



Charles McKenna

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Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee

Dear Chair and Members,,

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

I live in North Portland, where gun violence has become commonplace and a homicide involving a firearm seems to occur every few weeks. My working class neighborhood has always been a little "rough around the edges", but the easy access to guns has made this a dangerous place to live. By any measure gun violence in Portland is out of control.

Before moving to Portland I was the local Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America lead in Eugene for several years. In that role I came into contact with victims of gun violence often. The victims' stories were all different, but had the common thread that easy access to a firearm made a difficult situation become deadly. Particularly troubling to me were the stories by those close to someone who committed suicide with a firearm. Most of those affected believed that without easy access to a firearm their loved one would have had time to reconsider their actions and not killed themselves.

The task force SB 1503 creates would look for solutions to both the homicides we see in Portland and the firearm suicides that have disproportionately affected rural Oregon. Please pass SB 1503 to help Oregon set a course to reverse the epidemic of gun violence ravaging our state.

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

Sincerely yours,

Charles McKenna