

I respectfully offer this testimony against SB 554

This Bill is an unconscionable attack on our Second Amendment Rights and would make carrying a concealed weapon in public buildings (college campuses, airports, etc.) a felony even for licensed concealed carriers. Airports and schools will become an even more attractive target for criminals who don't have to worry about a law-abiding citizen concealing the means to fight back. There are no exceptions and you do NOT have to enter the terminal or even leave your car. If you pick up a friend or family member and just drive near the terminal or parking lots you can be charged, and when found guilty, sent to prison.

Overriding Oregon's preemption rule and allowing individual jurisdictions to pass local laws governing an individual's rights to self-defense will make it all but impossible for an honest citizen to know where they would be "allowed" to exercise their freedom to carry a weapon and where they could not. Inadvertently crossing a jurisdictional boundary would make an otherwise law-abiding citizen carrying a legally owned a carried firearm open to felony gun charges, and with no central authority to control where such laws apply, the only option to avoid being out of compliance with the ensuing mishmash of restrictions would be to not carry a weapon at all. This will serve only to disarm honest citizens and provide no relief from violent crime in Oregon.

As a lawful gun owner, I am tired of being vilified by the press and by the Left for valuing the sanctity of the Bill of Rights. Our nation was founded with the belief that certain rights are inalienable, and our Constitution provides specific limits that our government and elected officials may impose on those rights. Gun rights are civil rights, and as an elected official you swore an oath to protect and defend the Constitution. You can't honor that oath while actively working to subvert the intention of our Founding Fathers by intentionally weakening the protections afforded to all Americans in any part or portion of the Bill of Rights. Frankly, supporting any reduction in the protections afforded to Americans in the Bill of Rights is the most egregious violation of your oath that I can imagine. Please, honor your oath and do not support this – or any other gun control measure being considered this session.

Please also stop punishing honest citizens for the actions of criminals and start holding those responsible for committing violent crime exclusively accountable for their actions. Ultimately, it is my belief that all gun control is either racist, sexist or classist at its root. Why else would anyone want to take away a law-abiding citizen's right to defend themselves against criminals or tyranny?

I will close with two timely quotes from Thomas Jefferson, a Founding Father of our great nation, the author of the Declaration of Independence, and our third President.

"The laws that forbid the carrying of arms are laws of such a nature. They disarm only those who are neither inclined nor determined to commit crimes.... Such laws make things worse for the assaulted and better for the assailants; they serve rather to encourage than to prevent homicides, for an unarmed man may be attacked with greater confidence than an armed man."  
- Thomas Jefferson, Commonplace Book (quoting 18th century criminologist Cesare Beccaria), 1774-1776

And

"The Constitution of most of our states (and of the United States) assert that all power is inherent in the people; that they may exercise it by themselves; that it is their right and duty to be at all times armed."  
- Thomas Jefferson, letter to to John Cartwright, 5 June 1824

Please take the time to re-read the Bill of Rights and your oaths of office, and then consider these words carefully as you decide how to vote on this issue.

Respectfully,

Anthony Fields  
Milwaukie, Oregon