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Testimony for HB2510

As a professional in the child welfare field for more than 20 years, I am all too aware of the many challenges families and youth face every day; from housing instability, unemployment, food insecurity, and domestic violence. Gun violence does not have to be one of these challenges, but with *4.6 million American children living in households with at least one loaded, unlocked firearm*, the reality is that they do.

In my work as the Director of Adoption Services for the oldest child welfare agency in Portland (Boys & Girls Aid), asking about the presence of guns in the home and how they are stored, is not just a standard question when conducting an adoptive home study, it's a requirement. *Every year in America, 350 children under the age of 18 gain access to firearms and unintentionally shoot themselves or someone else*. Every child, not just adopted children, deserve the protection of the adults who care for and serve them, whether this is at home, at school, or elsewhere in the community.

HB 2510 would create a secure storage law that requires gun owners to store their firearms securely when a firearm is not on their person. Without the passing of this law, we continue to set a low bar for the safety of our citizens, including the most vulnerable among them, Oregon's children.

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