

February 6, 2024

Honorable Senate Judicial Committee Members:

I'm writing to oppose SB 1503, creating a task force on "gun violence & suicide". Rather than addressing the root causes of crime or suicide and their effects on victims & families, this bill seems focused on firearms. Firearms are just ONE of the many weapons felons use in the commission of violent crime. Lumping the issue of suicide into a "gun violence" bill seems to indicate concern only for those suicides committed by firearms, rather than suicide prevention as a whole.

Responsible, law-abiding Oregonians should not be penalized for the violent or irresponsible actions of others. The fact is, firearms are used by law-abiding citizens for lawful purposes (including self-defense by crime victims) FAR more often than they are for harm. There are countless statistics available that prove this, many of which can be found here:

<https://crimeresearch.org/>

In addition, the membership of the proposed "task force" glaringly omits anyone with knowledge or expertise in the area of firearms. To me this indicates a political agenda, not genuine interest in preventing crime or suicide. Also conspicuously absent: law enforcement. If the goal is to reduce violence, it would make sense to include members whose job it is to fight crime.

As is often the case with this legislature, SB 1503 appears to be a misuse of taxpayer money that would punish responsible citizens & fail to solve the problems it purports to address. For the above reasons, I oppose SB 1503.

Sincerely, Lesley Roehr
Retired LEO & law-abiding Oregonian