

February 14, 2021

TO: Oregon State House Judiciary Committee
FROM: Colette DeWitt, Portland, Oregon
RE: SUPPORT OF HB 2543

Dear Judiciary Committee Members,

I am writing today to urge you to pass House Bill 2543.

In 2015, Oregon passed a law requiring a criminal background check for all gun purchases, but there is a gap in this law. Federal law usurps Oregon's law and allows gun sales to proceed if the purchaser's background check is not completed within three business days. HB 2543 will close this gap.

The passage of HB 2543 will prevent guns from being transferred to a purchaser until the result of their criminal background check is known.

In Oregon, approximately 97% of background checks are resolved within minutes. However, in 3% of cases, background check operators need more time to determine if a person can legally purchase a firearm. Background checks that take longer than three business days are 4 times more likely to result in a denial.

Oregon would join at least 19 other states and D.C. who give law enforcement sufficient time to complete criminal background checks on all potential gun buyers.

With gun sales rising and the Oregon background check system overwhelmed during the COVID-19 pandemic, it's more important than ever to make sure that people who shouldn't have firearms aren't able to bypass Oregon's background check system.

Thank you for voting for passage of HB 2543!

Sincerely,
Colette DeWitt