

Submitter: Jared Wickert
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4145

Chair and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully submit testimony in opposition to HB 4145. While public safety is a shared priority, this bill appears to expand administrative burdens without addressing the underlying causes of violence that recent incidents in Oregon have clearly exposed.

Oregon already conducts firearm background checks through the federal NICS system and the Oregon State Police. HB 4145 adds increased fees, longer delays, and additional permitting requirements without a clear implementation plan explaining how these measures improve existing safeguards. Even law enforcement agencies have struggled in recent years to determine how similar licensing systems would be administered. Expecting rural jurisdictions to dedicate multiple officers to permit processing creates an unfunded mandate, increasing local tax burdens while diverting limited personnel away from policing and crisis response.

Recent violent incidents demonstrate that the primary failures are occurring earlier, and at the level of mental health intervention. In the Bend shooting, the perpetrator publicly expressed intent and distress online for months without meaningful intervention. In Baker County, an individual repeatedly referred for mental health assistance ultimately committed a near-fatal assault on a USPS worker after multiple contacts with authorities. These cases show breakdowns in response systems, not failures of lawful firearm permitting. Expanding administrative hurdles for compliant citizens does not address individuals already in crisis who are not receiving timely evaluation or treatment.

Additionally, HB 4145 does little to deter illegal acquisition. Individuals intent on committing crimes have historically bypassed restrictions by obtaining firearms through unlawful channels or traveling to less restrictive jurisdictions. Firearms are not constantly trackable devices, and policies focused solely on lawful purchasers cannot prevent determined offenders from acting outside the system. Federal law already regulates interstate transfers and imports, meaning additional state bureaucracy primarily impacts those already following the law.

Oregon has seen similar challenges when policy implementation outpaced operational capacity, as experienced following Measure 110. Without strong execution mechanisms, legislation risks creating procedural expansion without measurable safety improvements. Meaningful prevention would instead prioritize

early mental health intervention, particularly for younger individuals where treatment and support can reduce the likelihood of future violence.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to reconsider HB 4145 and focus legislative efforts on strengthening mental health response systems and early intervention programs that address root causes rather than expanding administrative barriers. Especially in a time where fellow Oregonians are losing their health insurance, this will do nothing to resolve even worse issues while penalizing model citizens.

Thank you for your consideration.