

Friday, March 12, 21

House Committee on Health

RE: HB 2510

Safe gun storage

Dear Committee Members:

My name is Faye Melius, I live in Turner OR, and resided in Salem for over 35 years. I am a parent, a grandparent, a nurse, a gun owner, a member of MOMS Demands Action and a Board Member for the Center of Hope and Safety.

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 do not secure their guns in storage.

Unauthorized access to firearms is a major source of gun violence. It is also a source of unintentional injuries in both in the home and out of the home.

- In Oregon, firearms are the second-leading cause of death in children and teens. *Oregon has experienced children shooting children. One of the latest was in October 2020, a three-year old died after gaining access to an unsecured gun in his home and shooting himself in the head.*
- Nationwide roughly one unintentional shooting occurs per day, and 70 percent of these incidents take place inside a home. These numbers have experienced a *30+% increase in unintentional shooting deaths by children occurred nationally from March to May 2020.*
- Children die by gun suicide each year, most often using guns belonging to a family member and found in the homes of said family members. In Salem four teenagers have taken their own lives by gun since 2010.
- Incidents of gun violence on school grounds are also approximately 80 percent. Shooters under the age of 18 again obtained their guns from their own home, a relative's home, or from friends.
- *About 50,000 Oregon children live in homes with loaded guns, and over half (26,000) of those guns are not stored in a locked container or with a trigger lock.*

After a year of the pandemic exacerbating gun violence, gun violence prevention is more important than ever. With increased gun sales, increased calls to

domestic violence hotlines, a spike in city gun violence, and far more unintentional shootings, it's clear that immediate action is needed. Common-sense policies like secure firearm storage work.

Please vote yes on HB 2510.

Respectfully,

Faye Melius