

Submitter: Steven Harper
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4145

To: Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary

From: Steven Harper

Date: February 4, 2026

Subject: Testimony in Opposition to HB 4145 (2026 Regular Session)

Chair Kropf and Members of the Committee,

My name is Steven, and I am a resident of Salem, Oregon. I am writing today to voice my strong opposition to HB 4145. While this bill is framed as a series of technical "fixes" to Ballot Measure 114, it actually introduces significant barriers that will disproportionately affect low-income Oregonians and grants the state alarming, subjective power over the exercise of a constitutional right.

1. Financial Barriers to a Constitutional Right

HB 4145 raises the maximum permit fee from the already substantial \$65 to \$150, with renewals costing \$110. This represents a more than 130% increase. When you factor in the additional costs of required safety training—which the state does not provide for free—the total cost to simply apply for the right to purchase a firearm could easily exceed \$300.

Rights protected by the Constitution should not be reserved for the wealthy. By erecting this "paywall," HB 4145 effectively ensures that those in high-crime neighborhoods or those living paycheck-to-paycheck—who may have the most urgent need for self-defense—are the very people priced out of the process.

2. The Danger of Subjective "Discretionary" Denials

Perhaps more concerning is the bill's expansion of the "danger standard." HB 4145 allows permit agents to deny an application if they determine a person "may be a danger" based on past behavior or perceived mental state, even in the absence of any criminal conviction.

This moves Oregon away from an objective, "shall-issue" system toward a subjective, "may-issue" system. History shows that when government agents are given broad discretion to decide who is "eligible" based on their own judgment:

Bias is inevitable: Discretionary systems have historically been used to discriminate against marginalized communities and those with unpopular political views.

Due Process is undermined: An individual can be stripped of their rights based on the opinion of a state agent rather than a proven violation of the law.

3. Delays and Inequality

Furthermore, the bill doubles the time law enforcement has to process these permits from 30 to 60 days. A "right delayed is a right denied," especially for individuals facing immediate threats. While ordinary citizens are told to wait months and pay hundreds of dollars, this bill simultaneously carves out broad exemptions for retired law enforcement, creating a two-tiered system of citizenship where one class is trusted more than the rest of the public.

Conclusion HB 4145 does not target criminals; it targets the pocketbooks and the due process rights of law-abiding Oregonians. It transforms a fundamental right into a high-priced privilege granted at the whim of the state.

I urge you to vote NO on HB 4145.

Sincerely,

Mr. Steven Harper. 971-375-2090