

Submitter: Mary Burns

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4145

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 4145.

I support this bill because it focuses on implementation quality and system outcomes rather than ideology. In particular, HB 4145 advances three important and widely shared goals: suicide prevention, due process, and responsible use of state resources.

From a public health perspective, it is important to note that in Oregon, roughly three-quarters of firearm deaths are suicides. This underscores that firearm policy is not only about crime, but also about preventing irreversible harm during periods of crisis. Public health research consistently identifies time, training, and screening as core suicide prevention strategies when highly lethal means such as firearms are involved. HB 4145 strengthens these protective factors in a measured way, without criminalizing lawful ownership.

HB 4145 also improves system function and due process. Clear written notice to applicants, realistic timelines for background checks, protection of sensitive personal information, and accurate law enforcement records are foundational to any system that is expected to operate fairly and consistently. A rushed or unclear process can increase administrative error and legal risk, undermining both public confidence and public safety.

Finally, there are important fiscal considerations. Firearm injury and death place significant strain on emergency services, health care systems, law enforcement, and courts. Firearm death rates in Oregon have increased over the last decade, with suicide rising more sharply than homicide, which has implications for both communities and public systems. Even modest reductions in suicide attempts and emergency responses have implications for cost avoidance for the state. HB 4145 also helps align permit fees with administrative costs, supporting long-term sustainability.

HB 4145 does not undo voter intent. It strengthens the likelihood that the policy Oregonians passed can be implemented fairly, constitutionally, and effectively.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to support HB 4145.

Thank you for your time and consideration.