

Submitter: Patrick Ridenour
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4145

Chair and Members of the Committee, my name is Patrick Ridenour, and I am a Veteran of the US Army. I grew up in a household defined by instability and misguided attempts at protection, experiences that taught me early on that good intentions do not equal good outcomes. I learned to earn my own independence through hard work, and the decision to join the Army was my commitment to taking responsibility for my own life, a journey that led me to take an Oath of Enlistment. When I first took that Oath, I viewed the ceremony as just a formality, a necessary part of putting on the uniform. But watching the maneuvers around HB 4145, that Oath has moved from a distant memory to a deep sense of duty. I am standing here today to defend the Constitution against those who are actively violating it—an action that is a direct betrayal of the very Oath you took, and one I view as tyrannical in nature.

For years, I focused on surviving and building a career, choosing not to involve myself in politics. However, witnessing the constant chipping away of our fundamental rights at both the state and national level has forced me to engage. Measure 114 was a real wake-up call for me. It prompted me to dive deeper into firearms training and the weight of my own rights. I was reminded that our freedoms aren't a gift granted by this building or by your grace; they are our inherent rights. HB 4145 isn't a 'fix'—it's an infringement. By doubling wait times and doubling fees, you are turning a fundamental right into a luxury. You are effectively pricing the working class out of their own safety, a concern echoed by members of this committee regarding equity and the disproportionate impact on low-income citizens.

But what really alarms me is the process. We supposedly live in a "Constitutional Republic," however, based on the reports of the unethical tactics used to force this bill through—the 'strong-arming' to flip votes—I have serious doubts. When a bill cannot pass on its own merits, it loses its moral authority. It tells the public that you believe the 'ends justify the means,' regardless of the cost to our democratic integrity.

You might feel shielded by the 'immunity' of your office today, but that shield vanishes at the ballot box. Law-abiding Oregonians who just want to be left alone are waking up. As we head into this election cycle, remember: actions have consequences. If you continue to treat our rights with contempt, you may soon find yourselves back on the level of the 'common people' you have sought to restrict.

I took an Oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. By being here today, I am taking the first step towards fulfilling that Oath. I challenge you to do

the same. Vote NO on HB 4145.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Ridenour