

February 18, 2021

Representative Bynum
Committee on Judiciary
House of Representatives

RE: Oppose HB 2543

Dear Chair Bynum and Members of the Committee:

My name is Tim Barnes with Tigard Pawn 4More and I am testifying in opposition of HB 2543 that would over burden and already burdened gun background check system.

Our business buys and sells guns to customers in Oregon. We also offer safe, secure storage for Oregonians that do not want to store guns in their own house. We are committed to public safety and ensuring that all gun transfers are done safely, responsibly and follow the law.

That has been more difficult because of the state's current system. The F.I.C.S. System is and has been failing for some time. For example, the system stalls and locks up when we try to log in, enter information or just check on the status of a previously entered background check (some background checks have to be re-entered due to loss by the online system). There is also a "build-up" of background checks in que (waiting to be reviewed and processed). Currently, the que is 6,978 customers long waiting to be reviewed, which is about 2 weeks at current rate. Also, we have 27 background checks on file with OSP that are over 30 days old (a couple are a year old). We acknowledge we may be a bit different as we perform approximately 300 background checks a month. The catch 22 is that as a Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL) must adhere to ATF's rules (they issue our Federal Firearms License). One of those rules is that a background check form (form 4473) expires 30 days from the day it is filled out. Meaning, when the state cannot process background checks within 30 days, the customer must re-fill out the federal form with new dates only to put them to the back of the line.

We agree with bill sponsors that public safety and responsible gun ownership is important. We don't think this bill does that because the F.I.C.S. System is already ineffective at timely transferring guns encouraging people to find alternative paths for gun purchases and circumventing current practices and laws. HB 2543 proposes to make the F.I.C.S system a cornerstone which will only hurt law abiding Oregonians. Over the last 10 years, we have discussed these issues with the state police and the ATF. We have come to understand that in many cases when the state police have a background check that must be delayed, it is because there is information in the person's file that needs to be verified, often through another state. As you know, Oregon does not have the authority over other state records departments to "hurry up" the other state's process. On top of that, COVID restrictions have increased the waiting period to get the information to be verified. In many cases, the waiting period is months.

In short, I feel that this bill just “layers on” more restrictions for law abiding citizens trying to use a defective system in the first place.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tim Barnes
Tigard Pawn 4More