

Dear committee members,

I'm testifying in opposition to sb554. My first point in opposition to this bill is that it is unconstitutional. Article 1 section 27 of the Oregon constitution says "The people shall have the right to bear arms for the defense of themselves and the State". This bill is clearly in contradiction to our constitution. Also adding the emergency clause in this bill is clearly being used to keep the voters in Oregon from being able to have the ability to have a vote to change or alter it. I urge you to oppose this legislation.

Also raising the cost of a chl license will hurt the ability of lower income Oregonians to be able to legally protect themselves.

This bill would also make it nearly impossible for law abiding citizens to be able to protect themselves in public without unknowingly becoming a felon. That's one of the main problems with this bill. We are talking about men and women who have showed by the fact that they have obtained a carry permit that they are people in good legal standing and want to follow the law. This brings me to a very important point. This law will not have any affect on criminals! They do not follow the law. Adding gun free zones will not stop criminals from carrying firearms. On the contrary it will give them more freedom to rape and murder Oregonians because this bill will leave honest people from being able to defend themselves.

This brings me to my next point. This bill will have a devastating impact on women in Oregon. Many of the chl holders in Oregon are women. Mothers and grandmothers. What happens when a woman wants to pick up her children at school? She has to choose between her and her children's safety or following the law. This is unacceptable. Many women are the targets of attacks by men. These criminals seek an easy target and they prey on women because they think that they will be able to overpower them. Let's face it, a woman being attacked by a two hundred pound man, especially if he is armed with a knife or a gun it would be nearly impossible for a woman to protect herself. Even if her attacker is unarmed she still could be overpowered and then what happens? Whatever the criminal wants! That's not acceptable. We owe it to the women in Oregon to give them the ability to legally protect themselves.

Please support women's safety by opposing this bill.

Please reject this bill and keep our concealed carry law unchanged.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Steven R Garrish