

Submitter: Brandy Steelhammer
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB243

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I am a mom, a social worker, and a life-long Oregonian who has lost five people I care about to gun violence; 2 by homicide and 3 by suicide. All of these beautiful people were Oregonians who had full, vibrant lives with family and friends and communities who loved them very much.

I am asking you to support SB 243. A 72-hour waiting period to take possession of a gun after purchase can save lives. Gun suicide and homicide can be impulsive acts in a moment of desperation and a waiting period can give time for the impulse to pass. In 2013 my friend, who was not a gun owner or hunter, purchased a firearm in a moment of desperation over finances. He brought the gun home, shot and killed his spouse, and then turned the gun on himself. SB 243 could have saved their lives.

Raising the age to purchase firearms can also save lives. It is well-established that the human brain is not fully developed until our mid-20's. Impulsiveness and firearms are a deadly combination. As the mom of two young adults who grew up hunting with my husband, and who have lived all of the ups and downs that teenagers go through, I shudder at the fact that kids younger than 21 can own firearms.

Please pass SB 243 for the safety of our loved ones and our communities. The devastating impact of gun homicide and suicide is broad and deep. There truly are no words to describe the horror.

With Respect,
Brandy Steelhammer, LCSW
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