

Submitter: Andrew Harkins  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4145

I am writing to urge the legislature to abandon HB 4145 and to allow Measure 114 to expire.

I am a voter who strongly supports reducing violent crime and improving public safety. The challenge is finding a balance between protecting civil rights and preventing harm. I believe these proposals miss that balance by focusing on lawful ownership rather than on violent behavior.

Simply owning a firearm does not make someone dangerous. The vast majority of gun crimes are committed by people who already intend to break the law and who often obtain firearms illegally. Policy should focus on stopping that behavior directly rather than placing new burdens on people who already comply with existing laws.

The permit system raises serious equity concerns. Giving law enforcement discretion over who may exercise a constitutional right risks unequal treatment of people of color residents, who already experience disproportionate scrutiny. The carve-out for current and retired law enforcement also creates a special class of citizens with privileges unavailable to others, which appears to conflict with Article I, Section 20 of the Oregon Constitution.

There is also a troubling disconnect between the goals of this legislation and recent crime trends. Preliminary 2025 data, including reports from Portland, show substantial decreases in homicides and shootings during the period when Measure 114 was blocked in court. These improvements occurred without the law taking effect, calling into question claims that it is necessary to achieve public safety.

One of the most counterproductive outcomes of Measure 114 was the dramatic spike in background checks after its passage. Prior to the measure, Oregon averaged roughly hundreds of checks per day. Afterward, that number surged into the thousands. This strongly suggests that many people who had not previously planned to buy a firearm did so out of fear that their rights would soon be restricted. In effect, the measure appears to have increased gun purchases rather than reduced them.

The magazine capacity limit is particularly difficult to justify. There is no meaningful difference in lethality between 10 and 11 rounds, and such limits are easily circumvented by carrying additional magazines or firearms. States with long-standing magazine restrictions have not become demonstrably safer as a result. These limits primarily burden lawful owners while doing little to deter criminal misuse.

These proposals also appear to have been drafted without sufficient input from people who understand firearms and their real-world use. Policies based on assumptions about reload time or equipment constraints do not reflect how firearms are actually used and therefore risk being symbolic rather than effective.

If the legislature wishes to reduce gun violence in a meaningful way, I urge you to focus on: • enforcement against illegal gun trafficking • violence interruption and gang intervention programs • mental health and addiction treatment • housing stability and poverty reduction • voluntary, state-funded firearm safety training

These approaches address the causes of violence rather than targeting lawful ownership.

Oregon has a long history of firearm ownership, which is reflected in Article I, Section 27 of our Constitution. I respectfully ask that you reconsider HB 4145 and allow Measure 114 to expire, and instead pursue policies that are constitutional, evidence-based, and focused on reducing violent behavior rather than restricting civil rights.