

To: House Judiciary Committee, Oregon Legislative Assembly

From: Rick Coufal, Colonel US Army (Ret), Oregon Law Enforcement (Ret), NRA Firearms Instructor, NRA-ILA Frontlines Activist Leader for Oregon, Oregon Firearms Owner

Re: Written Testimony Opposing HB 4145

Date: February 2, 2026

SECTION 1 — Introduction

This written testimony is respectfully submitted for the record in opposition to House Bill 4145. HB 4145 proposes a permit-to-purchase system for firearms in Oregon, requiring fingerprinting, photographing, identity verification, background checks, and firearm safety training. While the bill intends to enhance public safety, its structure and implementation mechanisms raise serious concerns regarding feasibility, fairness, and constitutional integrity.

SECTION 2 — Summary of Concerns

HB 4145 presents several critical issues that undermine its effectiveness and fairness. The proposed permit-to-purchase system is operationally unworkable, relying on under-resourced local agencies without providing the necessary infrastructure or support. The bill lacks statewide standards for training and application processing, leading to inconsistent implementation. It allows automatic denials based on incomplete state records, with no administrative appeal or correction process. Finally, despite delaying implementation until 2028, the bill fails to provide a viable roadmap or funding to ensure readiness.

SECTION 3 — Detailed Opposition Arguments

1. 1. The Permit-to-Purchase System Is Not Operationally Feasible

HB 4145 mandates that every firearm purchaser obtain a permit from a local police chief or sheriff. However, the bill does not establish a centralized application portal, electronic submission process, or automated status updates. It relies on 36 counties to independently manage applications, despite many already lacking the staff or infrastructure to do so. The 60-day processing window lacks any accountability measures, reporting requirements, or readiness benchmarks, making the system vulnerable to delays and inconsistencies that could infringe on lawful access to firearms.

2. 2. Automatic Denials Due to Missing or Incomplete Records

The bill permits the Oregon State Police to deny permit applications if background checks cannot be completed due to missing or incomplete records. This effectively penalizes applicants for deficiencies in state-maintained databases. There is no administrative appeal process, no defined timeline for correcting errors, and no mechanism for conditional approvals. This lack of due process is deeply problematic and risks unjustly denying rights to law-abiding citizens.

3. 3. Training Requirements Are Inconsistent and Unstandardized

While HB 4145 requires firearm safety training, it fails to establish a standardized curriculum, certified instructor registry, or documentation standards. This opens the door to inconsistent interpretations across counties—some may accept online courses, others may not; some may require live-fire demonstrations, others may waive them. Such disparities create confusion and unequal access to the permitting process.

4. 4. Barriers Without Public Safety Benefits

The proposed permit system does not address key drivers of gun violence such as straw purchasing, criminal trafficking, theft, suicide prevention, domestic violence enforcement, or mental health intervention. Instead, it imposes bureaucratic burdens on law-abiding citizens who are already following the law. Criminals are unlikely to participate in a permit process. The bill creates obstacles without delivering measurable public safety improvements.

5. 5. Implementation Is Delayed but Still Unprepared

Although HB 4145 delays implementation until January 1, 2028, it offers no funding for local agencies, no staffing plan, no centralized infrastructure, and no statewide coordination. The delay itself acknowledges that the system is not ready, yet the bill does not take the necessary steps to ensure it ever will be. Mandating a complex system without first building the foundation is a recipe for failure.

SECTION 4 — Conclusion

HB 4145 does not resolve the structural flaws of Measure 114. It recreates the same unworkable framework, without the tools, funding, or safeguards necessary for success. It risks denying rights, creating confusion, and burdening local agencies without improving public safety. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to reject HB 4145.

Thank you for your consideration.