

March 24, 2025

TO: Senate Committee On Judiciary  
FROM: Ali King, Our Children Oregon  
SUBJECT: Support for SB 243

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ali King and I am the Policy and Advocacy Director for Our Children Oregon (OCO), a statewide organization that champions equitable policies and opportunities for every child by leveraging data and research. The Children's Agenda, convened annually by OCO, brings together more than 135 organizations statewide to create a holistic legislative agenda dedicated to improving the wellbeing of Oregon's children, youth, and families.

As a coalition of child and family advocates, health care workers, educators, administrators, parents, researchers, and policy experts, we have seen firsthand the devastating impact of gun violence on Oregon's children. It's heartbreaking that half of Oregon students report worrying about a school shooting on a weekly basis, creating fear and anxiety that impacts their ability to learn.

SB 243 addresses a few important things Oregon can do to reduce the risk of mass and school shootings, including a Rapid Fire Device Ban, Raise the Age to 21, and 72 Hour Waiting Periods.

Rapid fire devices include devices like Bump Stocks and Glock Switches that increase the firing rate of rifles and handguns. The gunman who killed 60 and injured over 400 people in the 2017 Las Vegas mass shooting used bump stocks to fire 1,000 rounds in just 11 minutes. Seventeen states, including California and Washington, have enacted laws to ban bump stocks and similar devices, often

with bipartisan support. Bump stock bans can reduce the number of fatalities and injuries in the event of a mass or school shooting.

In Oregon, you have to be 21 to purchase a handgun but can purchase a semi-automatic (AR style rifle) at age 18. These weapons have been used in the majority of school shootings with the highest death counts and lead to higher injury rates. Research shows raising the age to 21 can reduce prevalence and lethality of mass shootings. States with higher age requirements have seen reduced gun deaths among young adults. The human brain, particularly the area controlling impulse and judgment, continues developing into mid to late 20s.

In 2023, we lost 650 Oregonians to firearm suicide, community violence and mass shootings. ([Johns Hopkins, 2024](#)). Oregon's high firearms suicide rate has a devastating impact, particularly in our rural communities where suicide rates are double the national average (as are suicide rate among veterans). Creating 72 hour waiting periods for the purchase of a firearm is an evidence-based policy shown to reduce suicides by up to 20%. 75% of Oregon voters support waiting periods (FM3, Likely Voters, 2021) and 93% of Oregon voters support requiring a completed background check before a sale is completed (FM3, Likely Voters, 2022).

We appreciate the work you do for our state and we urge you to protect the well-being of future generations of Oregonians and help keep our communities safe by supporting SB 243.

Sincerely,

*Ali King*

Ali King

Policy and Advocacy Director, Our Children Oregon

View the [2025 Children's Agenda](#)