**From:** Cheryl McDowell
**To:** DeJong Annola
**Subject:** Please support SB 347 and SB 700
**Date:** Wednesday, April 03, 2013 10:50:06 AM

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Dear Chair Prozanski and Committee Members,

I am writing in support of two very sensible gun-control bills that would make a dramatic improvement in the lives of all Oregonians. In the wake of the horrible tragedies in Connecticut and right here in Oregon at the Clackamas Town Center Mall, we can no longer be silent and let dangerous people have and use guns.

Senate Bill 700 requires that most gun sales between private parties be preceded by a background check, thus establishing universal background checks in Oregon.

- Universal background checks are the easiest, most effective way to keep guns out of the hands of criminals, people who are dangerously mentally ill, and others who should not have guns.
- Universal background checks will not prevent law-abiding citizens from buying or owning firearms.
- Universal background checks have overwhelming public support. A January 2013 poll found that 81% of Oregonians support universal background checks on all gun sales, including 75% of Oregonians who have guns in their homes.
- Background checks work. From 1994 through 2008, background checks prevented 1.8 million prohibited people in the United States, including felons and the mentally ill, from buying guns.

Senate Bill 347 would change Oregon law to allow in schools ONLY guns carried by public safety officers or carried under written policies adopted by the school district. State law would no longer allow every person with a concealed handgun license to bring a handgun into elementary and secondary schools. SB 347 improves student and teacher safety because it:

- Puts school districts in charge. Local districts can be expected to confer with public safety officials, teachers, and parents about the best way to keep students safe. School districts won't invite armed personnel into their school buildings except under a rational program. Under current law they have no control over who brings a gun into schools.

- Reduces the risk of vigilantes in the schools. Parental concern is high right now, and many parents own guns for the purpose of defending their homes and families. Few gun owners have the training and skill needed to respond in a crisis situation without further endangering students and staff. The bill would keep gun owners from creating additional risks, and still allow school districts to develop needed security plans.
- Reduces the risk of unintentional shootings. Although mass shootings are the focus of public attention right now, on a day-to-day basis, accidents and inappropriate access to firearms are the causes of many more child deaths. Careless gun owners, like the Tillamook gun dealer who lost his handgun in a theater where it was found by school children the next day, are far more common than mass murderers. School kids need to be protected from them as well.

Please support these common sense gun laws. The people of Oregon are depending on you to keep us safe. The proposals and demands made by the NRA are counter productive and would make Oregon a much more dangerous place to live. Please listen to sensible Oregonians, not big lobbyists.

Thank you,

Cheryl J. McDowell
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