



April 2, 2019

## Letter of Support for SB 978-1

Chair Prozanski and other Distinguished Members of the Senate Judicial Committee:

Lift Every Voice Oregon (LEVO) was formed roughly a year ago, following the Parkland, Florida shooting to respond to the voices of youth and others who called for responsible action to end senseless gun violence. The Directors are faith leaders from Muslim, Jewish and Christian traditions and other people of good faith in Oregon and our membership has grown into the thousands. We submit this letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee to express our strong support, without reservation, for each of the provisions of SB 978-1.

The bill responds to the voices of students and others opposing gun violence by empowering individuals, as well as private and public entities, to take responsible action. All gun owners will be required to maintain safe storage and report of lost and stolen weapons, incurring liability if injuries occur by their failing to comply with these common-sense steps. Private sports stores, firearms dealers and all persons transferring firearms and ammunition in Oregon are granted authorization to adopt minimum age requirements for their customers, placing safety over profit as their first priority. And, public entities such as cities, counties, schools and universities will be permitted to regulate and prohibit the possession of firearms in public buildings. Empowering these agencies and institutions to increase the safety for all who enter a public building is an essential step toward making the state of Oregon safer, more welcoming and more equitable for people, irrespective of their age, race, gender or beliefs.

While the LEVO campaign has focused upon measures that would reduce the proliferation of assault weapons and large-capacity magazines, we stand in unwavering solidarity with those who have brought the valuable measures set forth in SB 978-1 and implore this Committee to send it to the full Senate for approval.

Blessings to each of you,

**Rev. W. J. Mark Knutson**, Sr. Pastor of Augustana Lutheran Church, LEVO Chair

**Rabbi Michael Z. Cahana**, Congregation Beth Israel, LEVO Director

**Rev. Alcena Boozer**, Former Principal of Jefferson High School, Pastor Emerita of St. Philip the Deacon Episcopal Church, LEVO Director

**Muhammad Najieb**, Director of Muslim Community Center Portland, LEVO Director

**Rev. Lynne Smouse Lopez**, Ainsworth United Church of Christ, LEVO Director

**Tamrah Knutson**, Advisor to Students, LEVO Director

**Elizabeth McKanna**, Advisor to Legal Committee, LEVO Director