

Testimony in support of SB1503
Create a State Task Force on Gun Violence Prevention and Firearm Suicide Prevention

Dear Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee:

I am writing today in support of SB 1503, the Task Force bill on gun violence prevention and firearm suicide prevention.

We are the parents of a kindergartener who is just starting to go to playdates at other families' homes, and our top priority is protecting him and other kids from unintended access to guns that can lead to accidental shootings.

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 average.

I strongly support the SB1503, Task Force bill, and urge the Task Force to prioritize prevention efforts that are centered around those most impacted by gun deaths and shootings, as well as firearm suicides. I urge the Task Force to analyze and prioritize ongoing, sustainable funding for efforts for prevention work that is making the most meaningful, equitable impact, both for homicide and suicide prevention.

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

Sincerely,
Sarah Wexler and Tony Larson
Portland, OR