

Chair Bynum and members of the committee,

Please accept this testimony in support of HB 2543.

In 2016 I gave the testimony below in favor of HB 4147, an earlier version of HB 2543. My sentiments about this bill remain the same. Passing HB 2543 will strengthen Oregon's existing background check bill. It will ensure that prohibited people cannot purchase firearms just because their records cannot be accessed quickly. This is a but important improvement to our existing law.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sarah Finger McDonald, PhD
Corvallis, OR

Sarah Finger McDonald Testimony on HB 4147 (2016)

Chair Barker, Members of the Committee, I am Sarah Finger McDonald. I'm from Corvallis and I'm also a volunteer with Moms Demand Action.

I'm here today to speak in favor of House Bill 4147. Last Sunday I was at a town hall meeting in Corvallis and at that meeting, Representative Olsen spoke about the purpose of the short legislative session. He talked about it as an opportunity to look at our laws and improve on bills passed in previous sessions. That's exactly why I'm pleased to see HB 4147 introduced this session.

This bill would improve Oregon's background check system. It will improve and build on Oregon's important gun safety law that went into effect in August. It will give local law enforcement the information they need to arrest dangerous people who've tried to purchase a gun so that we as a state can do a better job enforcing our laws.

This bill will also ensure that background checks are actually completed. I teach at a university, I know the difference between a pass and an incomplete. Students don't pass my class if their work is not complete. Right now with background checks in Oregon, an incomplete is in effect a pass.

If work of determining if a person is eligible to buy a gun is not able to be finished in three days, we'll let them purchase that gun anyway, we give them a pass. Let's hold all our gun owners to the same standard and complete the work of our background checks before we decide who passes and who fails.

After all this is far more important than a college course, this could be life and death if an incomplete background check means domestic abusers or felons can buy guns.

Please vote in favor of 4147. Please make sure a background check is completed before a gun can be purchased and give local law enforcement the tools they need to enforce our background check law.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

