

As the sale of guns continues to rise in Oregon and the background check system in the state remains overwhelmed amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, it is more crucial than ever to ensure that those who would not pass a background check are not able to bypass the system through this loophole. This is why lawmakers need to prioritize the passing of HB 2543, as it will close the "Charleston Loophole", the deadly allowance that makes a gun sale proceed regardless of a background check if it takes more than three business days for the check to be completed. Within Oregon, the Firearms Instant Check System (FICS) recorded nearly 100,000 more checks in 2020 than in 2019 during the same time, with 2,538 denials. Of those denials 89% were due to the intended purchaser being a felon or another prohibited person. In the US currently there are 19 states as well as Washington, DC which allow a period of time longer than three business days for a background check to be completed. With the passing of HB 2543, Oregon has the unique opportunity to be a leader within this issue. This loophole is always deadly, and we have seen this illustrated throughout this nations history, most notably in the murders at Mother Emanuel church in Charleston. While people prayed a white man with a gun murdered nine Black people on the same basis of hate that is upheld everyday in this country as systemic inequity, racism, and lack of gun safety laws kill Black people without hesitation. The man responsible for these murders was armed because of the "Charleston Loophole". In order to truly condemn these actions and those of so many other hateful individuals who gain access to firearms due to loopholes like this one, HB 2543 must be passed.