

April 2, 2019

[Senate Committee on Judiciary](#)

RE: SB978

Sent via Email to Committee Members:

Chair: [Senator Floyd Prozanski](#)

Vice-Chair: [Senator Kim Thatcher](#)

Members: [Senator Cliff Bentz](#); [Senator Shemia Fagan](#); [Senator Sara Gelser](#); [Senator Dennis Linthicum](#); [Senator James Manning, Jr.](#)

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

We all want “Gun Safety”, who doesn’t want a safe gun? The bill before you, SB978, is asking you to pass what some would say is sensible legislation, with the hope there will be fewer mass shootings in Oregon. Naturally, we all want that, not only for Oregon, but globally. Therefore, if the mass shootings are the problem, then the weapon of choice, guns, must be tightly controlled.

I want to know that when any one of my 14 grandchildren go off to school, they will come home safely. I want to be assured that when my daughter goes shopping at Clackamas Town Center, she will have a wonderful day and not shop with an eye looking around for a suspicious person who may cause death and mayhem. I want to feel safe when I am in church on Sunday morning, praising and worshipping God. I don’t want to be living in fear that someone might walk into the sanctuary and start randomly shooting my fellow parishioners. None of us should live in fear.

When I read SB978, I can sense how the authors are attempting to make sure we are safe. However, there are provisions in this bill that concern me.

You see, if I must keep my firearm locked and unloaded, should I be in a situation where I am needing to defend myself, or others, how will I be able to quickly defend myself, or others, if I must first unlock my firearm and then load it? By then, I or others, could be seriously injured or dead.

I am not the person we need to be afraid of.... Nor are most of the gun owners in Oregon or America. The failure is not adequate background checks, or the age of gun owners; It is the failure of our society to make sure our kids and family members are mentally and emotionally balanced. That does not mean shielding them from every adversity that comes their way. It means, loving them and letting them know they can overcome adversity and failure. It is the failure of making sure we do not exacerbate poor mental health of our citizens. I ask you to read the following excerpt:

Peter Langman Ph.D. [Keeping Kids Safe](#)

School Shooters: There Is No Sound Bite

Research highlights the diversity of perpetrators. Posted Jan 31, 2015

“As noted in previous works, simply identifying perpetrators as psychopathic, psychotic, or traumatized, does not explain why they committed rampage attacks; most people in these categories never commit murder. The research presented in my book furthers our understanding

of why certain people carried out school shootings. Not only were they psychopathic, psychotic, or traumatized, but they experienced repeated failures across multiple domains: education, military aspirations, work, intimate relationships, financial stability, and sense of masculinity. They often felt they had nothing to live for, and they often wanted to get revenge against those they blamed for their predicaments. These factors, combined with psychopathic traits, psychotic symptoms, or histories of traumas, resulted in violence.”

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/keeping-kids-safe/201501/school-shooters-there-is-no-sound-bite>

The truth is, we all go through adversity. We always have, we always will. That is life. Some of us can handle it better than others. Bad things happen. This does not mean the need to legislate how parents raise their children. Nor does it mean we make law abiding citizens criminals. Those bent on causing mayhem, death, destruction will find a way. This includes suicide.

My nephew committed suicide. He didn't use a gun, he hung himself. Years ago, a friend overdosed on heroin. He knew he was going to die and told his girlfriend not to call an ambulance. Yesterday, April 1st, a man drove his Franz Bread truck into the propane tank at the Franz Bakery in Portland killing himself.

I ask you to stop putting a 'band aid' over the gaping wound and ask your fellow legislators to fund mental health care. Work with psychologists to find the solutions. We have much bigger problems than how I store my firearms.

Facts:

104 Murders in Oregon 2017 –(<https://www.statista.com/statistics/195331/number-of-murders-in-the-us-by-state/>)

17,284 reported murder and non-negligent manslaughter cases in the U.S. in 2017 (IBID)

10,128 Murder by Firearms in the US 2017 –

(<https://www.statista.com/statistics/195325/murder-victims-in-the-us-by-weapon-used/>)

70,237 drug overdose deaths in 2017 Nationwide 67% due to opioids

(<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm675152e1.htm>)

40,100 Motor vehicle accidents deaths in 2017 nationwide

(<https://www.insurancejournal.com/news/national/2018/02/16/480956.htm>)

23,854 gun-related suicides in 2017(<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/suicides-drive-record-us-gun-deaths-in-2017>)

47,173 Americans died by suicide in 2017, an estimated 1,400,000 attempted suicide.

(<https://afsp.org/about-suicide/suicide-statistics/>)

Top 10 causes of death in the US 2016 (<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/leading-causes-of-death.htm>)

- Heart disease: 635,260
- Cancer: 598,038

- Accidents (unintentional injuries): 161,374
- Chronic lower respiratory diseases: 154,596
- Stroke (cerebrovascular diseases): 142,142
- Alzheimer's disease: 116,103
- Diabetes: 80,058
- Influenza and pneumonia: 51,537
- Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome, and nephrosis: 50,046
- Intentional self-harm (suicide): 44,965

To put this in perspective: in 2016, the latest year the cause of death for top 10 is available, Total suicides were .023% of total deaths in 2016. Or about 1.15% by firearm. We have other health issues that must be explored. Guns/firearms are not the problem; therefore, gun restriction is not the answer.

When I look at all the issues concerning pre-mature death, whether by murder, suicide or poor health habits, I personally see one consistent theme.... Lack of self-worth and/or lack of the value of human life. Too many people feel they do not matter. This goes along with the mental health issues, which are the culprit for homicide by firearm.

I want my 14 grandchildren to be safe – perhaps encouraging faculty and staff who feel comfortable with the idea, who are willing, and would pass a stress test, become proficient with firearms. They can protect our precious children.

Encourage Oregonians to become responsible gun owners. I don't want criminals to be the only ones with guns. We all know they are not going to obey any gun laws.

Teach gun safety / respect for firearms to our children.

I ask you to please vote No on SB978. Do not pass it or any other gun bill out of committee. Please take a step back and look at the real problems. Please do not do the politically correct thing. Do what is Politically Honest.

Thank you for your time,



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