

TESTIMONY OF THE JUSTICE STUDY GROUP OF THE MULTNOMAH COUNTY DEMOCRATS
ON HB 2510

Chair Prusak, Vice Chairs Hayden and Salinas, and Members of the Committee,

We members of the Justice Study Group of the Multnomah Democrats write in SUPPORT of HB 2510.

We note that this bill fulfills one of the Planks of the Platform of the Multnomah Democrats: Article VII (“Justice”), Legislative Action Item [LAI] 6, “**We call on the Legislature to create a law regarding safe storage of firearms.**” We respect the right of the People to bear arms, including for their own defense, under Amendment II of the US Constitution and Article I Section 27 of the Oregon Constitution. Nonetheless, we believe that the State has a compelling interest in preventing firearms from being used impulsively or by unauthorized persons.

The number one cause of death by firearm is suicide, and studies show that locking up firearms when not in use is the second most effective way to prevent suicide by firearm. We believe that locking away firearms will also go a long way to reducing domestic homicide and other crimes of passion. In addition, these safety measures protect children. We note that 75% of gun owners already store their firearms safely when not in use, and that this law is intended to push the other 25% in the right direction. While we understand that some careful gun owners might resent making failure to lock up guns a ticketable offense, we believe this is well worth the lives saved.

With all that said, we note that lines 40-42 of page [3] of the bill outline a police exemption. This exemption is contrary to the Platform of the Multnomah Democrats: Article XIV (“Abuse of Power”), Legislative Action Item [LAI] 10: “**We support ending law enforcement exemptions at every level from gun control laws.**” We request that these lines be struck from the bill.

Respectfully submitted,
Sally Joughin

on behalf of the Justice Study Group of the Multnomah Democrats’ Platform Committee