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On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4145
Judiciary Committee Members

HB 4145 is the next iteration in a multi-session legislative campaign that began the moment Measure 114 passed and immediately ran into constitutional trouble. I'm writing because HB 4145 continues that pattern and crosses the same constitutional line. Article I, Section 27 is not ambiguous, and you know it. Oregon courts have been clear for decades about what the right to bear arms protects and what the state may not do. Yet HB 4145 attempts to turn a constitutional right into a licensed privilege by requiring a permit, fingerprints, photographs, mandatory training, waiting periods, and a state-managed ownership record before a citizen may exercise that right.

No other right in Oregon is treated this way. Not speech. Not religion. Not assembly. Not the press. Not voting. Only this one. That alone should make the constitutional problem obvious.

The Harney County ruling already established that Oregon's constitution does not tolerate laws that materially interfere with the right to keep and bear arms. HB 4145 does not fix that problem — it doubles down on it. The permit-to-purchase system remains a prior restraint. The fingerprinting and photographing remain a registry in practice. The firearm-specific data retention remains a tracking system. The subjective "dangerousness" clause remains a discretionary veto. And the magazine ban remains a prohibition on items that are overwhelmingly common and constitutionally protected.

Lawmakers are not required to keep refreshing or rewriting Measure 114 while it sits before the Oregon Supreme Court. There is no legal mandate forcing the legislature to revive it session after session. This is a political choice, not an obligation. But once 114 passed, the legislature locked itself into a cycle of "delivering something" to prove they are honoring the will of the voters, even as courts block implementation and expose the measure's constitutional flaws. Instead of accepting that the structure is unworkable under Article I, Section 27, it continues to be re-packaged session after session hoping that a more complex or more polished version will survive judicial scrutiny. It's momentum, not mandate — and it's why the same architecture keeps returning every session.

Union members, rural Oregonians, and working-class people see laws like HB 4145 for what they are: barriers built by people who don't live their lives, don't share their

responsibilities, and don't understand their realities. The permit system hits hardest on those who work long hours, live far from training centers, or rely on self-defense because law enforcement is miles away. When you stack permits, fingerprints, photos, fees, delays, and subjective evaluations on top of that, it doesn't read as "safety" — it reads as a system designed to burden the very people who keep this state running.

Oregon can pursue public safety without violating Article I, Section 27 or forcing ordinary citizens to justify their rights to the government. Laws like HB 4145 don't create compliance — they create opposition.