

Dear Representatives,

My name is Matthew Weaver, I am opposed to SB 978. I spent 11 years in the US Army. 5 of those years I was an Infantryman training and leading soldiers on how to use different types of weapons from pistols to Heavy Machine guns. I spent the last 6 years in the Intelligence corps of the US Army. I have seen the best of people and have seen the worst of people. I give to my fellow man with money, help, or advice. I coach baseball in my local community and am a member of the American Legion.

On April 4<sup>th</sup> 2019, I sat in amazement at the State Capital. Not by the testimonies from those who were in support, but in the presence of those who oppose SB 978. We came to the Capital to let everyone know, that Portland and Eugene do not speak for the whole state. As we heard testimony from all sorts of people, high schoolers, doctors, survivors, military members, etc. I listened intently to both sides. One of the things I heard from those opposed was Mental Health. People mentioned school shootings, but did not mention the fact that mental health played the biggest part in 90% of those shootings. I heard people who were in support was locking up weapons, which as a law-abiding gun owner I can agree with to a point. Some of us live in very rural areas where police presence is not always there. Having a safe next to the bed would be ideal in some ways but if your adrenaline has never been pumping, how many times will you need to punch in the code to your bedside safe? Will it be too late?

As a former Sergeant of the United States Army, I have trained people to use weapons from handguns to Machine guns. Unlike the former military member who falsely stated that weapons were always locked up that spoke in front of the committee, this is not true. There were many times where my weapons were next to me, under or on my cot while I slept. My weapons were always in my room while deployed. Most everyone I deployed with had their weapons with them and in their rooms unlocked with loaded magazines.

The fact that if my property line is adjacent to a school, I cannot have weapons. The fact that if I have been trained and have my CHL and carry on airport grounds I am now a felon. The one thing I hear from people all the time that are opposed to guns is that they should be treated like a car. Yet, currently CHL carriers are being persecuted because they went through the training and now if they are driving through Portland to the airport to pick up a loved one they have to be disarmed. What "Common Sense" does this make?

I listened intently as the students talked. I thought back to Marjorie Stoneman Douglas and remembered watching as the police officer who worked at the school who was armed declined to go in to neutralize the threat. I remember reading about how the local police knew that the kid was threatening to shoot the school up and did nothing. I remember Kip Kinkle who was 15 years old when he decided to shoot up Thurston High School. Which came back to him not being Mentally stable and his parents allowing him to be free to get in and out of the family safe. I remember the Columbine shooters who purchased weapons from illegal dealers in Colorado. I remember the Sandy Hook shooting and hearing about how the shooters mother purchased weapons for her son because she felt "shooting would help his mental health". In all of these issues not once does anything in this bill cover any of that, other than holding the parents liable for if their child uses one of the weapons in a school massacre. A trigger lock can be cut.

I am one that believes that if you have something that you want to see change in then offer a solution. So here is my solution.

Have armed guards at schools. There is a crisis right now with Veterans without jobs. These veterans are trained to know what to listen for and how to react to certain situations where a shooting is taking place. During the school year make it mandatory for these veterans to walk around concealed so they are not causing fear within the students. Yearly mental health checks for the veterans and during the summer when school sessions are not in, they focus on training and making sure their tactics are precise. When I got out, I wanted to spend time with my son. I have helped in many ways and this would be one way I would be all for helping in.

Secondly, lets start helping in the Mental Health area. This has seemed to become such an epidemic it is getting overwhelming. I can walk down main street in my small town and see many people who need help. This is the same for our school children. Let's focus on better Mental Health care and then if that doesn't work look at "Common Sense Gun Laws", because if you haven't figured out, Criminals don't abide by Gun laws.

Thirdly, bring back gun safety in schools. We live in a society today that people think guns are bad. The issue is not the tool, it's the person who is operating the tool.

I strongly urge you to vote no on SB 978.

Sincerely,

Matthew Weaver

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10