



clackamas women's services

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June 1, 2015
House Judiciary Committee
Support for SB 525B

Chair Barker, Co-Chairs Olson and Williamson, Members of the Committee:

I am Amy Doud of Clackamas Women's Services, a non-profit in Clackamas County which provides support, services, education and empowerment for domestic and sexual violence survivors and their supporters. I am writing to express my support for SB 525B, which would codify in Oregon law the federal firearms prohibitions applicable to adjudicated domestic violence offenders.

We see it daily and it is well-documented that firearms and domestic violence are a dangerous and lethal combination. There are approximately 28 deaths due to domestic violence every year in Oregon, and more than 60% of those fatalities are by gun. Our community and those we serve have been greatly impacted by the intersection of firearms and domestic violence. Survivors in our county have lost their lives to a perpetrator with a firearm and we see daily the tremendous fear in a victim that they will be killed by a firearm in the hand of their abuser.

Federal law has long prohibited possession of firearms by domestic violence perpetrators subject to a restraining order that has been upheld after a hearing, or convicted of a misdemeanor domestic violence offense. But without a parallel state law, enforcement and implementation of these protections is virtually impossible. We hear from agencies in other states what a tremendous impact enforcement makes in this area, particularly for the survivors at the highest risk of being killed, and trust it would have the same impact in our state and community here in Clackamas.

Oregon should join other states in taking steps to ensure the safety of our most vulnerable citizens. Passage of SB 525B will ensure that Oregon law enforcement agencies and district attorneys will have important tools to protect vulnerable victims from lethal domestic violence. Studies show that local implementation of these protections helps to reduce domestic violence fatalities.

We urge your support of this important bill to protect victims, their children, and our communities.

Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,

Amy Doud
Program Director