

Please pass HB 4005 to reduce the risk of suicide and accidental injuries from guns in Oregon particularly among young people.

Secure gun storage can help reduce the risks of suicide by gun, especially for children. (Grossman DC, Mueller BA, Riedy C, et al. Gun storage practices and risk of youth suicide and unintentional firearm injuries. *Journal of the American Medical Association*. 2015;293(6):707–714). When children die by suicide by gun, more than 80% use a gun belonging to a family member. (Johnson RM, Barber C, Azrael D, Clark DE, Hemenway D. Who are the owners of firearms used in adolescent suicides? *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*. 2010;40(6):609–611. Study defined children as under 18).

One study found that households that locked both firearms and ammunition have a 78% lower risk of suicide by gun and also an 85% lower risk of unintentional gun injuries among children, compared to those that locked neither. (Grossman DC, Mueller BA, Riedy C, et al. Gun storage practices and risk of youth suicide and unintentional firearm injuries. *Journal of the American Medical Association*. 2005;293(6):707–714).

And researchers estimate that one third of all youth deaths from gun suicide and accidental shootings could be stopped if half of households with guns locked up their guns when not in use by the owner. (Monuteaux MC, Azrael D, Miller M. Association of increased safe household firearm storage with firearm suicide and unintentional death among US youths. *JAMA Pediatrics*. 2019;173(7):657–662.)

Many cities and states have laws that require or encourage secure storage, including Nevada and Virginia. And 14 states including Iowa, Wisconsin, Washington, and North Carolina have passed laws which impose criminal penalties when a person fails to securely store a firearm and a child gains unauthorized access to it. States with such laws had an 8% decrease in overall suicide rates and an 11% decrease in gun suicide

rates among adolescents aged 14 to 17. (Webster DW, Vernick JS, Zeoli AM, Manganello JA. Association between youth-focused firearm laws and youth suicides. *Journal of the American Medical Association*. 2004;292(5):594–601)

HB 4005 is a common sense gun safety measure to protect the public health. Surely, Oregon's children are worth these minimal protections. With the safe harbor provision that protects gun owners from liability if they report a gun stolen within 72 hours, there is no reason not to pass this public safety measure.

Laura Allen
Seaside, Oregon