

Testimony on SB 554A, House Rules Committee, 4/22/21

*Lisa Reynolds, MD, State Rep HD36*

Good Morning Chair Smith Warner, Vice Chairs Drazan and Holvey, and members of the Committee.

For the record, my name is Lisa Reynolds. I am the State Representative for House District 36, which covers Portland's west side.

I am here today to testify in support and as a chief co sponsor of Senate Bill 554 A, which would prohibit guns in certain public buildings and require that guns are locked when not in use.

For context, my *other* workplace, the clinic where I see pediatric patients, bans firearms on its premises.

Five years ago, I became an activist with Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense, and have spent many a day in hearing rooms and in Capitol hallways in support of bills that reduce gun violence. I will tell you - those days in the capitol have an eerie feeling when you know that some of those who disagree with you are carrying firearms, some OPENLY.

Still, we continue showing up, undeterred, though not always at ease - especially my friends in this work who have lost loved ones to gun violence.

This is the fourth year I have worked to pass safe gun storage legislation in Oregon, and it is incredibly important to me, as the health and the safety of children and adolescents is my calling.

This is why, in my exam room, I ask families if guns are locked in the homes of my young patients. I urge families to ask about safe gun storage in the homes their kids are

visiting. And I counsel parents of youth in crisis about the risk a gun poses for death by suicide by that youth.

Colleagues, every day in the US, 8 children are shot by an unlocked or unsupervised gun in the home. Two children a day are unintentional shooters. 75% of school shootings are by a student who brings a gun from home. It is overwhelming to even imagine the impact and the lifelong trauma for the family, for the shooter, for the victims and for their community.

We speak often on the House floor about Oregon's mental health crisis. We have passed and will pass measures that improve access to mental health services. As a member of the House Committee on Behavioral Health, I am here for all of this. And more.

But make no mistake: Oregon's high suicide rate, for adults and children alike, is a directly linked with access to guns. Suicides are more common in states with high gun ownership rates, and overall suicide rates decline when safe storage laws are instituted.

The great news is that there is a simple act that can prevent suicide: a gun lock or a gun safe. Safe storage saves lives.

And, please know, modern gun lock boxes, sold for less than \$100, can be opened with a swipe of a preprogrammed fingerprint.

We CAN have it both ways - keep a gun from getting in the hands of a child, or from someone in crisis - AND have swift access to that gun should an owner need it to protect their family or property.

Thank you and I urge your support for the lifesaving, suicide preventing bill that is SB 554A.

