

Testimony of Tom O'Connor
To Oregon Senate Judiciary Committee
In Support of SB 945
April 16, 15

Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee:

My name is Tom O'Connor. I'm retired and live in Clackamas County.

I am a lifetime gun owner and I strongly support SB 945 that creates the crime of endangering a minor if the owner of a firearm does not store it properly to prevent a child from gaining access to the firearm.

This requirement is easy for any gun owner to comply with in practical ways and at a reasonable cost. There are a wide variety of storage and security devices readily available at any gun store or outdoor store. These include a range of sizes of safes with key or combination locks. For example, here are several links to secure storage safes and lock boxes from two major retailers in Oregon, Dick's and Cabela's:

http://www.dickssportinggoods.com/family/index.jsp?categoryId=12114941&bc=LN_Category_5_PersonalHandgunSafes

http://www.dickssportinggoods.com/family/index.jsp?categoryId=4414544&bc=LN_Category_1_GunSafes

http://www.cabelas.com/catalog/browse/gun-safes/_/N-1100213/Ns-CATEGORY_SEQ_104369580

For those who feel they must have ready access to their firearm, there are several models of safes that allow quick access by the gun owner using a four digit punch code or coded card or new "biometric" models that open with a fingerprint or handprint.

Also readily available are simple "trigger locks" for example such as the ones made by Remington that are sold at Dick's for \$9.99. When I purchased a rifle last year, the manufacturer provided a "cable lock" for free along with the firearm.

In my opinion, the best alternative even if children are not present in the home, is to have a gun safe for firearms and a separate locked box or safe for ammunition. Responsible gun owners follow this approach. See Remington's "Ten Commandments of Firearm Safety":

https://support.remington.com/General_Information/The_Ten_Commandments_of_Firearm_Safety

The 2nd Commandment says in part:

"Take special care if there are children around. Children are fascinated by firearms. It is a natural curiosity that can have tragic consequences when not properly supervised. Store your firearms in a locked gun safe or some other location that physically bars a child from gaining access. Ammunition should be stored and locked in a location separate from your firearm. Never leave an unsecured firearm or ammunition in a closet, dresser drawer or under the bed. Remember, it is your responsibility to make sure that children and others unfamiliar with firearms cannot get access to your firearm and ammunition."

SB 945 is a common sense gun safety bill that makes it clear that we, as gun owners, are responsible for keeping our firearms secure from children and provides a penalty for those who would ignore or forget that basic responsibility. Thank you.

