

Submitter:

Vance Chauncey

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB4145

I respectfully submit this testimony in opposition to Oregon HB 4145.

While the goal of improving public safety is important, HB 4145 expands government authority in ways that are unlikely to achieve that goal and may instead create serious unintended consequences for law-abiding Oregonians. The bill relies on increased administrative control and discretionary decision-making rather than clear, objective, and evidence-based standards.

A central concern with HB 4145 is that it effectively places law enforcement agencies in the position of deciding who may or may not exercise a constitutional right. Police should not be the governing authority that determines whether an individual is permitted to purchase a firearm. Law enforcement exists to enforce laws after violations occur, not to act as a gatekeeper for the lawful exercise of rights. Granting police discretionary approval power undermines due process and creates the potential for inconsistent, subjective, or unequal application across jurisdictions.

HB 4145 also risks imposing delays, uncertainty, and barriers on individuals who are already complying with the law, while doing little to deter those who intend to act unlawfully. Complex approval systems tend to impact lawful citizens far more than criminals, who by definition do not follow regulatory processes. This imbalance erodes public trust without delivering measurable public safety benefits.

Additionally, the administrative and fiscal burdens of implementing HB 4145 have not been adequately justified. Expanding review, permitting, and enforcement responsibilities will require additional resources and staffing, further straining state and local agencies that are already overextended. These resources would be more effectively used enforcing existing laws and addressing violent crime directly.

Public safety policies should be narrowly tailored, objective, and consistently applied. HB 4145 fails to meet those standards by expanding discretionary authority over a fundamental right without clear evidence that such an approach will improve outcomes.

For these reasons, I urge legislators to oppose HB 4145 or significantly revise it to remove discretionary approval authority and focus on targeted, evidence-based solutions that respect due process and the rights of Oregonians.