

Submitter: Rita B Kiley
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure: SB1503

February 9, 2024

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.

I am the mother of 3 adult children, and a grandmother as well as a member of my community.

I am very concerned about gun violence, both locally and nationwide. My niece and nephew were in the tragic Las Vegas concert shooting several years ago and are still dealing with residual trauma from their frightening experience. Guns are the cause of so many lost lives and we must all try to find a way to curtail this.

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,
Rita B Kiley

