

Susheela Jayapal



Multnomah County Commissioner, District 2

March 23, 2023

Representative Kropf, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for HB 2005, HB 2006 and HB 2007

Chair Kropf, Vice-chairs Andersen and Wallan and Members of the Committee:

I am the Multnomah County Commissioner for District 2, representing North, Northeast and parts of East Portland, and am writing in support of the gun violence prevention Bills - HB 2005, HB 2006 and HB 2007. These bills would prohibit the sale of "ghost" guns, raise the age limit to own a gun to 21, and allow local governments to regulate concealed handguns. We know that common sense gun laws mean fewer gun deaths. These laws work.

In Multnomah County, we have seen an ongoing rise in gun violence in the last two years. In 2022, the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office investigated [42 shooting incidents](#)¹ — a 425 percent increase from 2020. And across Oregon, nearly 550 people die, and over 600 are wounded, by firearms each year, with gun deaths being the second leading cause of death among children and teens in our state. Additionally, 81 percent of gun deaths in Oregon are suicides.²

Because they are untraceable and require no background checks, ghost guns are becoming the weapon of choice for people engaged in unlawful and harmful activities. The proliferation of these weapons poses an enormous additional threat to community safety as well as to law enforcement. We must restrict their availability and use.

Raising the purchase age of buying a firearm to 21 is a common sense policy to reduce the number of weapons of war in the hands of teenagers, while protecting access for people younger than 21 to firearms used for hunting and sport shooting. Tragically, many of the recent mass shootings, including the one in Bend Oregon, were perpetrated by young men under the age of 21.

Finally, as a County Commissioner who works in and around public buildings and spaces, I recognize the importance of having local control over safety and security for our employees and for all who walk through our doors every day. Multnomah County has increased safety at our public facilities, yet we are still experiencing many incidents that risk the health and safety staff and clients. HB 2007 provides the opportunity for us to implement common sense policies that will improve the security in county buildings.

I urge you to pass HB 2005, HB 2006 and HB 2007. We know that more common sense gun laws mean fewer gun deaths. These laws work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susheela Jayapal".

¹ <https://www.multco.us/multnomah-county/news/board-updated-county-departments%E2%80%99-efforts-combat-gun-violence>

² <https://everystat.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Gun-Violence-in-Oregon-1.pdf>