

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this testimony in relation to the upcoming proposed Senate Bill 554, in which it should be noted that I strongly oppose. In reviewing over this proposed bill, it is clear that the goal of this bill is to limit the rights of Oregon residents. Those who possess concealed handgun licenses are, on average, better trained than law enforcement officials as they understand the repercussions of missed shots. It is clear that the goal of this proposed bill is to disable law-abiding citizens and continue to strip second amendment rights away. It is ridiculous that simply having a legally purchased, legally licensed firearm, and proper, associated licensure would lead to a felony simply by possession related to location. Instead of passing new arbitrary laws that do nothing to curb violence, would it not make more sense to enforce the laws already present on the books? Instead of further dividing the state, by causing those who follow the current laws to be felons overnight, would it not make more sense to increase enforcement and target criminals? Those who aim to do harm will find a way, one way or another.

I know that my statements mean little without evidence. To start, a document "CD Summary: Volume 66, number 13" from November 2017 provides statistics related to Oregon firearm deaths. That document, provided by the OHA Public Health Division, shares that 82.1% of firearm deaths in Oregon are from suicide and only 13.6% are homicides. The passage of SB 719 has been aimed to prevent the former issue. Why not enforce this law? In regard to gun homicides (the supposed preventive focus of this bill), this document shows clearly that the area most common for homicides is private residences (57%), with streets or roads (17%) and park, public use or nature areas (6%) being second and third, respectively. How would a passage of this bill benefit Oregonians? The last of these areas has been lumped together for a grand total of 6%. In another OHA document entitled "Firearm Fatalities in Oregon", it is clear that an average of 456 people per year die of firearm-related injuries. With around a 13.6% homicide rate, about 62 would lose their lives to homicide per year. Even further, with the aforementioned location, this would bring our grand total to be 4 individuals. With these statistics in mind, it is clear that this law contains no structural evidence that prevents unnecessary deaths in this state. It is obvious that the focus is to disarm the public, limit rights and make criminals out of those who simply want safety for their families during uncertain times. I strongly urge opposition to this bill, which will accomplish almost nothing for the public safety of Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Alexander Stein