

Dear Elected Legislators,

I am a concerned citizen, residing in Forest Grove, OR and I'm writing about SB 978. My interest as a progressive voter, and one who is pragmatic on the issues, is to approach the gun issue in a thoughtful and practical way.

I am concerned with the safety of our students in schools and this includes my own two children. I cannot help but notice that it was only in the last few months that any visible signs of security has been implemented in my own school district, consisting of a camera door-bell at the school front-door. I have, silently, been rather shocked that no more observable measures have been implemented. What we have today still seems remarkably bereft of what I would call 'comprehensive security.'

I use this example of inattention to the security of our children in schools to draw a stark contrast to the attention and efforts that have been underway to curb gun ownership and outlaw whole categories of firearms.

Of all the tools or objects that can and would be leveraged by people who are of criminal or deranged mentality, guns does present one that can have dangerous effect. However, automobiles, knives, and fertilizer also present other options that could be leveraged in heinous crimes. Really, anyone who wants to kill will find a way to do it, unfortunately. I believe our tax dollars and legislative efforts would be better spent on addressing mental health issues for our public and shoring up the security in our schools.

In my opinion, the result of passing SB 978 will be that an even greater culture war will open up--greater divisions that we have seen. We seem to have two different worlds clashing with each other: The urban and rural divide may be one way to describe it. Guns are a way of life for many and there is an emotional attachment to them for what they symbolize. Some claim that the purpose of possessing guns has its roots in the founding of the country and also as a natural right of protection. I think that it is wrong to widen the divide even further by stoking anger that this legislation will surely foster.

Being a progressive, yet pragmatic voter, I feel that the legislation is rather draconian. In fact, it may change the way I vote. I would like my statements to have an impact and hope you understand that we need to come together and not further divide each other.

Best Regards,

Chris Sauvageau  
Forest Grove, OR