

House Democratic Leader Barbara Smith Warner, House Republican Leader Christine Drazan, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Michael Smith. I am a resident of Multnomah County. By way of identification only, and not to claim to speak for these organizations with this testimony, I currently serve as Chair of the Gun Owners Caucus of the Democratic Party of Oregon, a delegate to the DPO Rules Committee from the Third Congressional District, and Precinct Committee Person from House District 46. I also used to be an officer of the Democratic Party of Multnomah County, first serving as Technology Officer and then as Second Vice Chair. I am formerly a candidate for DNC Member from the State of Oregon. I am also a gun owner and the holder of a concealed handgun license. All of this is to say that I am a Gun Owning Democrat.

I write today in support of amendment A-24 to SB 554.

As Chair of the Gun Owners Caucus I convened two business meetings to discuss gun bills, including SB 554 and HB 2510. We found merit in both of these bills but also found significant issues. For SB 554 we believed that the bill would go too far in allowing restrictions on concealed carry and would unintentionally make many people into felons. For HB 2510 we objected to strict liability, to OHA setting container standards, and to law enforcement being exempt if following their department's own policies.

After a careful examination of this amendment, I note the following:

- 1) Prohibitions on concealed carry would be allowed for government buildings, school buildings run by a college or school district, and airports with more than one million passengers per year. Notice of the ban would need to be conspicuously posted.
- 2) Bringing a concealed firearm into one of these buildings while holding a concealed handgun license would be a *misdemeanor*.
- 3) Strict liability is replaced with negligence *per se* such that it is not a defense that the violator acted reasonably.
- 4) OHA is no longer charged with finding minimum criteria for locking devices or storage containers.

There will still be problems with SB 554 if this amendment is adopted. The raising of concealed handgun fees will discourage the poor from carrying legally. Law enforcement should still be following the provisions of SB 2510 as a minimum standard.

Nonetheless, compromise on a bill such as this is bound to lead to a solution with which almost everyone is unhappy for some reason. The bottom line is that amendment A-24 makes SB 554, and by its inclusion HB 2510, into better bills.

I have not consulted the Caucus of which I am chair, for lack of time to do so. As such I cannot speak for them. Speaking only for myself, I urge adoption of amendment A-24 to SB 554.

Finally, I note that the amended bill would encourage safe storage practices that will save hundreds of lives. Therefore, should the amendment be adopted, I urge the committee to send the amended bill to the floor with a recommendation of "do pass."

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Smith,  
Gun Owing Democrat, HD 46