



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF OREGON**

*The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 98-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.*

February 20, 2018

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary  
Senator Floyd Prozanski, Chair

Re: HB 4145, Relating to firearms and relationship status of stalkers – Support

The League of Women Voters is committed to the reduction of gun violence and to closing loopholes in current firearm laws. This is why we are strongly supportive of HB 4145, which will strengthen Oregon laws related to firearm possession for those convicted of stalking, intimidating, molesting, or menacing in domestic situations.

We take issue with those who may characterize this bill as an attempt to take firearms away from law-abiding gunowners, since the term “law-abiding” does not and should not apply to those convicted of stalking under Oregon law. We also question the arguments that false accusations will proliferate or that past ex-girlfriends or boyfriends will use this law to seek revenge. The process for obtaining a stalking conviction is not an easy one for victims, and the court system is not in the habit of handing out convictions without probable cause.

HB 4145 provides added protections for victims of domestic violence by prohibiting the ownership of firearms by those convicted of stalking them. It has been coined the “Boyfriend Loophole” bill, because it no longer limits firearm prohibition to those who fit the strict legal “spousal relationship” definition. We agree with those in law enforcement who argue that this definition is not adequate in many domestic scenarios, since stalking can often be perpetrated by boyfriends or other household members.

The League also supports the provision in HB 4145 to require the Oregon State Police to enter conviction data into the Law Enforcement Data System and the Justice Department’s National Crime Information Center, as well as notify the Oregon U.S. Attorney office, and all state and local law enforcement agencies and district attorneys.

The importance of this issue becomes clear when looking at statistics from the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. 1 in 7 women and 1 in 18 men have been stalked by an intimate partner during their lifetime to the point in which they felt very fearful or believed that they or someone close to them would be harmed or killed. 19% of domestic violence involves a weapon, and the presence of a gun in a domestic violence situation increases the risk of homicide by 500%.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Handwritten signature of Norman Turrill in black ink.

Norman Turrill  
LWVOR President

Handwritten signature of Marge Easley in black ink.

Marge Easley  
LWVOR Gun Safety Portfolio