

## Testimony for HB 4005

Good afternoon, Chair Sanchez, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Elaine Woods and I live in Beaverton. I am here to speak to you about some issues that I have with House Bill 4005.

Every gun owner that I know is very concerned about the safe use of guns and being extremely aware and alert any time handling or using them. Safe and proper skills and techniques are constantly taught, emphasized and reinforced at Tri-County Gun Club, where my husband and I have membership. The Ladies League at Tri-County is a great place for women to grow in these skills, and is also a lot of fun.

The skills learned and practiced at the range are important to develop, in order to be prepared for the unexpected. The unexpected could happen at any time day or night, and in any home. That is why it's important to store our guns in a way that makes them quickly available should the unexpected happen.

My husband and I do store our guns safely, but seconds count when danger is present. To unlock a container, and then have to release a trigger lock or cable lock when someone is trying to, or has already gotten into our home is putting us in danger. I would have the added disadvantage of having to defend myself against someone who is already active and prepared, when I am caught by surprise, by someone who is probably bigger, heavier and stronger than I am, and is probably violent. At this point, the only thing that levels the playing field for me would be a quickly available gun. Police cannot be there at a moment's notice. Requiring both trigger locks and a locked container is redundant & time consuming in the best of circumstances. We must be able to defend ourselves & our loved ones.

The bill states that it would take effect on its passage, but whatever safe storage we already have will have to meet as yet unstated and unadopted rules as to what the specifications might be for trigger locks, cable locks, and containers with tamper-resistant locks. As I stated before, our gun storage is already safe. How would you, or anyone, determine what “safe storage” means we are using? Do you intend to send someone to check our homes? As you know, or should know, this would be unconstitutional, illegal, and dangerous for all concerned.

I understand that your intent with this bill is to protect children who are curious, or who are intent on suicide. Unfortunately, child suicide and mental health issues are rising. I suggest that there are better ways to address the needs of depression, suicide and mental health issues. It's not by legislating away safety, but by helping those afflicted with issues which may lead to suicide.

One possibility is the The Safer Homes Coalition in Washington State. It began when a woman, whose husband committed suicide, called the NRA, knowing that they offer gun safety training. This coalition includes gun rights groups, veterans affairs, law enforcement, firearms retailers, mental health organizations, all focused on reducing suicides. This is done from a neutral, non-judgmental or government mandate approach. It sounds like it aims to affect the root of the problem from many angles, collaboratively and without involving legislation. Perhaps this would be a better approach for everyone. Please consider this, rather than the legislation before us now.

Thank you for your time.