



Date: February 7, 2020
To: House Judiciary Committee, Chair Tawna Sanchez and Members
From: Laurie Wimmer, OEA Government Relations
RE: *HB 4005 [Secure Storage Legislation]*

On behalf of OEA's 45,000 members, it is my honor to submit this testimony in support of HB 4005, which offers common-sense protections against unauthorized or impulsive gun access, to protect our communities.

HB 4005 would ensure that all gun owners practice safe and secure storage protocols that many already do. By making sure that children do not inadvertently find and handle unsecured weapons, tragedies will be averted. By making sure that potentially suicidal people do not have easy access in their moments of grief and confusion, we will have the opportunity to save lives and offer help. By ensuring that would-be murderers – domestic violence offenders, mass shooters, and others – do not have the ability to steal or borrow weapons, we will protect entire communities from violence and death.

Because our schools and higher education institutions have become sites of tragic gun violence in recent years, our members want this bill to become law. You have of course heard of the massacre at Thurston High School, and the shootings at Umpqua Community College – both of which took the lives of some of our members – but what you undoubtedly do not know is that weapons come to school with increasing frequency, and it is not uncommon for even elementary schools to experience lockdowns to avert incidents and keep our students safe. These frequent incidents do not even make the news anymore, they are so common.

Add to that the trauma that our students and staff confront when they must participate in active shooter drills several times each school year. Our youngest children plan for their own safety and the survival of their classmates, all the while absorbing a steady diet of trauma in this preparation. Our educators envision how they will act, perhaps to die, to save their kids. Too many have had to deploy these skills in real crises across the nation.

This bill should have passed a year ago. Now, Oregon has been given a second chance to be safer because of its chances today. We urge you to not let another year go by without protecting our people. Thank you for your consideration of this critical legislation.