

Dear Legislators,

I am a constituent in Senate District 14 and House District 27 in Beaverton. I appreciate the efforts of the committee and the work that you all do. Thank you.

I write to express my concern with HB 2543. I am, as many are, in favor of keeping firearms out of the hands of prohibited persons. The current law, with its limit on background check time, was written to that end, while also providing a relief valve for legal persons who may get swept up in an otherwise well-intentioned bureaucracy. I think it is reasonable to expect our government to be able to provide the background check timely, and the limit in the law is an incentive to that. The proposed change to the law eliminates the relief valve, and I am concerned for the potential abuse, intended or unintended, that may result, if a law-abiding citizen has no way to seek relief.

I would support this change if there was a way for a legal owner to seek relief for a mistake or long delay in the background check process. As written, I cannot support the change.

I understand the concern of some of the public that this relief valve, sometimes known as the "Charleston loophole", allows prohibited persons to obtain a firearm. However, I would point to the current implementation of this law in the state. To my knowledge, almost every gun dealer \*does not\* follow the relief valve, and if a background check takes longer than the current end-of-next business day limit, a dealer will not turn over the firearm to the purchaser. Instead, they wait for the State Police to return a result. I personally have waited weeks for a background check to go through. I understand the current demand and staffing situation and thank the State Police for their efforts during this time. Pre-pandemic, the process was fast enough, often 30 min or less. Clearly, most Oregonians are tolerant of this situation too, as I know of no lawsuits to compel quicker transfers. Therefore, I would personally put less weight to perhaps uninformed yet well-meaning testimony by non-gun owners that this is a problem in the state of Oregon.

No one wants a firearm in the hands of a prohibited person, I am 100% in support of that. I oppose the change to remove the relief valve, which, in addition to providing a path for grievance to the citizenry, also incentivizes the state to provide timely service. I think a different relief valve, perhaps, not defined by a time limit, may prove more amenable to all involved. Codifying a legal way to get meaningful redress in the case of a long delay or mistake in the check process would be my preference. Currently, the proposed change has no such relief and I cannot support it.

I would like to note that I am a registered Democrat in the state of Oregon, tend to support progressive policies, and hold a doctorate in engineering from an Ivy League university. I mention those things about myself in order to show that firearms owners and those that support firearms ownership come from a diversity of backgrounds.

Thank you again for your civil service.