

To Oregon State Judiciary Committee – [annola.dejong@state.or.us](mailto:annola.dejong@state.or.us)

From Carolyn Wendell – [carolynwendell1@gmail.com](mailto:carolynwendell1@gmail.com) for the April 5<sup>th</sup> hearing.

Dear Chair Prozanski and Committee Members,

My name is Carolyn Wendell and I am speaking in opposition to SB 347, SB 699, SB 700 and SB 796.

I am here representing three teenage girls who in 1966 were kidnapped, robbed, beaten, threatened with death, then all subsequently raped one after another by three serial rapists. I am one of the three.

Our lives for these 46 years have been tragically affected by this long night of darkness; filling us with fear on so many levels, beating us down emotionally. One friend suffers from anorexia because of her rape and to this day hasn't spoken to her husband about this night although he was part of her life in 1966. The other friend is a recluse, divorced because of the wreckage she made of her life after assault. She lives alone: afraid of the world. She has no children except the little boy she was impregnated with by her rapist. The baby ended up in a quart jar at the side of her bed in our apartment. She named him Sam.

Back then it wasn't deemed necessary for victims to have counseling. There were so many layers of pain that just remained buried. I didn't know there could be an answer to my fears.

A doctor told me I had Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) a few years ago. This didn't compute. Then recently another physician heard what had happened to me during a PTSD episode in his office and was adamant that I take classes in concealed carry firearm protection as a very important aspect of healing.

I erroneously believed that guns somehow fired themselves. I hadn't even held a gun so breaking down this emotional wall really "empowered" me. After my concealed carry class I knew this would be a big part of my healing.

The road to advocating for firearm protection is just beginning for me to help myself and other assault victims of every kind. I have joined the new group Safer Oregon. The timing is perfect.

As a mother of five and grandmother of twenty-four my life has always been about protecting them. Now that I am older and have suffered many surgeries and a mini-stroke so it is hard to even protect myself. For the first time in forty-six years I feel that I have a chance to regain some strength. Life is not over for me.

The Second Amendment should always be an option. There are so many women that have been assaulted and feel like there is no way to regain confidence. The answer for some may be a handgun (with a laser). Those of us who are weaker have a way to level the playing field.

I believe in safety and having a firearm makes people safer. Knowing about weapons allows the mind to be calmer and make the correct decisions. Safety is drilled into our minds. With children in our lives safety is the main issue.

My friends and I had been together since we were in Kindergarten. We were Bluebirds, Camp Fire Girls, and took ballet together. In 1966 we had just moved into our own apartment. Then our lives were changed forever that night. No one should be abused in any way by another. Having the Second Amendment in place, with concealed carry allowed, may give pause to someone before they think of hurting others. Please remember us.

Thank you committee.

Carolyn Wendell

1540 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Ave., Stayton OR 97383