From: David Shaw
To: DeJong Annola
Subject: Written testimony on Senate Bills 700, 347, 699, and 796
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Written Testimony in Support of Senate Bills 700, 347, 699, and 796

Dear Chair Prozanski and Committee Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am David Shaw and have resided in Oregon for 40 years.

I wish to testify in support of the following four bills which you are considering on April 5, 2013:
1. Senate Bill 700: Universal Background Checks, which closes the private sales loophole so criminals and dangerous people cannot buy guns.
2. Senate Bill 347: Gun-Free Schools, which gives school districts the authority to prohibit guns in Oregon public schools, K-12.
3. Senate Bill 699: Guns in Public Buildings which requires that people with concealed handgun licenses who are carrying firearms to keep them concealed while in public buildings.
4. Senate Bill 796: Training for Concealed Handgun License, which requires that citizens applying for a concealed handgun license pass a firing range test.

I have been a gun owner since the age of 12. My grandfather, a sheriff, and my father, a Coast Guard officer, taught me gun safety from the age of 5. Later, the US Navy provided me with more gun safety training. However, nothing I was taught about safely handling or storing a weapon addresses the risks reduced by these four bills. The issue is not so-called gun safety. The issue is changing a culture in which dangerous mentally ill persons and criminals have unregulated access to firearms and the misguided "right" to bring them into schools and other public buildings. We need many more measures to reduce the risk of massacre, but this is a start.

These measures:
1. Create universal background checks (SB 700),
2. Contradict the assertion that the 2nd Amendment gives the right to bring concealed weapons to school (SB 347). And provides the authority to resist those persons who would try to make schools safer with armed volunteers.
3. Prohibit the deliberate intimidation of citizens in public buildings by misguided gun owners who believe they are exercising their 1st and 2nd Amendment rights (SB699).
4. Require persons qualifying for a concealed handgun permit to demonstrate the ability to use the weapon safely (SB 796). This is as reasonable as requiring licensed drivers to demonstrate safe use of a car.

All these measures are constitutional according to the criteria stated by Justice Antonin Scalia in a recent US Supreme court ruling.

And these measures are a starting point in changing a culture in which massacres of school children and drive-by gang shootings are frequent occurrences. As a psychologist who was called to debrief students at Thurston High School after the mass shooting there, I witnessed the terror, heartbreak, and outrage of the survivors. Probably none of these measures would have directly prevented that tragedy. However, they can move parents toward seeing the absurdity and liability of buying guns for a troubled teenager in an attempt to improve his self worth. Ironically, Kip Kinkel's parents were his first victims. In the Newton shooting a parent made this same mistake and the result was the deaths of 20 young children and 6 school teachers. She was also her son's first victim.

None of us wants to live in an America with these random acts of violence. However, images of massacre are now embedded in the minds of many disturbed individuals. The only way to deter them from acting on this idea is through sensible laws and policies regarding guns. Please pass these measures as a start in creating a sensible gun and mental health culture.

Thank you for your attention to this testimony,

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