



Monday, July 3rd, 2017

Members of the Oregon House of Representatives,

We are Oregon health professionals. We care deeply about the health of our communities and believe we must employ sound public policy to protect the public health. This approach is critical to reducing gun deaths and injuries in Oregon and across the United States of America.

Gun violence has reached epidemic proportions in our state and nation and should be understood and treated as a public health crisis. A public health approach has been successful in reducing death and disability from infectious diseases, automobile accidents, unsafe food, and consumer products, but similar strategies have not been put in effect to address injuries and fatalities from firearms. We see the tragic result of these policy failures in our work. Here in Oregon, there are more fatalities each year from firearms than from motor vehicle traffic accidents or unintentional poisoning.

As doctors, nurses, and other health professionals, we are writing an evidence-based prescription to address this issue: We call for your support of the following bills in the 2017 Oregon Legislative Session:

*· SB 719 (formerly SB 868, Extreme Risk Prevention Order)
83% of gun deaths in Oregon are suicides. People experiencing a crisis may be at an elevated risk of suicide. Senate Bill 868 establishes an Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) to empower families and law enforcement to prevent gun tragedies by establishing a civil court process to restrict access to firearms for up to a year based on clear and convincing evidence.*

*· SB 1065 (Limit the Charleston Loophole)
Senate Bill 1065 will strengthen Oregon's gun violence prevention laws by: (1) prohibiting gun possession by abusive dating partners and stalkers, (2) limiting the Charleston loophole by giving law enforcement more time to complete criminal background checks before gun sales proceed, and (3) ensuring that law enforcement officials are notified when criminals try and fail to purchase guns illegally.*

Many of these common sense policies are already in place in some form in a number of other states; each has been shown to reduce gun deaths and injuries. A majority of the Oregon public, health professionals, and gun owners alike strongly support these measures. It is time for the Legislature to take action to confront the epidemic of gun violence in our communities. Please join us in supporting these proposals.

Sincerely,

Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility Health Professionals (see attached PDF for full list of signees)

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