

Testimony of Tom O'Connor
to Senate Judiciary Committee
On HB 4145
February 20, 2018

Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee:

My name is Tom O'Connor. I am retired and live in Clackamas County.

I am a life-long gun owner and I support HB 4145. I am a member of Gun Owners For Responsible Ownership and an Advisory Committee member of the Giffords Oregon Coalition. We believe that with rights come responsibilities and we support common sense measures to reduce gun violence.

Our organization supported legislation adopted in 2015 that currently prohibits domestic abusers from purchasing or possessing firearms. Today, I'm here to support this bill that clarifies that abusive dating partners convicted of domestic violence and persons convicted of misdemeanor stalking are included in that prohibition.

Allowing known domestic abusers to have firearms just because they are not formally married to their victim or do not live together doesn't make any sense in today's real world. Guns and domestic violence are a deadly mix. When a gun is present in these situations a woman is five times more likely to die.

Saving lives by keeping guns out the hands of those who would use them to threaten, harass or murder is reason enough for responsible gun owners to support this bill.

But, in addition, I believe this legislation actually has a real benefit to gun owners like myself. When I sell a firearm, I want to know that I am not selling to a person who will use it in a crime. Clarifying the definition of domestic abuser in this bill will ensure that these persons are identified as part of a required background check and prohibited from purchasing.

Thank for the opportunity to testify and I urge your support of HB 4145.