

I wish to voice my strong support for the proposed legislation contained within HB 2510.

I have owned firearms for more than 30 years - I bought my first firearm at age 16 in the Roseburg Fred Myers. I was taught even before that by my father and grandfather to shoot, and that firearms are tools, but tools to be respected and treated with safety as forefront of mind. I am a confirmed believer in the 2nd Amendment, and our right as law abiding citizens to obtain firearms for whatever purpose legally allowed, to include self defense. I am also an 8 year veteran of the U.S. Army Infantry (11B), both Active Duty as well as Oregon National Guard. I currently own many firearms - from AR platform types with which I have first hand real-world experience (M16A2), to handguns to hunting rifles and shotguns. I've shot competitively in leagues (practical rifle and IDPA), professionally train with my weapon and practice it's employment, as well as elk hunt every year here in Oregon. I am an Oregon CHL permit holder, and I do actively concealed carry when with my wife and child in public. I would joke (not really) that I own more guns than my spouse knows about...

Saying all of that, I know firsthand how deadly these weapons are, how much damage they can cause, and how easy they are to manipulate, load and fire - at intended targets or not. They are, in fact, inanimate tools that require a finger to press a trigger - but they do not care nor discriminate that the finger is an experienced adult defending their home, or a 3 year old that found a loaded/chambered gun in a nightstand.

To the Legislators reading this, I only offer that owning a firearm is a deadly responsibility as much as it is a right. As a gunowner, I do take that very seriously and I secure every firearm I own. If I need them to defend myself, I don't think it unreasonable to have a plan to get them from a secured place, if that means I am preventing a child from inadvertently finding a loaded weapon. My observation is simple: More children and adults are killed by unsecured firearms inadvertently discharged than people who lost their life "because I couldn't get to my gun in time". As legislators, I believe your duty is to look after the greater collective - in this case I believe that to be the lives that would be saved by requiring gun owners to secure their weapons.

Guns are a right afforded us law abiding citizens. They are a tool. But they are not a tool of the garden-rake variety, but rather the running chainsaw type. It is reasonable and prudent that running chainsaws are secured from children - I firmly believe firearms to be the same.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill.