

My name is Susan Elizabeth-Marsh Tanabe. Today I speak in strong support of Senate Bill 554. I am a retired public educator and current volunteer in a family of many generations of educators and state employees. My family has lived in Oregon since the 1880s, many of us in Salem. Other than five years in Tokyo and annual trips to Japan, I am a lifelong resident of Salem, from birth through college and into adulthood. My brother and I have spent a good deal of time proudly working and volunteering in this Capitol building. While working, advocating, and attending hearings we often see non-law enforcement individuals carrying firearms. We do not believe this is appropriate for any public building or outdoor space, which should offer safety for all. Our multiracial, bilingual family deeply appreciates working, walking, and enjoying events in public buildings and parks in and around Salem. My home is near Bush Park. We join our neighbors in anger and frustration at recent events during which individuals have openly carried firearms and used alcohol in this park. These individuals, men and women who identify with Proud Boys, Patriot Prayer, and possibly other White Nationalist groups, arrive from out of town and out of state. They have threatened Salem residents of all ages who use these parks for recreation, rejuvenation, meditation, and celebration. These individuals choose to dress, speak, and act with loud aggression. They have blocked traffic at multiple times in multiple locations, endangering young and old, in the park and on the surrounding streets as they attempt to harass our Governor in the State Governor's Residence. We expect our public buildings to be safe. We expect our public parks to be safe. We expect our public streets to be safe. I strongly encourage the passing of Senate Bill 554 which will allow the great State of Oregon and the beautiful City of Salem, our city of Shalom, to adopt ordinances which stop such individuals and groups like the Proud Boys from openly carry firearms in our public parks and buildings. Thank you for your time.