

Submitter: Joseph Whitcomb  
On Behalf Of: Multnomah County Republican Party Chairman  
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary  
Measure: HB2005

The right of the people to keep and bear arms is enshrined in the Constitution's Second Amendment. It is centered not on hunting or sport shooting but on the natural right of self-defense. It gives "life" to the promises of liberty, ensuring that attempts to reduce our natural rights to mere dead letters may be met with meaningful resistance.

Just like the Constitution protects the broad concept of "speech" instead of particular modes of speech, it protects "arms" as a general concept of weaponry. The idea was not to protect a specific type of weapon, like a musket, any more than the idea of the First Amendment was to protect a specific mode of speech, like a quill pen or printing press. That is in large part because the Framers of our Constitution and the people who ratified it knew that while technology and circumstances would undoubtedly change in unanticipated ways, these broader concepts of self-defense and free speech would remain vital to a free society.