

Oregon Senate Bill 554 Testimony
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All:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to Proposed Amendments contained in Oregon Senate Bill 554. I am opposed to all provisions within the amendment and wish for my testimony to be entered into public record.

When considering legislation to be passed into law, there are at least two reasonable considerations to weigh:

- 1)What is the problem that this legislation might cure?
- 2)Will the proposed legislation cure the problem?

I am aware of no event, nor series of events, nor even any theoretical premise, which justifies language that inhibits our rights to bear arms.

This amendment would create a nightmare hodgepodge of prohibited areas for law-abiding, conceal-carry citizens to no constructive purpose. Allowing municipalities, colleges, port authorities and other non-legislative, un-elected bodies to craft vague, so-called "legislation" is an invitation to disaster, and it is highly likely that such "rules" would be deemed unconstitutional by a reasonable court.

As an aside, I am aware that my alma mater, Oregon State University (OSU), was slapped down and publicly embarrassed by the Oregon judiciary for doing just that; trying to legislate carriage of concealed weapons within its campus. My guess is that they may be key petitioners to the Legislature to allow this type of un-democratic rule making. The spectacular arrogance displayed by OSU administration before, during and after that court case clearly demonstrates they – and other public entities - are unfit to make such decisions. Institutions in the public sphere, whether public colleges, universities and schools, and even non-profits such as hospitals, do not have the accountability demanded by a modern representative democracy. My preference is that colleges and universities stick to their charter of education and research, and leave the democratic process to we, the people.

My conceal carry permit states, in bright red-and-white letters, "Oregon Concealed Handgun License," issued by the Washington County Sherriff. The fact that the license is applicable to our state of Oregon implies that laws and standards of conduct to retain the license are consistent throughout the entire State. The proposed Section would allow un-elected, petty bureaucrats to dictate their whims and rule the people in an un-democratic manner. This runs entirely contrary to common sense and our democratic representative system of government. I do not wish to be controlled by such people; I do not wish anyone else to be, either.

It is ironic that the Oregon Legislature is considering multiple bills this session to reform our criminal justice system. The language in SB554, should it poison our statutes, will undoubtedly create inadvertent felons out of decent people for no constructive purpose, just as decades of unbalanced prosecution has done throughout our great country. If we as a people are serious about true criminal justice reform, let us not manufacture criminals out of what is now legal and responsible behavior.

In my opinion, the language in SB554 constitutes "constructive denial" of basic constitutional rights. To be precise, permissions granted to the whim of unelected officials will give reasonable people an unpleasant choice: Forgo the right to self-defense or go to prison. No reasonable person – and all people I know who own firearms are reasonable – would choose the latter.

This language does not in any way meet two simple, basic criteria for effective legislation. There is no observable problem that it can address. Logically, it cannot therefore provide a remedy. I request that the bill be voted down in its entirety.

Preemption must be retained in Oregon statutes with regard to conceal-carry legislation.

Sincerely,
Carl F. Jahn