



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF OREGON

April 5, 2013

To: Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Sen. Floyd Prozanski, Chair
Members of the Committee

Re: SB 347, SB 699, SB 700, SB 796, Gun violence prevention—SUPPORT

The League is a non-partisan, grassroots political organization that encourages informed citizen participation in government. We strongly support the four gun safety bills before you today. Our support is based on a fundamental League tenet that it is the role of government to promote the health and safety of all members of the community. Our national position on violence prevention promotes “the active role of government in preventing violent behavior,” while our gun safety position allows us to be even more specific. It states that “the proliferation of handguns and semi-automatic assault weapons in the United States is a major health and safety threat to its citizens.” It goes on to say that, as a matter of consumer safety, the League supports legislation “to limit the accessibility and regulate the ownership of these weapons by private citizens.”

We acknowledge that the League also has a long history in support of constitutional rights. However, it defies logic to assume that the right of individuals to keep and bear arms, as provided in the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, nullifies the government’s responsibility to insure the health and safety of its citizens. The bills before you are not radical—keep guns out of the wrong hands, make our schools and public buildings safer places, and promote proper gun handling.

The statistics on gun violence, including those pertaining to suicide by firearm, are too alarming to ignore. If this threat to public safety were a looming health epidemic, fire hazard, or invasive species the Legislature would not hesitate to act. We know that no legislation can prevent all gun violence, but these bills are a path forward to ensure a healthier and safer Oregon. The League joins with the majority of Oregonians who are appalled by the intimidation tactics and specious arguments of a small minority. The League strongly urges your support of SB 347, 699, 700, and 796.

Sincerely,

Robin Wisdom
President

Marge Easley
Past President