

In the email subject line, please identify the bill number and the name of the committee holding the meeting. In the body of the email, include:

Juliet Peterson. Oregon Citizen, Not affiliated with any special interest group.

Feb 7th, 2020

Re: HB4005 2020

It seems there are many people objecting to the passing of HB4002 – 2020 rather than being in support of it, however, I would like to offer an opposing view for consideration.

2nd amendment right activists, who argue that bills like HB4005 chip away at their right to own a gun are clearly not having any of their rights to gun ownership removed by this bill. This bill only requires responsible gun owners to increase the level of responsibility so that the tragic events that are occurring every day in America will decrease.

I used to be a law abiding “responsible gun owner” but that never kept a thief from breaking into my house in Wilmington; and stealing an unsecured weapon from my home. I have no idea how that unsecured weapon may have been passed on or used to permanently destroy the lives of others, but I can state with almost complete certainty that because it fell into the hands of a criminal, it was never used for good. And...I can certainly speak to what it’s like to have your life permanently destroyed by an unsecured firearm.

I am a bereaved mother. On November 18th, 2012 my life was forever changed. My beautiful daughter Charlene broke up with her boyfriend. She took his unlocked firearm, put it to her own head and pulled the trigger. In the heat of a single second, the trajectory of our world went spiraling completely out of control.

12 short days from today, February 19th 2020, Charlene should be surrounded by all the family and friends who love her; celebrating her 35th birthday. But instead, those of us left behind will be doing our best to fight the darkness that has called our own names since that fateful day.

This is the reality of suicide survivor loss. Every Birthday. Every New Year. Every Christmas, Thanksgiving, Easter, EVERY SINGLE DAY...We fight the urge not to join her.

Those who oppose gun safety regulations are clearly detached from this gut-wrenching agony, but I, speaking from very personal experience, can testify to the ripple effects that this simple measure could prevent.

Since the day Charlene took her own life with an unsecured firearm, the lives of everyone who loved her have been permanently, deeply and tragically affected. Her sister (my only surviving child who suffers from horrific survivor loss) turned to drugs to numb the pain.

Today, Instead of going to work, I am headed to Randall Children’s Hospital to spend time with my new Granddaughter who was born on January 9th, addicted at 25 gestational weeks, on the filthy basement floor of a drug house without ever receiving any prenatal care, to a mother who was too high to call an ambulance when she went in labor.

She will likely lose custody of this beautiful, innocent repercussion of this crisis in America. And I, as her mother, will hope and pray that in her grief, she does not lose all hope and join her sister on the other side.

Please, carefully consider the significance of passing this bill. Stories like mine might not matter to those in opposition who are not personally affected by these tragedies, but, to those of us who are...it REALLY matters.

Thank you.