

Chair Prusak, Vice Chairs Hayden and Salinas, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Hyon Chol Kahng. I live in Multnomah County and serve as a Precinct Committee Person and an Assistant District Leader of House District 45 with the Multnomah Democrats. I would like to express my opposition to HB2510 as currently written.

I understand and appreciate that this bill represents a shift in attitude about gun legislation, treating gun violence as a public health issue. A safe storage law would do a great deal to reduce gun deaths across the board -- mass shootings, yes, but also suicides and domestic homicides that make up the vast majority of gun deaths.

Safe storage laws are a good idea in theory, and as with any gun safety law, the details matter. I have a number of concerns with HB2510, and these mirror concerns that I've had about HB 4005 from the 2020 Special Session. I respectfully ask that the Legislature consider modifying HB 2510 to address the below points before putting it to the floor.

Strict liability

I believe this could cast firearms ownership as so inherently dangerous as to warrant onerous regulations. The fallout from this could be devastating to productive conversations on gun ownership and safety and to gun owners' rights.

No definition set for adequate safes and locking devices

It is my opinion that existing law and legislative intent would provide adequate guidelines to the Oregon Health Authority so that OHA would allow gun owners to employ a wide variety of effective, inexpensive devices in order to comply with the bill. I am concerned that OHA is being given too expansive authority to decide what constitutes an "adequate" locking or storage device. Misplaced good intentions on the part of OHA regulators could have them decide that no cable lock or trigger lock meets their standard and that only the most robust (and expensive, and difficult to deploy) containers suffice, thus forcing renters and the poor to either carry all their firearms full time or risk a ticket and strict liability. I do not believe that current statements of legislative intent will suffice to prevent this. I would like this bill to more extensively define the guidelines OHA is expected to follow.

Law Enforcement Officer exemption

Per lines 40-42 of page [3] of the bill, civilians would be held to a minimum standard of firearm storage from which police are exempt. I believe that law enforcement should follow the same laws as Oregon citizens.

Respectfully submitted,

Hyon Chol Kahng