

Members of the committee,

HB 4005 does nothing to prevent criminal use of firearms. It is a pure harassment of law abiding gun owners, and renders them and their minor children incapable of from defending themselves from a home invasion. It makes them liable for the criminal actions of others who have stolen weapons.

But I want to address the larger issue of the morality of gun control, and the illegitimacy of imposing further gun control on the citizens of Oregon.

All gun control laws are the result of somebody thinking “something has to be done” about the misuse of guns by criminals.

Such thinking is inherently flawed, because something has already been done about the misuse of guns. Thousands of state and federal laws have already been put in place to fully criminalize the improper use of firearms.

The misuse of guns is already illegal, and more than enough laws already exist to provide for the restraint of the misuse of guns, if such laws actually have any restraining effect.

If someone is inclined to misuse a gun, no additional number of gun laws will either restrain his behavior or limit his ability to do the damage he is inclined to commit. By definition, criminals do not obey gun laws.

Furthermore, more than enough laws already exist to provide for the adequate punishment of those who ignore the existing gun laws, and misuse guns anyway.

If more than enough laws are already on the books to restrain and to punish those who commit gun crimes, then what possible use could further gun laws have, but to harass and limit the freedoms and rights to self defense that law abiding citizens inherently possess?

If the laws that already exist do not deter criminals, will additional laws do so? The answer is: clearly not.

More laws will not deter those determined to misuse guns. More laws will only serve to render honest citizens less able to defend themselves against the violent criminal.

To limit the rights of the honest citizen to keep and bear arms because criminals misuse firearms, is to tell the law abiding that their rights and liberties depend not on their own conduct, but on the conduct of the guilty and the lawless.

It is to say that our rights are defined by the criminal that misuses guns, and that we should be denied our liberties because of his bad behavior.

This is immoral. It is like saying that because one person misuses alcohol and drinks, drives, and kills an innocent person, that therefore all responsible drinkers should be denied access to alcohol and automobiles.

When a drunk driver kills an innocent person, we do not ban either alcohol or cars, because we recognize that the instrument is not the problem. It is the person who misuses that instrument that is the problem, and he alone should be punished.

In the same way, guns are not the problem. The criminal who misuses the gun is the problem, and he alone should be punished for his crimes. To limit our liberties because of his behavior is to punish us for the crimes he commits. That is legally and morally indefensible.

Often the best course of action in the face of a problem is to do nothing, because all of the proposed solutions are worse than the problem they seek to solve.

That is the case with additional gun control. It creates a worse problem than it seeks to solve.

The problem it creates is the criminalization of the honest citizens of this state who have never misused guns, and who never will.

The problem it creates is depriving the honest citizen of their God given and constitutional right to keep and bear arms without infringement by the government.

The problem it creates is to make the honest citizen more vulnerable to criminals, as they have less and less ability to keep and bear arms.

And worst of all, the problem it creates is that it turns the honest citizen against the state, as they begin to see the state as a tyrant intent on oppressing them, instead as a protector of their liberties that is worthy of their loyalty and support.

The best citizens of this state are the responsible gun owners. Do not turn them into your enemy by punishing them for the actions of criminals who harm others.

We gun owners want to support the state, but we need for the state to support us as well, by protecting our God given constitutional liberties, and by protecting us from those who want to deprive us of them.

Protect your best citizens. Protect gun owners, by protecting our right to keep and bear arms without any further infringement.

Thank you.

Max Doner,

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