

# Opposition to Oregon Senate Bill 243

Oregon Senate Bill 243 (SB 243) represents an overreach of legislative authority that undermines the constitutional rights of law-abiding Oregonians, fails to address the root causes of violence, and imposes impractical restrictions that burden citizens without enhancing public safety. This omnibus gun control measure, which includes a 72-hour waiting period for firearm purchases, a ban on rapid-fire devices like bump stocks, expanded gun-free zones, and age-based restrictions on firearm possession, is misguided and must be rejected for the following reasons.

## Violation of Constitutional Rights

SB 243 infringes upon the Second Amendment of the United States Constitution, which guarantees the right of individuals to keep and bear arms. The 72-hour waiting period delays the exercise of this fundamental right, creating an unnecessary barrier for law-abiding citizens seeking to protect themselves or their families. Similarly, the ban on rapid-fire devices and restrictions on semi-automatic weapons for those under 21 arbitrarily limit access to tools of self-defense without clear evidence that such measures prevent crime. The expansion of gun-free zones, allowing local governments to prohibit concealed carry in public buildings, further erodes the ability of licensed individuals to exercise their constitutional protections, particularly in rural areas where security resources are scarce. These provisions collectively treat law-abiding gun owners as potential threats, undermining the presumption of innocence and the sanctity of individual rights.

## Failure to Address Root Causes of Violence

Proponents of SB 243 claim it will reduce gun violence, yet the bill ignores the underlying factors driving such incidents, including mental health crises and criminal behavior. Oregon's gun death rate, while concerning, is largely driven by suicides, which account for the majority of firearm-related fatalities. A 72-hour waiting period may delay impulsive acts, but it does not address the systemic shortage of mental health resources that could prevent such tragedies. Likewise, banning rapid-fire devices like bump stocks—already rare in criminal activity—does little to deter determined criminals who operate outside the law. Republicans in the Oregon Senate have rightly criticized the bill for failing to prioritize mental health solutions or target illegal firearm use, instead imposing blanket restrictions on law-abiding citizens.

## Impractical and Inequitable Implementation

SB 243's provisions are impractical and disproportionately harm vulnerable populations. The 72-hour waiting period creates logistical challenges for gun dealers and buyers, particularly at gun shows, where transactions are time-sensitive. This could devastate small businesses and limit access for rural Oregonians who travel long distances to purchase firearms. The expansion

of gun-free zones leaves law-abiding concealed carry holders defenseless in public spaces, especially in small towns lacking robust law enforcement presence. As Senator Todd Nash noted, rural counties often cannot afford security measures to enforce such bans, rendering them ineffective against criminals who ignore signage. Additionally, the age restriction on semi-automatic weapons unfairly penalizes young adults aged 18–20, who are legally recognized as adults capable of voting, serving in the military, and bearing other responsibilities. These measures create a patchwork of regulations that confuse citizens and erode trust in governance.

## Lack of Transparency and Public Input

The process surrounding SB 243 has been marred by a lack of transparency, further fueling opposition. Reports indicate that last-minute amendments, including attempts to incorporate elements of Measure 114's magazine ban, were introduced without adequate public scrutiny. Such tactics undermine democratic principles and alienate Oregonians who deserve a voice in shaping laws that affect their rights. The bill's passage through the Senate on a party-line vote, despite significant public testimony in opposition, reflects a disregard for bipartisan consensus and the will of constituents.

## Conclusion

Senate Bill 243 is a flawed and heavy-handed attempt at gun control that sacrifices the rights and freedoms of Oregonians without delivering meaningful improvements to public safety. It fails to address mental health, criminal activity, or the practical realities of rural life, while imposing burdensome restrictions on law-abiding citizens. Oregonians deserve policies that respect their constitutional protections, promote transparency, and target the true causes of violence. SB 243 does none of these things and must be opposed in its current form.

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