

Honorable Senators,

I write to you in opposition to SB 554, which would severely limit the usefulness of an Oregon Concealed Handgun License.

SB 554 will cause injuries and fatalities.

SB 554 will increase the number of guns in the hands of criminals.

SB 554 will discriminate against disadvantaged communities.

In each of the innumerable new prohibited areas for CHL holders, they will be forced to disarm before entry and re-arm upon departure.

Each time anyone performs "administrative handling" of a gun - unholstering, unloading, re-loading, re-holstering - it is an opportunity for a negligent discharge. No matter their level of experience, no matter how carefully they conduct themselves, negligent discharges happen. When that handling occurs in less than ideal conditions such as in a hurry, in the dark, in bad weather, contorted in the seat of a car, or watching to see if they're being observed, the chance of a negligent discharge increases even more.

When those negligent discharges occur, everybody in the area will at least suffer damage to their hearing. They might be hit by splintering concrete, or a ricochet, or by a bullet directly from the gun's muzzle. People will be injured, and people will die, and not just the CHL holders themselves - everyone nearby will be at mortal risk.

By creating more opportunities for ordinary people doing ordinary things to make tragic mistakes, SB 554 will hurt people, and SB 554 will kill people.

When a CHL holder enters a prohibited area, they must leave their gun outside.

In some cities, thieves lurk in parking lots outside prohibited areas, waiting for CHL holders to park and disarm.

They smash the victim's car window to steal their gun, which the thieves sell on the black market.

SB 554 will funnel guns into the hands of criminals.

In Oregon's current regulatory climate, a CHL holder might go years without needing to enter a prohibited area, and thus never need to leave their gun outside.

Many CHL holders who must disarm use a small lockbox to deter and delay thieves, but those who can't afford a lockbox hide it in the glove box, or in the console, or under the seat.

By effectively requiring many more CHL holders to purchase lockboxes to go about their daily lives, SB 554 will add yet more cost burden, placing it beyond the reach of economically disadvantaged communities.

SB 554 will force single moms and lower-income Oregonians to make tough choices between feeding their kids and keeping them safe.

For the safety of all Oregonians, please do not advance SB 554.