

My name is Jen Barth, and I'm one of so many Oregonians whose family has been impacted by gun violence. Although I did not grow up here, I moved here a decade ago, and have become more and more concerned by the rising gun sales in our state, and a background check system that has become even more burdened and backlogged during the pandemic.

After learning that HB 2543 has the opportunity to close the deadly "Charleston Loophole", I felt the need to call upon lawmakers urgently to prioritize passing it; we must make sure that people who shouldn't have firearms are not able to bypass this system.

As we can all well recall, the hateful act that led to the murders of nine Black people in Mother Emanuel church in Charleston five years ago was one of so many more that take the lives, senselessly, of Black people every day. This loophole is always deadly, and I'm certain has gotten worse during the COVID-19 pandemic. After hearing the estimate that in 2020 over 438,000 of the delayed, uncompleted background checks conducted in 2020 were purged, and that there were twice as many cases last year of prohibited buyers trying to get guns from dealers last year, I felt I could not stand silent on this issue.

This is, of course, one of many steps we must take to strengthen our country's gun laws. But we must take this step, because it is the primary way we can enforce this law, and it's just plain common sense.

Please vote YES on HB2543.