

April 16, 2017

To the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing today to speak to concerns I have regarding SB 764. This bill appears to be a solution in search of a problem. CHL holders are not the issue in Oregon. They are, and have been, among the most law-abiding in the state. For many years, CHL holders have safely and judiciously carried concealed firearms to provide self-defense for themselves, their family and in some cases, innocent bystanders. As it stands, a CHL holder already has to submit to a background check as well as fingerprinting. In fact, in speaking with a number of LEO's, they have confirmed to me over and over that they find CHL holders to be among the least of their worries. If that's true, then why the need for this bill?

This appears to me to be nothing more than another barrier to lawful self-defense for the most vulnerable in our state. By placing yet more requirements to attend classes, for example, it restricts access to folks such as minorities, low income, women/single mothers, LGBTQ and anyone else who may have very limited means to pay for such classes and to get to such classes. The requirements for these classes virtually assures they won't be available in remote or rural areas of the state and places undo burden on those without regular and reliable modes of transportation.

The Oregon State Constitution guarantees the right of the people to bear arms for self-defense. Yet this bill seeks to limit that right, once again, by placing additional burdens that not only increase the cost to provide for one's self-defense, but to restrict who will have access to that right. Why would those who are elected to protect the citizens of this state choose to place such a heavy burden on low-income, minorities, women/single mothers and others with limited means? We should be encouraging these folks to take up their right, not find ways to limit them even further.

This bill needs to be removed from consideration. Otherwise the most vulnerable in this state will suffer from this ill-advised tactic to limit the rights of Oregonians.

I would also like to take a moment to express similar opposition to the proposed SB's 868 and 797 in that they will provide little to no further protections for the people of Oregon, but will, once again provide not only undo burden on law-abiding Oregon citizens, but run the very likely risk of being abused in such a way as to deny a constitutionally guaranteed right to bear arms, as put forth in the Constitution of the State of Oregon.

Thank you for your consideration,

Erik McCarty
Oregon City