

March 29, 2023

Chair Prozanski
Oregon Senate Judiciary Committee
Salem, Oregon

Penny Okamoto
Portland, Oregon
Re: Concerns about SB 348-1

Dear Chair Prozanski and the Senate Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding SB 348-1 which makes changes to the laws created by Oregon Measure 114, passed by voters in 2022.

For the past 24 years, I have advocated for strong, effective gun laws in Oregon and at the national level. I worked closely with Lift Every Voice Oregon to write Initiative Petition 17 which became Measure 114. My contributions included researching the academic work on permit-to-purchase programs and limiting high-capacity magazines. I worked on Measure 114 from its inception to this very day.

SB 384-1 makes certain changes in Measure 114 that will weaken the law and could undermine the initiative petition process in Oregon. **Oregonians must have faith that their legislators will respect their wishes and not take any opportunity to create special exceptions that were not included in Measure 114.**

My concerns about SB 384-1 are:

- SB 348-1 allows anyone—including 18 to 20 year olds—to buy a hunting rifle without a permit through July 1, 2026.
 - A 2020 study published in *Injury Epidemiology* of suicide in Maryland found that **rural teens and children were three times as likely to use a rifle for firearm suicide as adults**. According to the study. in “rural counties, [where] 51.6% of firearm suicides were by long gun, compared to 16.8% in the most urban counties.”
 - **Availability of only hunting rifles will not stop domestic abusers from intimidating, injuring, and fatally shooting intimate partners who are disproportionately female.**
 - **A permit is needed to prevent known abusers from accessing guns** when the abusers prior actions have not yet risen to the level of revoking their rights to firearms but are known to law enforcement or posted on social media.
- SB 348-1 needlessly delays implementation of the permit process until July 1, 2024. [Studies](#) clearly indicate that permits reduce gun-related crime and prevent the flow of firearms into the illegal market. **Delaying implementation delays prevention.**

- SB 348-1 changes the language that allows a permit agent to determine if an applicant is a danger to self or others. **The permit agent must be required to perform a reasonable, relevant investigation.**
- SB 348-1 allows active and retired law enforcement and military members to purchase firearms for personal use without a permit.
 - **Police and military members are still required to obtain a driver's license for personal driving and they are required to register to vote.**
 - No one should be allowed special privileges to buy a personal firearm.
 - **This carve out will disproportionately benefit gun-owning males and the hunting business while disregarding the increased risk of intimate partner violence and suicide.**
 - The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife estimates that only 16% of hunters are female.
 - Women are only about 12% of sworn law enforcement officers in Oregon.
 - Women make up only about 17% of the United States armed forces.
- Increasing the fee from \$65 to \$150 does not have a foundation that I could find. I am unsure if the increase will or will not reduce gun violence.

What I support in SB 348-1:

- SB 348-1 ensures that personal information on permit applications or on permits are confidential and not part of the public record. **Confidentiality has always been a priority for LEVO and the architects of Measure 114.** The new language will reassure people of confidentiality.
- SB 348-1 **allows the FBI the ability to provide fingerprint information to a permit agent.** My understanding is that this change is required by the FBI.
- SB 348-1 **ensures equitable administration of permits** by requiring race and gender statistics in the annual report to the legislature.
- SB 348-1 **requires a 72-hour waiting period** after passing a firearm background check to take possession of the firearm. This waiting period will reduce suicides. It was not part of Measure 114 but was added in by the Senate Judiciary Committee. I am hesitant to support a major change in Measure 114 because the voters did not approve of it.
- SB 348-1 extends the permit processing time from 30 days to 60 days. My understanding is that this change was requested by law enforcement.

Please consider making only the changes in SB 348-1 that will clarify the law or that are necessary for implementation. Do not weaken Measure 114 or add special exemptions for active or retired military or law enforcement members.

Thank you,

Penny Okamoto