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GUN REFORM ACTIVISTS PLAN MARCH TO SMITH & WESSON HQ

Youth-led gun reform activists are planning a three-day, 50-mile march across part of Massachusetts next month that will end with a rally at the Smith & Wesson headquarters in Springfield.

The march, which is anticipated to begin in Worcester on Aug. 23, is being organized by Stop Handgun Violence, March For Our Lives Boston and 50 Miles More.

"This 50 Mile walk is about accountability," student organizer Vikiana Petit-Homme said in statement. "Smith & Wesson continues to profit from guns used in horrific mass shootings and daily gun violence in our communities. We have had enough. We are demanding that they work with us to be a part of the solution, not the problem."

Activists hope the march and rally will keep gun reform issues in the national spotlight.

So far, the only other 50-mile march was held in Wisconsin in March. The campaign aims to organize marches in all 50 states. They are demanding that the gun manufacturer donate \$5 million to "research violence caused by Smith & Wesson weapons to offset the lack of federal research funding for the gun violence epidemic."

The project originated after the shootings at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida in February, which left 17 dead. A little over a month after the mass shooting, the March For Our Lives campaign drew a crowd of 50,000 to the Boston Common, according to the Boston Police Department.

Gov. Charlie Baker this month signed the extreme risk protection order legislation that was a major objective of local student activists, who visited the State House various times to petition legislators for their help in passing it. The bill allows family or household members to file a petition with a court to remove firearms from dangerous individuals. - Chris Triunfo/SHNS

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