

Good afternoon,

I would like to thank the Oregon Legislature for working to improve public safety, especially in the context of preventable injuries and deaths from accidental shootings and suicides. I would like to raise the following concerns that I have with HB 4005 whose goals I find admirable, but some of whose details are questionable and ultimately objectionable.

With regards to liability, I believe a firearm owner needs to be exempt (a) if only authorized users are in the home and the doors are locked, (b) if the firearm winds up in the hands of an unauthorized person due to an authorized person being overpowered.

I also believe that the legislation's language on strict liability portrays cast firearms owners and ownership to be so inherently dangerous as to warrant onerous regulations. I believe the vast majority of American firearms owners are responsible, law-abiding members of the community, and this alienating and altogether unnecessary provision will lose support from voters who would otherwise champion safe firearms ownership.

It is my understanding that existing law and legislative intent would provide adequate guidelines to the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) so that they would rule that a wide variety of effective, inexpensive devices would suffice to comply with the locking and storage requirements of the bill. Nonetheless, I am concerned that OHA is being given a blank check to decide what constitutes an adequate locking or storage device. Misplaced good intentions on the part of OHA regulators would have them decide that only the most robust (and expensive, and difficult to deploy) devices suffice, thus putting renters and the poor permanently out of compliance unless they carried their firearms full time. I believe that statements of legislative intent are insufficient to prevent this and would like something explicitly stated in the legislation.

Under HB 4005, civilians would be held to a standard of safe storage that is below NRA recommendations. I believe that theft of firearms from law enforcement is a serious issue, and to not hold law enforcement to the same standards as civilians is illogical.

Much to my regret, I am unable to support HB 4005 in its current form due to a number of serious issues with it. I reiterate my support for responsible and safe firearm ownership, and I express my disappointment with a fatally flawed piece of legislation that could have done something to address a public health issue.

Yours sincerely,

Hyon Chol Kahng
Portland, Oregon