

Submitter: Carol Manstrom
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure: SB1503

February 8, 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 a parent and community member.

I am retired from a 26 year career in law enforcement, as a Parole and Probation Officer. I carried a firearm as a part of my job. Also, I am a gun owner.

On Valentine's Day 2017, my teenage son, Will, tragically died by firearm suicide. On that day, Will was experiencing a severe mental health crisis, and his death was due to the presence of a fully loaded, unsecured and easily accessible handgun in the residence where he was staying. Will was a high school senior at that time. He was on the Varsity Cross Country, Track and Chess teams, and he was looking forward to attending Oregon State University with a major in Engineering. I know in my heart that Will did not want to die.

Every year, we lose close to 600 Oregonians to preventable firearm deaths, including many which are firearm suicides. My son Will's death was preventable!

During my law enforcement career, I was required to complete ongoing, intensive firearms training. This training was referred to as "Deadly Force Training." There is a reason the word "deadly" is used in the title of the training: the reason is – guns are inherently lethal!

I strongly support the SB 1503, Task Force bill. I urge the Task Force to prioritize prevention efforts, and sustainable funding, that are centered around making the most meaningful, equitable impact, for prevention of firearm suicide as well as prevention of all other types of gun violence.

My son Will's precious life, and his bright future, are gone forever. But I believe lives will be saved....someone will live to see another day....because of the prevention work which will be accomplished by SB 1503.

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

Sincerely,

Carol Manstrom
Eugene, Oregon