

Subject: Formal Opposition to Measure 114 and HB 4145

To the Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to formally express my opposition to the implementation of Measure 114 and the proposed amendments contained in House Bill 4145.

While these policies are framed as public safety measures, they represent something far more serious: a fundamental shift in the role of government and the meaning of constitutional rights.

The Constitution was not written to make people safe. It was written to make people free.

Liberty, not security, is the highest political value protected by our founding documents. The Bill of Rights exists to restrain government power, not to expand it in response to fear, risk, or social pressure.

When government assumes the role of arbiter of safety, it inevitably expands its authority, restricts individual liberty, and begins to treat constitutional limits as obstacles rather than guardrails. In doing so, it places itself in a position where it must reinterpret, bypass, or ignore constitutional mandates in order to enforce safety policies it was never assigned to create.

The Founding Fathers understood that danger would always exist. They also understood that a government powerful enough to guarantee safety would be powerful enough to destroy liberty. For this reason, they were more concerned with protecting the right of the people to possess than with attempting to engineer safety through law.

HB 4145 and the ongoing implementation of Measure 114 move Oregon further toward a model where rights are treated as revocable privileges rather than inherent freedoms. Each added fee, delay, restriction, and exemption compounds into a system of continuous encroachment on a right explicitly protected by the Second Amendment.

Beyond the constitutional concerns, these measures:

Create financial barriers to a protected right.

Raising permit fees and renewal costs turns liberty into a pay-to-exercise privilege, disproportionately burdening working-class and low-income citizens.

Impose unnecessary bureaucratic delays.

Extended processing timelines delay lawful conduct without evidence of public safety benefit.

Establish unequal treatment under the law.

Carve-outs for certain groups undermine fairness and erode trust in equal application of the law.

Most importantly, these policies do not address the real sources of violence. Law-abiding citizens are not the problem, and further restrictions on them will not produce safer communities.

Safety can and should be pursued through means that do not require legislative force: through education, training, cultural responsibility, and voluntary participation. Firearm safety classes in schools, expanded access to training, and community-based programs can promote

responsibility without turning rights into government-controlled permissions.

Public safety and constitutional liberty should not be framed as opposing values. We can pursue a safer society without sacrificing the freedoms the Constitution was designed to protect.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to oppose HB 4145 and halt further implementation of Measure 114.

Respectfully,

Khalil Burton

Albany, Oregon