

SB978 Testimony

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee Members:

I vehemently oppose this unabashed overreach on our right to defend ourselves. As a law-abiding, taxpaying Oregonian, I just want to live my life and be left alone, yet these elected representatives and Senators insist on not letting that happen.

Where to begin? Let me start at the top...

At least with SB501 and SB925, the bills have the sponsor's names on them. However, with SB978 the bill is sponsored by "Committee on Judiciary", and the -1 amendments to this bill have "Requested by Senate Committee on Judiciary". Whether this is by rule or not, it tells me that this power grab is so over the top, that even legislators won't even DARE to put their own names on this!

Which makes me wonder...

Do these legislators get elected and re-elected by telling their constituents that they'll vote to take away their gun rights? I have a very strong hunch that, if they did, those voters would see to it that these selfsame politicians would never come **NEAR** the State Capitol! Of course, I could very well be wrong on this, so I invite these legislators to prove me wrong; by their past campaign literature from any medium, showing that they indeed made taking away a constituent's State Constitutional right to bear arms (under Article 1, Section 27) a major part of their campaigns...I'll be waiting!!

Anyway, what's deplorable about this and the other anti-gun bills in the Legislature is that the sponsors of such bills claim to be "gun owners", which is a HUGE difference from the armed citizen, in my opinion. As noted firearms expert, the late Col. Jeff Cooper (USMC) once said:

"Owning a gun doesn't make you any more armed than owning a guitar makes you a musician."

Gun owners (or reasonable facsimile thereof) simply *possess* their guns, by keeping it in a safe or closet, rarely touched or used to practice safe gun handling, and the only time they would remove the gun from their safe (if they even have one...) is to strip their gun down for cleaning and maintenance. I'd bet dollars to donuts these so-called "gun owners" in the Legislature even *know* how to properly clean and maintain a firearm, for which I, for one, would pay to see!

The responsible and armed citizen, on the other hand, keeps their firearm on their person or within arms reach; loaded with a round in the chamber; and most importantly, they know how to use it: in plain English, they know when it's appropriate to use their firearm and can hit what they're shooting at, and above all else, are willing to protect and defend their own lives and the lives of their loved ones from those whose sole purpose is to shed innocent blood.

The responsibly armed citizen goes out of their way to seek as much training as they can with their firearm in order to be familiar with its use. With great power comes great responsibility, so

this person doesn't need a mandate from government (nor is it's government's job to dictate such training) to maintain and improve proficiency in marksmanship. There's also an added motivation to training: we hate it when these politicians say we don't need a firearm for protection and that only the police should have guns...yet HB 3338 proposes that Campus Police on University Campuses be DISARMED! This compels the armed citizen to train and practice even more.

As an aside, with all due respect: any citizen that carries a gun and doesn't put in their own time to practice and seek training, and thinks of their gun only as a "magic talisman" to ward off the bad guy, it would be wise NOT to carry in public!

The armed citizen knows the *four basic rules of gun safety*...

I do not list them here because I assume that these so-called "gun owners" in the Legislature know those rules by memory. These universal safety rules are part of every reputable firearms training and safety course in America, and if these Legislators haven't even heard of these rules, that tells me they've barely handled, let alone come near a firearm. And if this is the case, then these so-called "gun owners" posing as legislators should not....I repeat...should NOT be writing any gun legislation if they don't know what they're talking about!

Washington State Senator Phil Fortunato (R-Auburn) proposed a bill in January (SB 5172) in their Legislature that reads as follows:

Any legislator who wishes to introduce a bill pertaining to a firearm must be able to produce proof, upon request, that he or she has completed the following training requirements:

- (1) The criminal justice training commission firearm certificate program commensurate with that required for private detectives and security guards pursuant to RCW 43.101.250 and 43.101.260 for each firearm they wish to regulate;
- (2) Range safety officer training; and
- (3) A basic knowledge test of calibers and gauges of firearms.

This, I think, would be a great starting point for holding these politician's feet to the fire when it comes to our gun rights. Of course it doesn't stand a chance of being passed in the Oregon Legislature at this point, but in order to get like-minded representatives in office who will vote to pass it, folks need to start the groundswell for this....STAT!

This bill, if passed, will void Oregon's preemption statute ORS.166.170, which states:

"(1) Except as expressly authorized by state statute, the authority to regulate in any matter whatsoever the sale, acquisition, transfer, ownership, possession, storage, transportation or use of firearms or any element relating to firearms and components thereof, including ammunition, is vested solely in the Legislative Assembly.

(2) Except as expressly authorized by state statute, no county, city or other municipal corporation or district may enact civil or criminal ordinances, including but not limited to zoning ordinances, to regulate, restrict or prohibit the sale, acquisition, transfer, ownership, possession, storage, transportation or use of firearms or any element relating to firearms and components thereof, including ammunition. Ordinances that are contrary to this subsection are void. [1995 s.s. c.1 §1]"

Now, cities, counties, metropolitan service districts, airports, schools, colleges and universities can ban CHL holders from "public buildings" (including parking lots and grounds "adjacent" to those parking lots) under this amendment should it pass and be signed into law, basically making CHL holders law-abiding criminals. Yes, you read that right: law-abiding criminals.

But hey...let's raise those CHL fees! (Yup, that's in the amendment)

Had Enough yet?

If you've heard of the documentary "Seattle Is Dying" and have yet to watch it, I implore you to do so, for it is a reflection of Oregon. It has, among other things, advice from Seattle Police officers on how to significantly reduce crime, not just in Seattle, but also for other cities and their elected officials that are willing to face reality and finally do something. Take the testimony from these two Seattle Police officers, respectively.

For example:

"It's simple, start keeping criminals in jail. Judges need to stop giving them ridiculously low sentences and prosecutors need to stop accepting cheesy plea deals and actually lock people up when they commit a crime. That's all it would take to drastically lower Seattle's crime rate."

"In the last five years there has been a culture shift and it started with the legislature decriminalizing felonies and dumping convicts onto the streets."

Then there's this from Jim Glennon, a retired LEO who describes himself as "not a gun guy":

"For my friends who want the gun violence to stop and believe it is up to the government to stop it here is my opinion about what the government can actually do to save lives."

Ready?

ENFORCE THE GUN LAWS ALREADY ON THE BOOKS!

Ask any cop in the country. It's amazing how prosecutors routinely downgrade charges on people who use guns to commit crimes. There are laws all over the place that say if a gun is used in the commission of a crime that enhances the charge. Many have mandatory prison terms, but they don't kick in if the charges aren't filed.

This is happening in the most violent counties in the country. Invariably, people who do use guns during crimes, get away with it. And they know they will."

It's time to leave the law-abiding citizen alone and go after repeat criminals and lock them up. Criminals don't obey laws: never have and never will. I lay the blame at the feet of criminals, as well as the impotent judges and prosecutors that enable these criminals to keep committing crimes...and the so-called "gun owners" of the Oregon Legislature who write these laws (you thought you were gonna get off easy, didn't you?): all of you collectively deserve and share the blame.

Oh, and by the way, I still vehemently oppose SB978!

Sincerely,
Wayne Thomas

SENATE BILL 5172

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Senators Fortunato and Wagoner

Read first time 01/15/19. Referred to Committee on State Government,
Tribal Relations & Elections.

1 AN ACT Relating to legislative firearm training; and adding a new
2 section to chapter 44.04 RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 44.04
5 RCW to read as follows:

6 Any legislator who wishes to introduce a bill pertaining to a
7 firearm must be able to produce proof, upon request, that he or she
8 has completed the following training requirements:

9 (1) The criminal justice training commission firearm certificate
10 program commensurate with that required for private detectives and
11 security guards pursuant to RCW 43.101.250 and 43.101.260 for each
12 firearm they wish to regulate;

13 (2) Range safety officer training; and

14 (3) A basic knowledge test of calibers and gauges of firearms.

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