

April 1, 2019

I sit with my head down, in front of my keyboard struggling. Not only with what words to say, but just as much as much, struggling with the idea that I even have to write anything such as this. Struggling with the idea that to contemplate that life in our beautiful state has come to this. That our "leaders" have taken control of our lives in such a way as to strip us from our very freedoms as citizens, apparently to satisfy their own selfish, misguided agendas and that pushed and paid for by tainted out of state money. There could be no other reason. All other arguments are misinformed and misguided.

I am Northwest born and raised. Proud of my heritage here and up until now that I have raised my children and now grandchildren in this free state and country. Those very basic freedoms are threatened by the actions of the authors of this bill and the amendments attached. It saddens me that your intended actions if you proceed, will ruin the type of life I and my children to date have enjoyed, destroy the freedoms of a future for my grandchildren and all future Oregonians.

At 65 years old I truly fear for the future of all people who live in Oregon and perhaps plan to come here to live with no protections of the citizens from our legislature who is now of control. Up until this time I have not feared our "representatives", but now, those who are elected to serve us threaten us through their own self centered ideals.

I was raised to respect those in office, even when I disagreed with them. In this one short legislative session the push to strip us, as citizens, of the freedoms that represent the very basics of our country leave me with no respect for our current elected, but rather with utter disdain.

I am well educated, a physician, and serve people for their best interest everyday, it is my life. I cannot say the same for those who now are "running" our state, running it into the ground.

In all of my travels I have never seen anyplace more beautiful with more to offer than Oregon. I have never desired to live anywhere else, the Northwest and Oregon in particular, has been and always was to be home. That is threatened with the overstepping of this legislative body. If these laws pass I will have no choice but to move from the place I have always lived and loved.

When will those who hate guns, who for no reason other than for some misinformed and misguided ideas, who refuse to look at the real statistics do just that, look at the numbers and think through what you are doing?

The concept of taking guns and restricting the use of same from law abiding citizens, **who are not the problem**, will only leave those who are law breakers with guns, you KNOW that. All Oregon will be at risk, the threat is real. As I assume you have already heard, taking guns from law abiding citizens in an attempt to protect any one has the same misguided logic as taking cars from sober people to stop drunk drivers. Under the guise of protecting the public you're actions are wrong, simply wrong.

Consider the statics that follow, not from some magazine, but from Oregon.gov:

In the Sate of Oregon, between 2010 and 2014, the latest numbers available as of 3-22-2019 there were a total of 2280 gun related deaths. We can all agree that is a horrifying number, but, lets look at the breakdown of those numbers. Of that total 1897, 83%, were suicides. 53, 2% were by police action, 25, 1%, were considered accidental and the last category, homicide numbered 282, 12%. Certainly, once again we can all agree 282 homicides is a terrible number but not impressive on a statistical basis compared to suicides. So, do we have a gun problem or a mental health and social problem which is were our attention should be.

The first murder I ever read about took place in the book of Genesis, in the Bible, when Cain killed his brother Able in anger and jealousy... with a rock. Given the current legislative logic, we should outlaw rocks (I am not being humorous here).

If you continue to read from the Oregon.gov page you will find in those above numbers regarding homicides these statistics: of those who committed the homicides 44% were in a depressed mood, 33% had been diagnosed with mental illness, 27% were under treatment for mental illness and 13% had themselves had suicidal thoughts. As much as you want to talk about your life saving laws and believe what you yourselves say, to the contrary, our own state reported statistics do not support the idea that we have a gun problem. We have a mental health problem. Once again, restrictions on the legal ownership and use of guns in Oregon will have no effect on these numbers, they speak for them selves, anything else you attempt to promote is simply nonsense and not fact. Spend a few minutes as well on www.gunfacts.info, read up on the truth before you perpetuate and legislate lies.

Gun free zones, you know those areas like schools and public buildings which you are trying to create with your restrictive law proposals on CHL holders (also known as the good guys), create the opposite. Not safe zones but killing zones. Every mass shooting in the US, with the exception of the atrocity of Las Vegas, was in a gun free zone. A place where even those of us who can carry legally were not allowed.

All it takes is one lawfully licensed individual to be present and act to stop single a situation before it becomes a mass situation. Every attacker is a coward and acts only where there is no chance of a challenge. By creating your " gun free zones" particularly in our schools, you give and advertise an open season for the deranged to draw to.

I would like to be present at the hearings on April 2nd but my job is to care for people and incidentally, so is yours. The apparent difference is that I don't put on a guise of doing so to satisfy myself or my own agenda.

I can only further call shame on you who seek to restrict our constitutional rights and do so in secret and in deceit, naming a simple bill one thing and behind closed doors changing it into something it was never meant to be. That is more than deceit, that is simply, as I taught my children, a lie. Lies and deceit and those who perpetuate them always come into the light in the end.

There is so much more that could be said but I will draw to a close. I would ask, that before you pass such restrictive and simply wrong doings that you reconsider where you are taking us as a populace. You are supposed to be our leaders, please, be very careful where you try to lead us. The consequences of your actions have yet to be seen.

Dr. Kim Gauntt
Dundee, Oregon