

Chair Bynum, Vice Chair Noble, Vice Chair Power, and members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I write in support of HB2543 to close the Charleston Loophole.

Background checks are the foundation of our gun safety measures to keep guns out of the hands of people who are prohibited from having them. The Charleston Loophole is named after the shooting deaths of nine people at Mother Emanuel Church in Charleston, SC while they prayed. The shooter was able to acquire his gun because his criminal background check took longer than 3 days to complete. Had the background check system been allowed the time it needed to complete the check, the shooter would have been denied access to purchase that gun because he was legally prohibited from having a firearm. Nine lives would have been saved.

With the recent spike in gun sales in the past year, the Oregon Firearms Instant Check System (FICS) has recorded nearly 100,000 more background checks in 2020 than in 2019, placing a heavy workload on the FICS system. It is more important than ever to make sure that our background check system is allowed the amount of time necessary to complete all of the background checks submitted which will help ensure that guns are kept out of the hands of people who are prohibited from having them.

Please vote to support HB2543 to close this deadly loophole.