

HB 2005, HB2006, HB2007 – Support All Three Bills

March 24, 2023

To: Representative Jason Kropf, Chair, House Committee on Judiciary

I am a member of the Core Leadership Team of Lift Every Voice Oregon and also a Board Member of Ceasefire Oregon. I am proud to report that both of those Organizations voted unanimously to support each of the bills brought forward by the House Committee on the Judiciary. Those decisions were made after reviewing the bills and finding all of them are well-drafted and designed to reduce gun violence in Oregon.

HB 2005 is focused on safety in the streets by reducing undetectable and untraceable guns; HB 2006 is focused on safety everywhere, in homes, schools and places of worship as well as on the streets, by increasing the minimum age limit to 21 for possession and ownership of high-powered semiautomatic rifles and other firearms. HB 2007 is focused on allowing local control of individual buildings and surrounding areas to be free of guns. It is tragic that there are nearly 2 mass shootings, where four or more are injured or killed, every day in this country.

While each of these is important, I choose to focus this testimony on HB 2006 because prohibiting youth under 21 from obtaining assault-style rifles addresses a most troubling and dangerous trend: “[s]ix of the nine deadliest mass shootings in the United States since 2018 were by people who were 21 or younger.”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/02/us/politics/mass-shootings-young-men-guns.html>

This represents an upward trend. Over the prior 68 years from 1949 to 2017, “[o]nly two of the 30 deadliest mass shootings recorded from...involved gunmen younger than 21.” *Id.*

The reason for this troubling increase is complicated and experts have a variety of theories. These youth are in “the throes of developmental changes and societal pressures that can turn them toward violence in general, and, in the rarest cases, mass shootings.” And, even more concerning is a younger group. There is a “a very big cluster of young people — 18, 19, 20, 21 — who seem to get caught up in the social contagion of killing,” according to one of the founders of [the Violence Project](#), which maintains a comprehensive national database of mass shootings.

The prohibition of the sale of assault weapons to individuals under 21 will not eliminate the risk of gun-related violence for those under 21 or the gun-related violence caused by them. Even hunting rifles are used in suicides and homicides, particularly in domestic disputes. But HB 2006 will make a difference and it should be passed to the floor for a vote along with the other companion bills presented by this committee.

Elizaeth McKanna