

DATE: Thursday, April 4, 2019
TO: Senate Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Melissa Laird, Beaverton, Oregon

SUBJECT: SB 978

Dear Chair Floyd Prozanski, Vice-Chair Kim Thatcher and Committee members,

I am writing today to ask you to oppose SB 978.

The proposed amendments as written will criminalize gun owners and justify it by labeling guns a public health crisis. Much of the testimony was about keeping guns away from children, attempting to "child proof" guns because young children are incapable of understanding guns and teens will use a gun in a "moment of distress". The student testimony Monday, April 1, made it clear they felt they were victims in constant fear for their lives.

As a mother I am appalled that our children are being used as political pawns, considered 'stupid' and used as victims to propose a one-sided solution to a complex societal issue.

As a mother I taught my children about 'Stranger Danger' so they knew what to do if approached by someone they did not know. Programs like Eddie Eagle can educate young children on what to do if they find a gun. Kids are smart. Remember the two young sisters (5 and 8) in California that were lost in the woods and used their wilderness training to survive.

Teens who are suicidal will find a way to harm themselves. The solution here is addressing their mental health needs.

As a child I remember civil defense exercises at school. We were not filled with dread of an imminent military attack or natural disaster. Instead we felt a confidence that we knew what to do and could 'live our lives' knowing we were prepared in case of an emergency. School lock down exercises serve the same purpose. About 60 percent of mass shooters have a history of serious mental disorders. Until we make major progress on the mental health care front, students will need to learn how to handle emergency situations in an empowered way.

I strongly urge you to vote **AGAINST SB 978**. Gun control is a simplistic and short-sighted attempt to solve a complex societal issue.

Thank you for considering my point of view.

Sincerely,
Melissa Laird
Beaverton, OR