

Submitter: Phyllis Oster  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary  
Measure: SB1503

Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee:

We are writing in support of SB 1503, the Task Force bill on gun violence prevention and firearm suicide prevention.

We are sickened by the proliferation of guns in our society and their easy use to solve peoples problems through homicide and suicide. For too long the US has had too little data about gun violence. It is important that the legislature be as informed as possible in order to make the most impactful policy decisions.

Every year, we lose close to 600 Oregonians to preventable firearm deaths. Black Oregonians are roughly 10 times more likely than white people to die by firearm homicide. And the firearm suicide rate in rural Oregon is 2.5 times higher than in urban areas and the state's veteran suicide rate is 37% higher than the national. We urge the Task Force to prioritize prevention efforts that centered around those most impacted by gun deaths and shootings, as well as firearm suicides. We also hope the Task Force will prioritize ongoing, sustainable funding for efforts for prevention work that makes a meaningful, equitable impact, both for homicide and suicide prevention.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our testimony on this issue.

Sincerely,  
Phyllis and Warren Oster  
Portland, OR