

**Written Testimony opposing SB 796
Oregon Senate Committee on Judiciary
April 5, 2013**

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The range association consists of 28 of the major non-profit shooting ranges in Oregon, having 16,500 members across the state and growing. The association is dedicated to the preservation of Oregon ranges.

We are opposed to SB 796 because the requirements are too stringent and there are not enough ranges available to accommodate those requirements and the training required. This means the bill would severely restrict who could obtain a permit, at least on a timely basis.

Non-profit ranges that have special training classes for women are booked a year in advance. Range memberships are quite expensive because of environmental requirements and liability exposure. And, many of our ranges are capping their memberships as the existing members are being crowded out.

A number of our ranges are restricted against public use by their non-profit tax status and most are not normally set-up for the extra short range shooting. Applicants will need practice to become proficient enough to pass the test- and they will have to shoot somewhere.

Dump site shooting in National and State forests is illegal, as is trespass shooting in rock quarries and pastures. Clackamas County Dump-Stoppers is a sheriff's officer and dept. effort assigned to stop and or arrest such shooters. Shooting at such "wide spots" is uncontrolled, very dangerous, and does not meet environmental laws.

There is a lack of publically owned ranges to accommodate concealed carry applicants. In an effort to allow more ranges, the range association has submitted SB 713 which would allow firearms training facilities in EFU zoning.

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Political opportunists exploiting tragedies for anti-gun agenda

Posted By [In the news](#) On March 28, 2013 @ 7:30 am In [2nd Amendment](#) | [2 Comments](#)

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by George Pitts, *Chairman, Oregon Association of Shooting Ranges*



I have been very uncomfortable watching the political opportunists like California Senator Feinstein, New York Mayor Bloomberg, and Oregon Senator Burdick dusting off their time-worn anti-gun agendas. The nation was still in the first days of shock from the tragic murder of school children at Newtown when we started hearing renewed demands for "reasonable gun control".

These political opportunists want us to believe that the solution to these murders is to outlaw so-called "assault rifles." They are being defined as "assault rifles" only because they have cosmetic features like bayonet mounts, flash hidiers, heat guards, and pistol grips. These mid-power AR style firearms have been used by three generations of our military and law-enforcement. We have sold many hundreds of thousands of surplus semi-automatic service rifles to Americans for over fifty years – apparently without major problems. Now, for some reason, they are a threat to society? Knowing that less than 1% of U.S. murders are committed using "assault style" weapons, you have to wonder why we are focusing all this attention on them.

Some claim that if we only had universal background checks we could control gun ownership and prevent future mass murders. However, universal background checks cannot work without universal registration as there would be no way to enforce traceability. The result would be to increase the number and value of black market firearms – better serving criminals than the law-abiding. An even worse result would be a national registry as a stepping stone to tyranny as repeatedly demonstrated in history.

Background checks only apply to the law abiding, as criminals by definition, do not obey the law, and so criminals either falsify information on applications or buy guns on the black market. Another problem with background checks is that critical information is missing from the database that's checked. An [AP article last week](#) [2] noted "There is wide-ranging agreement that many states poorly report mental health records to the federal background check system." Oregon is one of those states. We here in Oregon essentially [do not participate in mental health issues reporting](#) [3] to the national data base for background checks. So how are universal background checks supposed to save lives? As we know, the murders at Newtown, Tucson, Colorado, and Virginia Tech were all committed by people who were known to be mentally disturbed. Yet, we would not have reported them had they been Oregonians.

These anti-gun measures will not reduce the criminal use of firearms or mass murders by the mentally ill. Connecticut had the [4th strictest gun laws](#) [4] in the country, and has had an [assault weapon ban](#) [5] since 1993 that bans 67 semiautomatic assault weapons by brand name. The [federal ban that expired in 2004](#) [6] outlawed 18 specific models of military-style "assault weapons". Connecticut's strict gun laws and assault weapon ban did not prevent the tragic murder of children and adults at the Sandy Hook Elementary by someone with known mental health problems.

We need legislators who are serious about fixing the actual problems that will make us safer and not political opportunists who are pursuing their own political agendas.



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