



CITY OF

PORTLAND, OREGON

Charlie Hales, Mayor
Amanda Fritz, Commissioner
Nick Fish, Commissioner
Dan Saltzman, Commissioner
Steve Novick, Commissioner

February 4, 2016

Representative Jeff Barker, Chair
House Judiciary Committee
900 Court St, NE, Hearing Room 343
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Barker and Members of the Committee:

We write in support of HB 4147, which closes the Charleston Loophole for gun sales in Oregon.

Federal law requires that licensed gun dealers run criminal background checks on all potential gun buyers. However, if a background check is delayed, the law allows sales to proceed after three business days – even if background check operators have not confirmed the buyer is legally allowed to purchase a firearm.

Last July, the Charleston shooter was able to purchase the gun he used in a mass shooting because this default period had elapsed—and the dealer legally made the sale without a completing a background check. In the last five years, gun dealers made more than 15,000 gun sales to prohibited people because a background check could not be completed within the three-day default period. HB 4147 closes this loophole and prohibits a firearm transfer if background check operators have not confirmed the buyer is legally allowed to purchase a firearm.

In 2014, there were 497 deaths due to firearms in Oregon. Nationwide, over 30,000 people are killed by firearms every year. More than twice as many are injured. Oregon, along with the rest of the country, has experienced numerous mass casualty and tragic gun violence incidents in recent history. Public safety is a fundamental priority for the City of Portland and gun violence poses a serious threat to the security of our community.

Thank you for your efforts to ensure the integrity of our background check system. We urge your support for HB 4147, to close the Charleston Loophole in background check requirements for the purchase of firearms.

Sincerely,

Charlie Hales
Mayor

Amanda Fritz
Commissioner

Nick Fish
Commissioner

Dan Saltzman
Commissioner

Steve Novick
Commissioner