

Exhibit 66

To Defendants' Memorandum in Support of Motion for
Summary Judgment



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Correction Appended

SECTION: FRONT; Pg. 1A

LENGTH: 1003 words

HEADLINE: As sales soar, Bushmaster shrugs at bid to renew gun ban;
The Windham company has done well despite a 1994 ban on assault weapons.'

BYLINE: MATT WICKENHEISER Staff Writer

BODY:

Nearly a decade after Bushmaster Firearms and other gun makers lost their fight to block a federal ban on assault weapons, the Windham company has increased its sales by at least 900 percent, erasing fears that the ban would put some manufacturers out of business.

At Bushmaster, revenue is 10 to 15 times what it was before the 1994 law, said Allen Faraday, the company's vice president of administration.

"We adjusted our business as to what was allowed and what wasn't allowed, and we've grown since then," Faraday said. "Basically, what we did was, going forward, we eliminated all of those items that made it a banned firearm."

So, as Congress begins to consider an extension of the assault weapons ban, Bushmaster is largely indifferent. At the same time, some gun-control proponents cite the sniper shootings around Washington, D.C., where a Bushmaster gun was used, as an example of the need to extend such bans.

Legislation has been filed to indefinitely extend the ban, which is set to expire in September 2004.

"Of course we were opposed" to the ban initially, Faraday said. "It was the latest attempt - and a very powerful one - for the anti-gun people to ban firearms. What they do is go after the military, sinister-looking firearms first."

But Bushmaster is less worried about an extension. "From our point of view, extending the ban is probably OK," Faraday said.

In fact, the 77-employee company is so bullish about the future that on Tuesday it announced plans to buy a bankrupt competitor, Professional Ordnance Inc. of Lake Havasu City, Ariz.

Faraday declined to reveal sales figures and is not required to do so because Bushmaster is a private company. However, he said the firm - which makes semi-automatic rifles for civilians, as well as automatic weapons for the military and foreign government agencies - has increased its sales across all markets.

Bushmaster has pushed quality and customer service, Faraday said, while a major competitor, Colt, was having problems in those areas. Colt also lost support from traditional supporters, such as the National Rifle Association, when it agreed with a federal government request to put trigger locks on its guns.

"In terms of non-government sales, we are the largest in the country," said Faraday. "We're much larger than Colt for AR-15-type rifles," a semiautomatic version of the most common military weapon.

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An extension of the federal ban has been proposed by Sens. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., Lincoln Chafee, R-R.I., Dick Durbin, D-Ill., and Barbara Boxer, D-Calif. President Bush has also indicated he would support extending the ban.

According to a statement from Feinstein's office, assault weapons accounted for 8.2 percent of all guns used in crimes in 1993. In 1996, the latest date for which statistics are available, the number dropped to 3.2 percent.

The original ban listed a series of specific firearm models that were prohibited. Bushmaster's AR-15, a civilian version of the M-16, wasn't on the list, said Faraday, and that allowed the company to make product modifications that helped it thrive.

The federal law defined "assault rifle" by characteristics. Bushmaster's weapons included several of the features, including a telescoping stock, threads for a screw-on flash suppressor and a lug for mounting a bayonet, Faraday said.

Bushmaster fought the ban until it was clear the legislation would become law. Then the company began to redesign its AR-15 to comply with the new statute, he said. The changes were all cosmetic and didn't affect the gun's performance, Faraday said. Also, a limit on the size of magazines for the guns lowered the number of rounds to 10 from 30, he said.

Faraday said most of the gun manufacturers made similar changes to their designs, and that he wasn't aware of any business that would suffer if the ban weren't lifted as scheduled.

If the ban is removed, Faraday said a market probably would develop for weapons with the missing modifications, because that would make the guns more like their military cousins.

"I suspect we would respond to the market, and if the market wanted some other rifles in the pre-ban configuration, we would follow the law and we might offer those," said Faraday. "There was nothing we were required to do that would make that rifle safer."

Maine Sens. Susan Collins and Olympia Snowe, both Republicans, have yet to announce their positions on the proposed extension.

The House version of the bill would strengthen the current law by including weapons modified to get around the ban, such as Bushmaster's Superlight Carbine. Faraday said he wasn't familiar with the House bill, but said, "If it makes sense, then we certainly will consider it."

Bill Harwood, president of Maine Citizens Against Handgun Violence, said the ban should go further. "It has had some effectiveness, but it's not nearly what it could be," he said.

"Manufacturers are very, very successful at finding ways of getting as close to the line as possible," Harwood said. "Bushmaster's a good example. They've learned how to work around the assault weapons ban and still supply firearms to people who are capable of doing things like those done by the Beltway (Washington) snipers."

Bushmaster made the gun used in the shootings last fall, and the company is facing a lawsuit by relatives of victims. The suit, which seeks unspecified damages, also names the Tacoma, Wash., gun dealer that either sold or lost the rifle, as well as the sniper suspects, John Allen Muhammad and Lee Malvo. Muhammad and Malvo are accused of killing 13 people and wounding five others in Washington, D.C., Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland and Virginia.

Faraday said Bushmaster supports a pending bill that would not only ban lawsuits unless the manufacturer commits a crime, but would also allow for current lawsuits to be dropped after judicial review.

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CORRECTION-DATE: May 16, 2003

CORRECTION:

Clarification: A story on Page 1A Wednesday about Bushmaster Firearms in Windham could have been clearer about the company's position on assault-weapons legislation. The company is opposed on philosophical grounds to the continuation of a federal ban on assault weapons, even though the 1994 law has not had an impact on Bushmaster economically.

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GRAPHIC: BUSHMASTER SUPERLIGHT CARBINE

16" barrel

5.8 lbs. and 31 1/4" overall length

.223 caliber

Suggested retail price of \$985

LOAD-DATE: May 16, 2003