

HB4147 – Testimony in SUPPORT

2/3/16

Kerry “Spike” Selby

Hello, my name is Kerry “Spike” Selby, and I am a resident of Portland, Oregon.

Like many citizens who become passionately engaged in activism around a specific issue that concerns them, I had a “moment of crystallization” that took me from bystander to advocate.

It was in the summer of 2014, when a 15-year-old boy took an AR-15 to Reynolds High School, killed another 14-year-old student, then turned the gun on himself.

My brother-in-law Evan is a teacher at Reynolds, and when I first heard the breaking news, my heart jumped and I thought, “no, I’m sure Evan is fine, he couldn’t possibly be hurt.”

And yes, Evan was safe, but that is not the case with many gun violence survivors and families that I have met over the last couple of years.

They have suffered agonizing losses that are impossible for me to imagine, and I pray I never have to.

88 Americans are killed with guns everyday, and hundreds more are injured.

While we understand that background checks on firearms purchases do not prevent all instances of gun violence, they are a critical barrier to keeping dangerous people – who are not legally eligible to purchase a gun – from obtaining one.

A background check should be “pass-fail” with no exceptions, and the 3-day loophole is an exception that must be closed.

HB 4147 is an important step towards strengthening our background check system, and I urge a yes vote to send this bill forward.

Thank you.