

I strongly support SB554-A, including the Dash-18 amendment introduced by Representative Clem.

The legislation would allow public agencies, including state universities and local government, to set rules on carrying of firearms in public buildings. The amendment would expand that authority to include municipal parks.

Over the past 5 years, Oregonians have been subjected to increasing political intimidation by armed factions, including the illegal occupation of a wildlife refuge and the attempted storming of the state Capitol. It is clear that certain groups intend to make their weapons the message when it comes to public policy in Oregon.

To the extent that Oregon's concealed weapons statutes enable this behavior, the Legislature needs to place limits on those who carry or claim to carry concealed weapons permits. The limits proposed in SB554-A are a good step toward that goal. They are consistent with existing state laws that prohibit paramilitary activity and the use of weapons to further racketeering. And they are a way to ensure that debates over the future of our state aren't decided at the end of a gun barrel.