

House Judiciary Committee,

This bill is an essential measure for women's equal rights.

This bill will save lives.

Think of the number of reports you have read \*just in the last year\* of men who have killed their wives and/or children, or gone on killing rampages in churches, theaters, schools or elsewhere in the context of recent breakups, divorces, custody disputes, etc. The majority of mass shootings in the U.S. - 54% - are related to domestic or family violence. Source: Everytown for Gun Safety's analysis of mass shootings from 2009 to 2017 (defined as incidents in which four or more people are shot and killed, not including the shooter).

Over half of female victims of intimate partner homicide in the U.S. are killed with guns. In 2015, 92% of ALL women killed with guns in high-income countries were from the United States. Women in the US are TWENTY-ONE (21) times more likely to be killed with a gun than women in other high-income countries. This is an epidemic of violence against women that we can stop, yet we are letting it run riot over our women, children, and families, causing damage far into the future for even those whose mothers, children, sisters are NOT killed by their abusers.

In the US, more than 1 in 3 women report being abused by a partner.

Then there are the children in such households. I was one. When I was in first grade, my father held a gun to my mother's head and threatened to kill her if she left him. If a law like this had existed, she wouldn't have had to fear being trapped in an abusive relationship for fear she would be shot to death, leaving her children with an abusive alcoholic. But, there was no such law: she knew if she did leave - even if she got a restraining order - he would have kept his guns and she and her children would remain at risk.

My family's experience of gun violence and abuse is extremely common. According to Everytown for Gun Safety, "[m]ore than one in three callers to the National Domestic Violence Hotline report being threatened with a gun by their abuser, and more than three-fourths of those women report being stalked by their ex-partner. According to the author, 'the fear of a firearm threat—just the fear of the threat, not even the actual threat—is significantly associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It's stronger even than the link between physical or sexual abuse and PTSD.' "

The impact of being raised in an abusive household on cannot be overstated: the trauma and PTSD impacts children's physical as well as mental well-being, self-esteem, ability to form durable & trusting relationships with others, including school & work relationships, job success, and the need to expend valuable resources on therapy and psychiatric and medical services that would otherwise go towards building wealth, land ownership, starting businesses, etc. The cost to society is high, and women bear the vast majority of those increased costs. Guns are used by men to maintain their domination and abuse of women. If we care about women and children, we must address this.

This bill takes a very small but real step towards recognizing and reducing the harm that guns cause women and children. It will provide a mechanism for those with an active restraining order or stalking order against them to relinquish their guns to law enforcement. Right now Oregon law states you cannot possess a firearm if you are subject to a final protective order or are convicted of a disqualifying

domestic violence crime, or stalking. You will fail a background check, but there isn't a good way for law enforcement to make sure you don't have a gun. Oregon law does not presently require convicted abusers and stalkers to turn in their guns - so those abusers return home to pick up guns they already own. We know that guns in the hands of domestic abusers is very dangerous - for the person or people they are abusing and for the public at large. By adding this relinquishment requirement, Oregon would join California & Colorado's leadership in protecting victims of domestic violence.

State laws that prohibit abusers subject to restraining orders from possessing firearms, and require them to relinquish firearms in their possession are associated with a FOURTEEN PERCENT (14%) lower rate of intimate partner firearm homicide and a TEN PERCENT (10%) lower rate of total intimate partner homicide.

Access to a gun in a domestic violence situation makes it five times more likely that a woman will be killed. According to the Oregon Violent Death Reporting System, 62% of intimate partner homicide victims in Oregon between 2011-2015 were killed with a firearm. Imagine those lives were saved, and all the lives impacted by those losses.

"Public health researchers have established that in a domestic abuse situation, abusers' access to a gun significantly increases the risk of death for women compared to victims whose partners do not have a household firearm. Access to a gun makes it five times more likely that the woman will be killed by her abusive partner. The use of a gun by an abuser to threaten or intimidate their partner has been so well studied that researchers and victim advocates recognize it as a key predictor for domestic violence homicides.

Nearly 1 million women in the US alive today have been shot, or shot at, by an intimate partner.

About 4.5 million American women alive today report having been threatened with a gun by an intimate partner."

Now imagine that those women did not have to suffer those wounds or fears. Please pass this bill and put it into effect without delay. Thank you.

See <https://everytownresearch.org/reports/guns-violence-women-americas-uniquely-lethal-domestic-violence-problem/> for more information about the harms guns cause families and society at large when abusers maintain access to killing machines.

--

Erin Conroy

Please consider the environment before printing this email.

Think you're an ORGAN DONOR? Click here to find out:

<http://www.shareyourlife.org/become.asp>