

My name is Mark Fischer, I live in Portland currently and resided for many years in Clackamas County. I have raised two children here who are now adults. My partner is a teacher in a public school. I'm writing to urge this committee to support HB 2510, which would create a secure storage law that requires gun owners to store their firearms securely when a firearm is not on their person. Millions of responsible gun owners follow recommended secure storage practices, but it's estimated that more than half of gun owners actually do not lock their guns.

Here are the facts:

(1) Unauthorized access to firearms is a major source of gun violence.

? In Oregon, firearms are the second-leading cause of death in children and teens.

? Nationwide, nearly 350 children under the age of 18 unintentionally shoot themselves or someone else each year. That's roughly one unintentional shooting per day, and 70

percent of these incidents take place inside a home.

? Another 700 children die by gun suicide each year, most often using guns belonging to a family member.

? Unsecured firearms are also responsible for injuries and deaths outside home. In incidents of gun violence on school grounds, up to 80 percent of shooters under the age of 18 obtained their guns from their own home, a relative's home, or from friends.

(2) Common-sense policies like secure firearm storage work. One study found that households that locked both firearms and ammunition were associated with a 78 percent lower risk of self-inflicted firearm injuries and an 85 percent lower risk of unintentional firearm injuries among children, compared to those that locked neither. A 2019 study estimated that if half of households with children switched from leaving their guns unlocked to responsibly storing them all locked, one-third of youth gun suicides and unintentional deaths could be prevented – saving an estimated 251 lives in a single year.

(3) Suicide is the third-leading cause of death among adolescents and alarmingly, pediatric firearm death rates have increased 20% from 2009 to 2018 in the U.S., driven by the 56% increase in pediatric firearm suicide rates. Firearm safety drills in schools have become a routine part of many US public school students' lives. Almost half of suicides among youth involve a firearm. More than 75% of the guns used in suicide attempts and unintentional injuries were stored in the residence of the victim, a relative, or a friend. This demonstrates that guns in the households of others contribute to gun death in all homes including those without guns.

As we emerge from the pandemic, gun violence prevention is more important than ever. This is common sense legislation. The time is now. Please vote yes on HB 2510.