

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

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony to this committee meeting. I am a parent, and an active school and community volunteer. I have grave concerns with the Charleston Loophole that exists in our state which allows for individuals to purchase a firearm without a complete background check. House Bill 2543 will close this 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. This loophole is what led to the murder of 13 innocent victims in their place of worship in Charleston, South Carolina. 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. It will also prevent someone from harming themselves or others in the throes of a mental health emergency. Allowing enough time to complete criminal background checks before gun sales proceed is critical to keeping our communities safe from gun violence.

The NRA posits that "delaying the exercise of a person's right to self-defense can have deadly results." The epidemic of gun violence in this country demonstrates time and again that easy access to firearms is more likely to result in the discharge of a firearm in violent, deadly acts carried out against other people rather than the utilization of a firearm for self-defense.

Gun purchasers are not "arbitrarily denied their Second Amendment Rights" as the NRA argues. Someone's desire to own an item specifically designed to kill merits thorough review. Policy prioritizing accessibility to own a firearm over community safety perpetuates our epidemic of gun violence, making it all too easy for our policymakers to avoid working to address the complex issues that lead to gun violence in the first place.

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

Sincerely,
Stephani Scott