



**Multnomah County Sheriff's Office**  
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MICHAEL REESE  
SHERIFF

*Exemplary service for a safe, livable community*

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February 7, 2018

Oregon State Legislature  
House Judiciary Committee  
900 Court Street, NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Barker and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

As a law enforcement professional with more than 27 years of experience, I am writing in support of HB 4145, a bill to prohibit domestic abusers with restraining orders and convicted stalkers from possessing firearms. I am proud of the work my team at the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) does every day to protect victims of domestic violence – but their jobs would be safer if HB 4145 were passed into law, taking firearms out of dangerous and volatile situations.

A recent domestic violence incident in our jurisdiction illustrates this point. A neighbor looked out his window and saw a woman fleeing from her home. She was quickly caught and dragged back into the home by a man with a gun. The front door was slammed shut and barricaded, as screams continued from within.

Two MCSO deputies responded to the scene, because domestic violence is an inherently life threatening situation that requires backup. They entered the residence and found the man with his hand over the woman's mouth, holding a gun. In an effort to protect the woman's life – as well as their own – the deputies carefully deescalated the situation. Fortunately, the man dropped the gun and the deputies quickly arrested him.

This is just one situation out of the *21 times* our team at MCSO responded to domestic assaults involving a firearm in 2017. Domestic abusers are dangerous individuals who are all about "power and control." A loophole in federal and Oregon gun law allows these individuals – even if their victims have filed a restraining order – to possess a firearm if they are not married to their victim. There is no question that a gun multiplies their power and ability to harm or kill their victim or anyone at the scene.

Domestic violence in itself is a traumatic and complicated situation for women, children and anyone else involved. Our team is specially trained to work with victims who are hesitant to speak to prior abuse or report incident details because it means taking legal action against someone they love. By passing HB 4145, we can better protect victims in these situations from being shot and killed, as well as the law enforcement members who respond to their calls for help. As a result, I urge members of the House Judiciary Committee to close this loophole that needlessly puts lives at risk and pass HB 4145.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Reese".

Michael Reese  
SHERIFF