

This is in support of HB 4005. This common sense legislation will save lives by preventing unauthorized access to firearms. There is a growing epidemic of suicide in this country, and in Oregon it is responsible for most firearm fatalities, particularly affecting rural areas where guns are more ubiquitous. Most gun owners already follow best practice and keep their guns stored safely where children or those with nefarious purposes can't access them. Too often failure to follow these safe practices results in tragedy - children (who usually know where guns are 'hidden') unintentionally killing themselves or others. Teenagers impulsively taking their own lives.

I served as deputy medical examiner for over a decade while in practice in Florence. During that time, there were a number of suicides by firearm. Most of these would not have been prevented by this law. But some of them would have - by those who shouldn't have had access to guns, particularly teenagers. In my tenure, in line with the scientific evidence, we always saved those that attempted suicide by overdose, but never those with firearms.

Follow the evidence - safely storing guns doesn't interfere with second amendment rights, but does save lives.

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