

From: [Michelle Smigel](#)
To: [HJUD Exhibits](#)
Subject: House Bill 4145 Letter in Support from Safe Neighborhoods for Oregon
Date: Monday, February 10, 2020 11:16:52 AM

Chair Sanchez and Members of the Committee:

Oregon children, parents, teachers, and first responders are all too familiar with the growing number of threats of violence made against schools and places of worship. After experiencing a threat and lockdown that impacted one of my own children's schools, I had a real glimpse into the fear and uncertainty these threats create and was motivated to act.

As a result of that experience, I helped start a non-profit--Safe Neighborhoods for Orego-- aimed at making Oregon safer, especially for our children, through common sense and common ground legislation that can be implemented *now*.

These threats impact our schools and places of worship in numerous ways: the fear instilled in our children and community; the disruption of our community's ability to attend school or a place of worship safely; the use of first responders' resources; the risk of escalation to a violent act by the person who made the threat.

As I learned after following the case involving a threat to one of my local schools, current Oregon law falls short in addressing these threats. Currently, these acts are often charged under Disorderly Conduct. However, that statute is a poor fit for two main reasons: (1) it only applies to false, supposedly "hoax" threats and (2) it does not contain a mechanism to ensure those who make such threats receive supervised probation with mental health treatment.

We collaborated with Representative Neron, a champion of student safety issues, to draft House Bill 4145, which addresses these deficiencies in Oregon law. The data shows that those who carry out an act of mass violence usually have made a prior threat.^[1] House Bill 4145 will ensure that those who make such a threat receive mental health treatment, and it will provide our community with a chance to stop an escalation to a violent act.

Sincerely,

Michelle Smigel

President, Safe Neighborhoods for Oregon

^[1] https://www.secretservice.gov/data/protection/ntac/Protecting_Americas_Schools.pdf, p. 47.