

Members of the House Committee on the Judiciary, Chair Bynum,

I appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony to this committee in support of HB 2543.

I am one of the founders of what is now the agency in our tri-county area providing services for persons victimized by intimate partner violence and sexual assault. Although when I began this work in 1976, I naively hoped these issues would no longer persist, unfortunately they still do. As a person who has worked in and around this field for many years, and as a mother, I have serious concerns with “the Charleston Loophole” in our state. This loophole in our laws allows dangerous individuals to purchase a firearm without a complete background check. House Bill 2543 will close this deadly loophole.

Currently in Oregon, if a background check is not completed within 3 days, an individual can purchase a gun without a complete background check. As gun sales in Oregon are at record levels, and background check systems are overwhelmed, it is now critical that we close this deadly loophole. HB 2543 will ensure that a criminal background check is completed for every gun sale to stop convicted felons, domestic abusers, and other dangerous people from purchasing guns each year. Allowing enough time to complete criminal background checks before gun sales proceed is critical to stemming lethality in domestic violence and keeping our communities safe from more generalized gun violence.

I strongly urge you to take action now to protect our communities from gun violence by supporting HB 2543.

Sincerely,

Connie Peterson
Bend, OR