

My name is Dacia Grayber, and I am a resident of SW Portland and Veteran firefighter and paramedic. I am here today to testify in support of HB 4005, Secure Storage and Disrupting Dangerous Access to Firearms.

I first became an EMT over 26 years ago and have over 2 decades of emergency responses under my belt. I will never forget the first time I had to work what we call a "trauma code" on a child as a result of a gunshot wound. He had the same tousled blond hair as my son, and had he not been accidentally shot in the face by a friend, maybe I would have seen a resemblance there as well. I will never know, because it was my job to take what was left and try to create a viable place to deliver oxygen. We could not save him, and he died while his father howled the most unimaginable sounds from the next room. His friend had found the gun under the bed while they were playing. A child died that day, but countless lives were irreparably changed, including my own.

I wish I could tell you the names of every victim and details of every gun death since then, but I am ashamed to say that there have been so many over the years that I cannot.

There's a distinct feeling of dread when you are responding to a call involving a firearm, and especially a suicide. As a paramedic, there are so many things I can do to reverse attempts like drug overdoses. I can give Narcan, I can breathe for my patient, I can get them quickly to the hospital to turn the course. When a firearm is involved, often the only measure we can take is to deliver the worst news a family can ever hear, and clean up the mess. That's called a washdown, and I have also performed too many of those to remember.

Firearms are the second-leading cause of death among children and teens in Oregon. I often think, what if that teenager in distress had to take one more step to pull the gun on themselves? What if instead of being in the desk, or the bedside table, they had to remove the gun from a safe? Would those extra moments have changed their decision, and altered the terrible course of all the lives touched afterwards?

Would we still have to hold the mother crumbling to the floor after being told her child is gone? Would he have to endure the pleading eyes of siblings, parents, husbands, wives, and others? Would we have to remember the feet of the 11-year old child who died by gun suicide, still in footy pajamas?

A study published by the AMA has estimated that if even *half* of households with children that contain at least one unlocked gun *switched* to locking all their guns, one-third of youth gun suicides and unintentional deaths could be prevented, saving an estimated 251 lives in one single year.

We have before us such a critical and simple step to mitigating this safety risk to our families and community. While so many gun owners, myself included, keep our firearms locked in a safe or other secure storage, we know that more than half do not. It's time to take this small stand, for our communities, for our children, for the people like me called to fix the impossible.

I ask of you today, what *is* the value of one life? I implore you to vote yes on HB 4005.