



Testimony in support of HB 2013

Teri Mills RN, MS, CNE

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Chair Williamson and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of HB 2013. My name is Teri Mills. I am a registered nurse and a member of the Oregon Nurses Association- representing over 15,000 members working throughout our state's health care system.

When I began my career in nursing over 40 years ago, gun violence was almost unheard of. Today it is a public health crisis. I am sickened every time I or one of my students takes care of a patient or a family that has been impacted by gun violence- the worst was when I received a hysterical phone call in the middle of the night from my niece, whose best friend was shot and killed while they were attending the 2017 Las Vegas country music concert. Nurses are especially affected as they work to save lives- dealing with the amount of blood loss, witnessing the irrevocable damage, seeing the grief of families who have lost loved ones just because they were in the wrong place at the wrong time.

I decided that I am determined to make a difference. I joined the Oregon Chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. We do this work because every day 100 Americans die from gun violence and hundreds more are wounded. This number includes those whose lives are affected by abusers armed with guns.

That's why I am urging a YES vote on HB 2013. This bill will protect survivors of domestic violence by requiring swift relinquishment of guns from prohibited abusers and stalkers. Domestic violence and firearms are a deadly combination. Access to a gun makes it five times more likely that a woman who is a victim of domestic violence will be killed. During an average month, 52 women are shot to death by intimate partners in the U.S.¹

Gun violence also has a huge impact on children. Innocent children are all too often at risk- either of witnessing a violent shooting or becoming victims themselves. In America, children and teenagers are victimized by gun violence every single day. When American children die by gun homicide, they often die in incidents connected to domestic or family violence. In fact, 86 percent of the 224 children killed in mass shootings in the past nine years have died in an incident connected to domestic or family violence. No child should have to experience gun violence — not in their schools, not in their homes, and not in their communities.

Oregon should be doing everything within our power to keep guns out of the hands of people who have a history of domestic abuse. HB 2013 would protect families in Oregon by requiring abusers and stalkers to turn in their guns quickly to either law enforcement, to a federally licensed firearm dealer or to a sworn third party.

Nurses have a moral obligation to promote, advocate for, and protect the rights, health, and safety of our patients and the community we live in. Please join me today in supporting this commonsense bill that has great potential to save lives and prevent needless suffering.

¹ Federal Bureau of Investigation, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 2013-2017, available at <http://bit.ly/1yVxm4K>