



To: Chair Prusak, Vice-Chairs Hayden and Salinas, and Members of the House Committee on Health Care

From: Joel R. Burnett, MD, Adam Obley, MD, Tom Cooney, MD, and Marianne Parshley, MD on Behalf of the Oregon Chapter of American College of Physicians

Date: March 9, 2021

Re: In Support of HB 2510

On behalf of the Oregon Chapter of American College of Physicians, which in Oregon represents more than 1,900 medical students, residents/fellow-in-trainings, and practicing internists – specialist physicians who apply expertise to the diagnosis, treatment, and compassionate care of adults across the spectrum from health to complex illness, we write in strong support of HB2510.

Firearms-related injuries and deaths are a major public health crisis. In 2019, the most recent year for which CDC data is available, 566 Oregonians died from firearms-related injuries.¹ For perspective, in 2019 more Oregonians died from firearms than from pneumonia.² In 2018, 40 Oregon children and adolescents died by firearm, including 28 suicides, 8 homicides, and 2 accidental deaths.^{3,4} Suicide is the leading cause of death among Oregonians adolescent and young adults, with guns being the most common mechanism.^{5,6} Moreover, Oregon has the fastest-growing rate of pediatric suicide by firearm in the country.^{7,8}

These deaths represent an avoidable public health crisis, which, through passage and enactment of HB2510, you have the power to mitigate.

Safe firearm storage laws, such as HB2510, are an effective, evidence-based strategy for reducing firearm injuries and deaths. Numerous studies indicate that these laws increase safe storage practices and decrease both pediatric suicide rates and accidental firearm deaths.^{9,10,11,12,13} Because of their effectiveness, the Oregon Chapter of American College of Physicians and our parent organization, the American College of Physicians, strongly support safe firearm storage laws as outlined in a 2018 position paper in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, “Reducing Firearm Injuries and Deaths in the United States: A Position Paper from the American College of Physicians.”¹⁴ The laws are not only effective, they are also common. Currently, 29 states and the District of Columbia have child access prevention (CAP) laws in place.¹⁵

In sum, safe firearm storage laws are a common, simple, and effective strategy for decreasing firearm injuries and deaths. In the interest of Oregon's public health, we strongly urge you to vote yes on HB2510. Thank you for your consideration, and please don't hesitate to contact us for additional information or support.

Sincerely,

Joel R. Burnett, MD, Member, Health & Public Policy Committee of the Oregon Chapter of American College of Physicians

Adam Obley, MD, FACP, Chair, Health & Public Policy Committee of the Oregon Chapter of American College of Physicians

Tom Cooney, MD, MACP, Chair-Elect, Board of Regents, American College of Physicians

Marianne Parshley, MD, FACP, Governor of the Oregon Chapter of American College of Physicians

¹ https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/firearm_mortality/firearm.htm

² https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/flu_pneumonia_mortality/flu_pneumonia.htm

³ Oregon Health Authority. (2018). *Firearm Safety*. Retrieved from <https://www.oregon.gov>

⁴ Oregon Health Authority. (2019). Injury deaths and rates, by manner, sex and age. Retrieved from https://visual-data.dhsoha.state.or.us/t/OHA/views/Oregondeathsfromexternalinjuries/DemogDash?:showAppBanner=false&:display_count=n&:showVizHome=n&:origin=viz_share_link&:isGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y&:embed=y

⁵ Oregon Health Authority. (2019). Injury deaths and rates, by manner, sex and age. Retrieved from https://visual-data.dhsoha.state.or.us/t/OHA/views/Oregondeathsfromexternalinjuries/DemogDash?:showAppBanner=false&:display_count=n&:showVizHome=n&:origin=viz_share_link&:isGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y&:embed=y

⁶ Oregon Health Authority. (n.d.). *Suicide Prevention*. Retrieved from [oregon.gov](https://www.oregon.gov)

⁷ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2019). *WISQARS Fatal Injury Reports, Ages 10-24, Percent Change: 2009 to 2018*. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, CDC.

⁸ Everytown Research and Policy. (2020). *The Rise of Firearm Suicide Among Young Americans*. Retrieved from [everytownresearch.org](https://www.everytownresearch.org)

⁹ Hamilton, E., Miller, C. Cox, C., Lally, K. & Austin, M. (2018). Variability of child access prevention laws and pediatric firearm injuries. *Journal of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery*, 84(4), 613-619. Doi: 10.1097/TA.0000000000001786

¹⁰ Monuteaux, M., Azrael, D. & Miller, M. (2019). Association of increased safe household firearm storage with firearm suicide and unintentional death among US youths. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 173(7), 657-662. Doi: 10.1001/jamapediatrics.2019.1078

¹¹ Rowhani-Rahbar, A., Simonetti, J. & Rivara, F. (2016). Effectiveness of interventions to promote safe firearm storage. *Epidemiologic Reviews*, 38, 111-124. Doi: 10.1093/epirev/mxv006

¹² Cummings, P. & Rivara, F. (1997). State gun safe storage laws and child mortality due to firearms. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 278(13), 1084-1086 Doi: 10.1001/jama.1997.03550130058037

¹³ Webster, D., Vernick, J., Zeoli, A. & Manganello, J. (2004). Association between youth-focused firearm laws and youth suicides. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 292(5), 594-601. Doi: 10.1001/jama.292.5.594

¹⁴ Butkus R, Doherty R, Bornstein SS; Health and Public Policy Committee of the American College of Physicians. Reducing Firearm Injuries and Deaths in the United States: A Position Paper From the American College of Physicians. *Ann Intern Med*. 2018 Nov 20;169(10):704-707. doi: 10.7326/M18-1530. Epub 2018 Oct 30. PMID: 30383132. https://www.acpjournals.org/doi/10.7326/M18-1530?_ga=2.83151638.1282702833.1615352955-242887235.1613946666

¹⁵ RAND Corporation. (2020). *The effects of child-access prevention laws*. Retrieved from [rand.org](https://www.rand.org)