

2013 Oregon Legislative Session
Testimony to Oregon Legislature
Addressing Committee on Judiciary
Hearing Room 50
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Constituent of Senator Betsy Close
SD 8
Elected Precinct 093 Committee Person

SB 796
after first reading, unamended
OPPOSITION

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Dear Chair and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

Thank you for the opportunity to address you regarding SB 796.

Where is the problem that this proposed bill is intended to address? Have there been a lot of people wounded by inaccurate fire from CHL holders defending themselves?

I am a retired Coast Guard Master Chief Boatswain's Mate with 29 years of service, 21 of which I served as a Small Arms Instructor. In that role I trained hundreds of Coast Guardsmen and women how to safely and effectively use the .45 Cal M1911 Colt pistol, the 9MM Beretta PDW, the M-16 Rifle, the Remington Model 870 Shotgun and the Browning M2 .50 Machine Gun. As an Officer in Charge, I was responsible for certifying whether personnel were not only qualified, but were dependable and trustworthy enough, and possessed sufficient judgment and suitable temperament to carry a weapon in the performance of their duties, both military and law enforcement.

I currently hold concealed carry permits in Utah, Oregon and Nevada which allow me to carry concealed in 35 states. I am a member of the Albany Rifle and Pistol Club where I also serve as a Range Officer.

With my background and experience, I consider myself to be well qualified to discuss firearms training and proficiency.

To begin with, from the standpoint of firearms training, this bill is very poorly written. I really don't care if it came from another state's statutes, it's as if you asked a miner to design a space capsule....they'll no doubt come up with something, but it probably won't work.

- It doesn't address the difference between a revolver or a semi-automatic pistol. The differences in the operation of those firearms would result in significant differences in the timed fire exercise.
- It doesn't require that the weapon used for qualification is the concealed carry weapon.
- It doesn't address "condition of carry". That is, the prescribed courses of fire don't specify if the handgun is to be holstered or at the ready position at the beginning of a course of fire.
- It doesn't address targeting assist devices, such as scopes, optical or laser sights.

- For the purposes of this bill, what constitutes a suitable range?
- If the purpose of the bill is firearms proficiency, shouldn't we be looking at continued competency? In the Coast Guard, as with most Law Enforcement agencies, we had to qualify with our carry weapon every six months to demonstrate proficiency.
- The proposed amendment grandfathers in current CHL holders. That means over 150,000 CHL Holders would not be subject to this law's proposed requirements. Since the number of CHL holders grows by only about 10% a year. **That would mean that it will take 10 years before 50% of Oregon CHL holders are in compliance.**

In a lot of Oregon Counties, open carry is permitted and even common. Yet, this law does nothing to address the competency of those citizens exercising their Second Amendment rights.

Conclusion

Oregon Concealed Handgun Licensees are by nature, conscientious citizens. In addition to passing a complete background check, they have spent considerable time and expense to obtain their license. They are among the most law abiding citizens in the state, so why are we even imposing further regulations upon them?

So, since this proposed law woefully fails to adequately address its stated purpose, you have to wonder why it is even being proposed. The current requirements seem to meeting the needs for competency adequately, so if it isn't broke, don't fix it.

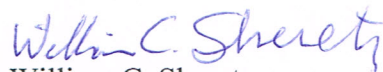
Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee and I strongly urge you to vote no on SB 796 for two reasons:

It woefully fails to adequately achieve its intended purpose, and

It needlessly imposes further regulations upon some of Oregon's most conscientious and law abiding citizens, our Concealed Handgun Licensees.

I would be happy to answer any further questions you may have.

Sincerely and Respectfully,



William C. Sheretz
Master Chief Boatswain's Mate, USCG (ret)