



February 7, 2024

Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 1503 - Enact a State Suicide Prevention Task Force

Dear Chair Prozanski and Honorable Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Everytown for Gun Safety, and the Oregon chapters of Moms Demand Action and Students Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, I'm writing to express our support for SB 1503, creating a statewide firearm violence and suicide prevention task force.

Oregon is experiencing a gun suicide crisis, particularly in rural areas. About 79% of gun deaths in Oregon are suicides – compared to 57% of all gun deaths in the US.¹ Oregon's rural areas have some of the highest rates of gun suicide in the nation. Everytown tracks gun suicides by US Congressional district, and of the 11 districts with more than 100 gun suicides per year, 2 are in Oregon.² These are largely rural districts with relatively small populations, which makes the data even more stark.

This bill would assemble a task force of researchers and experts from different sectors including public health, behavioral health, and violence prevention in order to study existing interventions, barriers to services and best practices in order to curb this epidemic, and report their findings to the legislature in 2025. Effective suicide prevention requires a multi-faceted approach that addresses the complex interplay between individuals, groups, community, and larger societal factors that impact firearm suicide. We thank the legislature for considering this important bill, and urge its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Sumadi". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Sarah Sumadi, Associate Regional Director for State Government Affairs
Everytown for Gun Safety, Moms Demand Action, Students Demand Action
450 Lexington Ave.
New York, NY 10163
ssumadi@everytown.org

¹ <https://everystat.org/#Oregon>

² CD 2 and CD 4: <https://everytownresearch.org/report/firearm-suicide-by-congressional-district/>