



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 100-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

February 7, 2020

To: [House Committee on Judiciary](#)
[Rep. Tawna Sanchez, Chair](#)

Re: [HB 4005](#) – Relating to safe storage of firearms – **Support**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports the active role of government in promoting gun violence prevention, which includes enacting regulations that require the safe storage and transfer of firearms and the timely reporting of lost and stolen firearms. We applaud the intent of HB 4005, as we agree with the sponsors that saving lives begins with changing the behavior of gun owners who currently store or transfer their firearms in a negligent manner. Unsecured firearms have already caused too many tragedies in our state, and it is time Oregon joined the twelve other states that have already enacted safe storage laws. Think of how many times we hear about a child accessing a gun and causing injury or death, a teen committing suicide with a parent’s gun, or a gang member using a stolen or trafficked firearm to settle a score.

Although the penalties for violations in HB 4005, ranging from minor fines to civil liability, are not as strong as those in many other states, we agree that deterrence and a change in behavior should be the chief goal, not criminal liability. For example, we had hoped to see escalating penalties for multiple offenses, a loss of the right to own firearms for the most egregious offenses, a clearer definition of the term “control,” and a much shorter window of time for the reporting of lost and stolen firearms. However, we support the basic safe storage concept and are happy to see such a broad coalition of supporters on this bill.

We believe that the vast majority of gun owners understand the value of safe storage. This bill is for the minority of gun owners who need an incentive to change bad habits. The argument most commonly heard from those who use firearms for protection is that gun locks and gun safes prevent quick access. However, the marketplace has met the need, and now there are many, many “quick access” devices to choose from. A change in mindset is the goal, in the same way that seatbelts, child car seats, and many other safety regulations have been put in place to save lives.

The League supports the safe storage concept and urges passage of HB 4005. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky L. Gladstone".

Becky Gladstone
LWVOR President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marge Easley".

Marge Easley
LWVOR Gun Safety Portfolio