

February 21, 2021

Chair and Members of the Committee

Senate Committee On Judiciary and Ballot Measures Chair Prozanski

Members - Senator Thatcher, Dembrow, Geiser, Heard, Linthicum, Manning

I am writing in opposition to Senate Bill 554 limiting or precluding affirmative defense for possession of firearms in public buildings by concealed handgun licensees, and increased fees for concealed carry permits.

There is much misinformation about firearm ownership and use as evidenced by some who have testified today regarding their support of this bill e.g., the difference between gun ownership, concealed carry and open carry.

I oppose this Bill because of its restriction on the right of Oregon citizens who are properly trained, licensed and authorized to carry a concealed handgun because such restriction is in direct violation of Oregon Constitution Article 1 Section 27 which clearly, affirmatively and without qualification states "Right to bear arms; military subordinate to civil power. The people shall have the right to bear arms for the defense of themselves."

It is my view that the Oregon Constitution could not be more clear in its support for proper carry of licensed concealed firearms by Oregon citizens without limitation.

While I believe that the Oregon Constitution offers the best opposition to Bill 554, it should be noted that other Oregon laws (e.g. Title 16) are also very clear in defining the responsibilities of those who carry concealed firearms and in the circumstances surrounding use of force under various circumstances making further restriction unnecessary.

Thank you.

Dennis Toohey

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