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First, I'd like to thank the committee for letting me be here today to speak to you regarding SB 346, SB 347, SB 699, SB 700 and SB 796.

I was invited here today for these reasons:

1. I am a gun owner and hunter
2. I am also a registered republican voter (although I vote for the best candidate in my opinion, not strictly by the party)
3. The defining reason I am here today is that my brother-in-law Steve Forsyth was one of two people murdered about 3:30 pm on Tuesday, December 11th, 2012 at the Clackamas Town Center Mall.
4. The first shooting victim murdered was Cindy Yuille, a hospice nurse with Kaiser Permanente. Even though two nurses and an ER doctor happened to be near Cindy when she was shot, all their medical training and knowledge could not save her.
5. Our two family's lives have been forever altered because of the careless and reckless storage of an AR-15. The shooter who so easily took this gun along with 1 full 30 round magazine, and then in the preceding 3 days purchased 4 more 30 round ammunition magazines and the rounds to fill them before going on a rampage through the Clackamas Town Center mall during the holiday shopping season last December.
6. I know my brother-in-law Steve Forsyth would have been here if I had been shot and killed, or if another person in our Portland family had been gunned down at the mall.

I received a frantic call from my sister who had just left her husband's side, she told me that there had been a shooting at the mall and she could not reach Steve on his cell phone. She also could not find him outside the mall where hundreds of other shoppers and retail workers had evacuated too. My sister, her daughter and I spent the next 5 hours at the Clackamas County Public Safety Training Center waiting for word about Steve. About 8:30 pm Clackamas County Sheriff's detectives confirmed the worst case scenario; Steve was in fact a victim of the shooter. The first words out of my sisters mouth were "did he suffer"? The detectives said he did not and in fact the medical examiner later confirmed that Steve died instantly. The fact that Steve did not suffer is a small measure of comfort to our family, but most of all to his wife Carla, their kids and Steve's dad Ron Forsyth. Unfortunately, the worst was yet to come.

The absolute worst moment of my life was when we had to tell Alex, Steve's 13 year old son that his dad had been shot and killed at the mall. While my sister Carla and her daughter Katie will be haunted by the gun shots they heard at the mall that day, I will be haunted by the anguished crys and screams of disbelief from Alex when we gave him this awful news. I sincerely hope that none of you ever have to face a similar situation; otherwise you may sitting here where I am now.

I also had to make the calls to family to tell them that Steve had been shot and killed at the mall. I will never forget any of those phone calls either.

Shortly after Steve's death I contacted Mayors Against Illegal Guns and The Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence. I have become involved with the Mayors group as have many of our family and friends. I have made two trips to Washington DC in recent months for MAIG. While in DC I was able to meet and talk

with staff of Oregon Senators and Congressman. In addition to the meetings with legislative staff in Washington DC, I was able to meet and hear from many people who had a family member wounded or murdered at the shootings we've all heard about: Virginia Tech, Columbine High School, Aurora Colorado movie theater, Northern Illinois University, The nursing school at University of Arizona, Sandy Hook Elementary School and Gabby Giffords event at a local Safeway grocery store in Arizona. These tragic shootings are becoming too common.

Experiencing firsthand how one of these senseless acts of gun violence turns a family's life upside down in a fraction of a second, has driven me to better understand our current gun laws both at the state and federal levels. I have met several times with Clackamas County Sheriff's officers to learn the details of the shooting, information about the shooter, the gun used and the sequence of events in the days leading up to Steve's murder. I even went to a local gun show recently at the Portland Expo Center to see a show for myself. A week before Steve was shot, I had purchased my 16 year old son his first rifle for a Christmas gift. That purchase gave me the opportunity to go through a background check at a retail store. The background check was painless, took less than 10 minutes and was inexpensive too.

As I said, I've used shotguns and rifles for hunting. There is absolutely no reason to use an assault style weapon coupled with a large capacity ammunition magazine while hunting. There is no sport using an assault weapon with that rate of fire and a 10 to 30 round magazine other than the simple goal of slaughtering animals.

What I've come to understand is that there are far too many holes and weaknesses in the system we have now to keep guns out of the hands of those that should not have access to them in the first place. The NRA and gun lobbyists share part of the blame for the systems we have in place now. However, the burden of blame for our poor system falls on our state and federal elected officials. Only our elected officials can write, vote and pass the laws that we all live by. Elected officials have taken money from the NRA and gun lobbyists, who they are then beholden to. The NRA also employs intimidation and bullying tactics with elected officials. The NRA leadership is responsible for the intimidation and bullying of politicians to advance the misguided objectives of the gun manufacturers. Based on recent polls across the nation, they show that 91% of voters and 88% of gun owners support universal background checks.

While the ban on assault weapons was in place, from 1934 to 1994 mass shootings were rare. They occur too frequently now. That ban stood for 60 years and was never struck down by a single court in the United States. Then the NRA used their influence and intimidation to water down a 10 year extension of this assault weapons ban which expired in 2004. So, today we have this proliferation of guns that use large capacity ammunition magazines which often end up in the hands of folks that should never have them in the first place. If the NRA was serious about gun safety, and the safety of the general public they should be advocating that anyone buying a gun must take and pass a weapons training course. Part of this course would require proving proficiency on a gun range. Additionally this should include a requirement to keep your gun stored in a secure manner, so that a child or teenager has virtually no possibility of an accidental shooting or suicide. A securely stored gun would lessen the

chance that it could be stolen in a home burglary too. Once stolen, the unsecured gun will be in the hands of a criminal, convicted or simply not yet caught and convicted.

There are five senate bills which we are here to testify for.

SB 346 – This would ban the sale of large capacity ammunition magazines, defined as those that can hold more than 10 rounds of ammunition.

SB 347 – Would permit school districts to decide if they would allow a concealed weapon permit holder to bring a gun on the grounds of a K through 12 school. To me the better solution to this situation is to require that you must be 21 years old to bring a concealed weapon on the grounds of K – 12 school. As it stands now you only have to be 18 to get a concealed weapons permit. There are far too many high school seniors that are age 18 that could get a concealed weapons permit and take it into a school.

SB699 – This bill would prohibit the carrying of firearms in the Oregon State Capitol by persons who have concealed handgun licenses without the permission of the legislative administrator. Frankly, I can't believe someone other than a police officer is allowed to carry a concealed weapon into this building today, given that you can't carry a firearm into a court house, on a plane, into the nation's capitol building and many other government office buildings in Washington DC.

SB700 – Requires universal background check before the sale or other transfer of every firearm, except transfers to immediate family members. Current Oregon law only requires licensed dealers and sellers at gun shows to run background checks.

1. This bill would allow the Oregon State Police to screen for and prohibit felons, fugitives, those adjudicated mentally ill and those with an active restraining order or those convicted of domestic violence from legally purchasing a gun.
2. Jurisdictions with universal background checks show significantly lower rates of firearm homicides by intimate partners, gun suicides and incidents of gun trafficking.
3. A survey of prisoners in state and federal facilities who committed crimes with handguns found that 80% of them got those guns through private transfers.
4. States that require universal background checks have 38% fewer woman shot to death by their intimate partners.
5. States with universal background checks have 49% fewer firearm suicides than states that do not.
6. In 2012, 96% of background checks in Oregon took less than 5 minutes.
7. Over 80% of Oregonians support universal background checks according to a January 2013 Oregonian poll.
8. The few minutes of inconvenience and minor cost to run a background check seems like a deal if it may prevent some deaths from occurring. How can any rational and responsible person argue with this?

SB796 – In addition to existing requirement, this would require that a person applying for a concealed handgun license to pass a firing range test.

This proposed bill has significant meaning to my family. My daughter who has one year left at the University of Oregon before she earns her elementary school teaching degree. She also has a former boyfriend who has threatened her in the past both at the campus in Eugene and here in Clackamas. His name is Kyle Young, he also has taken the test and earned a concealed weapons permit. We don't know if he actually owns a handgun, but we know he has the permit, we a picture of it from his twitter account. We also have a nice video he posted to his twitter account showing him pointing a 9MM Glock at the camera and asking who wants to get shot. I have sent this video to the Clackamas County Sheriff's office and the campus police in Eugene. Neither jurisdiction has the authority to revoke Kyle's concealed weapons permit. I hope Kyle will lose the right to ever renew his concealed weapons permit based on this video.

It is obvious that **today's** NRA leadership is focused on making guns easily available, rather than focusing on the safe use of a gun, the secure storage of guns and keeping them out of the hands of those with criminal backgrounds, those mentally adjudicated and those with a history of domestic violence. So it is now left to the overwhelming majority of Americans to demand that OUR elected law makers correct the laws and regulations that have left so many dead and wounded in schools, malls, college campuses, work places, grocery stores, movie theaters, etcetra. **Haven't there already been enough senseless acts of gun violence to get solid and profound action from our lawmakers?**