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Non-Law Enforcement Agencies Like IRS and EPA Spend Billions on Guns and Ammo, Watchdog Says

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Federal agencies such as the Internal Revenue Service and the Environmental Protection Agency have spent nearly \$4 billion in taxpayer funds on guns, ammunition, and other "military-style equipment," a watchdog group found.

Since 2006, "76 rank-and-file agencies" outside "traditional law enforcement entities" or the Department of Defense spent \$3.7 billion on "guns, ammunition, and military-style equipment," according to watchdog group Open

the Books's summary of its [report](#). These agencies include the National Institutes of Health, NASA, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Small Business Administration, among others that historically have played little to no role in law enforcement activities.

Federal agencies have ramped up spending on weapons and ammunition under the Biden administration, according to data provided to the *Washington Free Beacon*. The IRS has seen its annual spending on these items nearly double since 2020, while the whole federal government has seen a 60 percent increase over the same period.

The report comes as the Biden administration works to hire 87,000 new IRS employees, [raising alarms](#) across the country that the government is stepping up its tax enforcement of rank-and-file Americans. Republicans have sounded the alarm on this policy and others like it as examples of the federal government being

"weaponized" against the American people.

This weaponization is part of a longer pattern, according to Open the Books founder and CEO Adam Andrzejewski.

"A culture of militarization has permeated across the federal bureaucracy," Andrzejewski said in a statement. "In many cases, these agencies are stockpiling the very weapons some politicians seek to ban citizens from owning."

The IRS is now known to have spent a total of \$35.2 million on various weapons since 2006, [including](#) about \$725,000 on ammunition in 2022 alone. The agency's weapons purchases peaked in 2020 and 2021, when the government authorized the tax agency to purchase "\$10 million in weaponry and gear."

Around 2,100 IRS agents have "firearm authority," and around 600 more will be given this power as the tax collection agency expands as part of the Biden administration's budget. Prior to a COVID-era budget increase, the IRS

"owned 4,500 weapons, including AR-15 rifles, submachine guns, and 5 million rounds of ammunition," the report found. The IRS is now the general size of the 50 largest police departments in America.

"It's not only the IRS, but dozens of other rank-and-file administrative federal agencies," Andrzejewski said. "So, just who are they preparing to battle?"

NIH's internal police force includes 105 officers, which is larger than 95 percent of the police departments across the United States, according to the report. "This includes sophisticated training, night vision equipment, and weaponry," Open the Books noted.

The Office of Assistant Secretary for Health also "is involved in the purchase of \$100 million in guns, ammunition, and military-style equipment," the organization found.

The federal government now employs more than 200,000 agents with "arrest and firearm

authority," according to the report.

The IRS and the NIH did not respond to requests for comment.