

Submitter: Vance Chauncey
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4145

Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my opposition to HB 4145 (2026).

This bill does not fix the serious constitutional, practical, and equity problems created by Measure 114. Instead, it entrenches them and worsens several of the most troubling aspects—particularly by expanding delays, increasing costs, and reinforcing a permitting system that places discretionary power over a constitutional right in the hands of law enforcement agencies.

HB 4145 continues the flawed premise that police departments should serve as the governing authority deciding who may exercise a fundamental civil right. Law enforcement agencies are not licensing boards, courts, or constitutional arbiters. They are enforcement bodies. Allowing them to decide whether a citizen may purchase a firearm—based on administrative capacity, subjective judgment, or delay—is an improper delegation of power and incompatible with basic principles of due process.

The bill also exacerbates unequal access. Increased fees, extended timelines, and bureaucratic uncertainty disproportionately burden low-income residents, rural Oregonians, and those living in jurisdictions with limited law-enforcement staffing. A right that exists only for those who can afford delays, fees, and legal uncertainty is not a right in any meaningful sense.

Importantly, HB 4145 does not meaningfully improve public safety. There is no credible evidence that discretionary permitting schemes administered by law enforcement reduce violent crime. Oregon already conducts background checks through the Oregon State Police, a system that has operated for decades. HB 4145 adds layers of bureaucracy without addressing criminal misuse of firearms, which overwhelmingly involves individuals already prohibited from possession.

Public safety and constitutional rights are not mutually exclusive. Policies should focus on enforcing existing laws, addressing violent offenders, improving mental health response, and strengthening community-based interventions—not on creating administrative barriers for lawful citizens.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to oppose HB 4145 and reject any legislation that conditions the exercise of a constitutional right on discretionary approval by law enforcement.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Respectfully,
Vance Chauncey
Warren, Oregon