

I am writing to **support HB 2510 Relating to firearm safety requirements**. I am both a gun owner and a retired psychologist. My interest in laws about gun storage originated with serving as a mental health first responder at **Thurston High School** in Springfield on the day of a shooting (5/21/98). In that tragic incident Kip Kinkel brought guns from home to kill 2 students and wound 25 others. Before coming to the school that day, Kinkel killed both of his parents. As I have subsequently learned the details of Kinkel's actions, **I believe a safe storage law might have prevented this incident and other mass shootings since that date.**

According to the Wall Street Journal (4/5/2018) 85% of the guns used in school shootings between 1990 and 2018 came from the shooter's home or the home of an acquaintance. Records of Kinkel's previous therapy sessions with Dr. Jeffery Hicks became public due to his trial. Kinkel's mother sought counseling for him because she was concerned about his anger problems and "his fascination with guns, explosives, and knives." Although Dr. Hicks addressed Kinkel's anger, apparently he did not review safe storage of guns in the home.

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S. and over half are by firearms. 85% of suicide attempts with guns are lethal. Suicide is often an impulsive act that occurs too quickly for the purchase of a gun. (Editorial in Harvard Public Health 2021) Many suicides could be prevented through preventing easy access to guns in the home. As a mental health professional I believe safe gun storage should be addressed in any case with suicidal risk. If passed, HB 2510 would be part of alerting family members, law enforcement and mental health professionals to address the issue of safe gun storage in any cases concerning individuals at risk for violence or suicide.

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