

Dear Senators and Committee Members,

These new “gun safety” bills that have been coming out of the Oregon state legislature have caused me much concern and confusion. Bills such as SB 797, SB 868 and SB 764.

As a firearms owner and instructor I believe in safe communities and responsible firearms ownership. There are solutions to gun violence but I feel that the current motivations in our state government are not fueled by an interest in safety but by agendas and political motivation. These bills are not making anyone safer and they are not deterring criminals from committing violent crimes.

Let’s start with “dash 4” in SB 764, how does making CHL licenses harder to obtain and more expensive promote safety in our communities? Criminals carry firearms regardless of the rules, hence why they are criminals. This proposed change only hurts honest people who want to be able to protect themselves and others. This law is simply an attack on those who want to obtain CHL licenses.

SB 868 is also troubling, allowing people to report each other resulting loss in constitutional rights. I am all for taking dangerous instruments away from criminals. But who decides who is “extreme risk”? So, if a family member dislikes someone else in the family they can report them and now they are an “extreme risk” and lose their ability to defend themselves? What is the “foreseeable future”? This system could be easily abused and good people could be punished for having done nothing at all.

SB 797 looks like a mess, the state prohibiting firearms sales if they are unable to determine “whether recipient is qualified to receive firearm”. If the state makes an error causing a delay there is no guarantee they the delay will end, if the state doesn’t investigate they you are unable to finish the transaction. Representative Jennifer Williamson has stated that 95% of firearms transfer delays are in error, that’s a lot of people they will be unable to seek a protective tool because someone in the OSP made a mistake. How does this make us safe? Criminals steal firearms or buy them illegally, so this mess of a law will not affect them, it will not make my community safer.

I submit this testimony is opposing to these new bills. These proposals will do nothing to keep my family, my friends or myself safer. These bills look like nothing more than ways to restrict the rights of Oregonians. There are ways to keep our communities safer but attacking the rights of the law abiding is not one of them. Please think of the citizens of this great state, think of those that voted you into office. Taking rights away from them is not the way to protect them, these bills are dangerous and I urge you to oppose them as well. Thank you for your time in reviewing my testimony.

Sincerely,

Joseph Finley