

Dear Oregon Legislators,

I am writing today in response to Oregon SB 978. This bill is egregious and definitely not in the best interests of ALL citizens in the state of Oregon. I was born and raised in Bend, OR. I am a mother, wife, and public school teacher. If this bill is allowed to pass, it would irrevocably change our state in a negative way.

It is a very well known fact that strict gun control does not stem gun violence. If that were the case, Chicago and Washington D.C. would be the safest places in the country as their gun laws are the most onerous in the country. On the contrary, both cities have the highest rates of gun crime found anywhere. As Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1764, "Laws that forbid the carrying of arms . . . disarm only those who are neither inclined nor determined to commit crimes . . . Such laws make things worse for the assaulted and better for the assailants; they serve rather to encourage than to prevent homicides, for an unarmed man may be attacked with greater confidence than an armed man." --Thomas Jefferson, quoting Cesare Beccaria in *On Crimes and Punishment* (1764).

Upon assuming office, each of you took a solemn oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States. The Second Amendment is a vital part of that Constitution you swore to uphold and is a primary guarantor of our unalienable rights, rights granted by our Creator that can never be surrendered to or granted by any government for any reason. You are therefore obligated by the Constitution and your solemn oath of office to oppose any and all infringements on Americans' right to keep and bear arms and I expect you to abide by that obligation in every way.

In addition to upholding the Constitution, you took an oath to serve the people of Oregon, to the best of your abilities. The majority of Oregonians do support the Second Amendment and individual gun rights. In a time of school shootings, mass shootings in religious places, and with a media that consistently reports on shootings in a negative way, it is natural to say let's limit or do away with gun rights all together. I get that. I struggle with this on a daily basis as a mom and public school teacher. However, I look at the other side and notice how many of my students would not be able to eat through the winter and spring if their families were not allowed to own guns for hunting. I look at my family and friends who would be unable to defend their livestock from coyotes and wolves and how much their livelihoods would suffer. I look at my children who would not be able to participate in NRA sanctioned (and highly regulated) trap shoots and would not be able to learn how to be a responsible gun owner and steward of our state.

Please do more research into this bill and examine if it really is in the best interest for the majority of Oregonians, or for those who reside in the Portland-Metro area. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Most Sincerely,

Jessica Colburn  
Bend, OR