-avoid-business-due-to-of-your-personal-beliefs.html>