

Chair Prozanski and Committee,

My name is Jordan Ohrt and I am a mother of two, a local Realtor in the Willamette Valley of ten years, I have my Bachelor of Business Administration from James Madison University and I am a City Councilor for the City of Stayton.

If you would care to share, I would like to know who on the committee has a concealed carry license? Do you have friends or family that have one? How many of the sponsors of SB 554 have one? Their family? Friends? Neighbors?

I would like to know what the statistics are on the number of individuals with a CHL who commit a crime with their personal protection weapon. If you do not have or know these you should not be voting yes on this bill.

You may have a picture in your mind of what a someone who has a CHL looks like. Let me give you a few others. A mother who as a real estate agent frequently shows strangers property in remote areas or hosts open houses alone. A mother whose husband works late hours or is gone for work for weeks at a time and while she is home alone with her children. A bartender who has lots of cash tips and closes up the bar late at night. A property manager who checks in on properties that may or may not have drug activity occurring.

If you are not aware, the decision to carry a personal protection firearm is not one made lightly. There is much responsibility in owning a gun and even more when choosing to carry one in public for protection. When a person buys a gun a background check is performed. When someone applies for a CHL, another background check is performed as well as being fingerprinted. This process can take up to a month or so to complete. This process is repeated every four years to renew the license whether the individual buys a gun or not.

The people who have CHL are under more scrutiny- rightfully so- than the average individual in Oregon. Taking this into account, SB 554 would be putting many truly law-abiding Oregonians in a situation to be arbitrarily committing felons and incurring outrageous fines.

This bill will also increase the fees to obtain a CHL. Is there a sliding scale for low-income individuals? Is this bill going to limit the access for someone low-income to protect themselves in a manner they see fit?

At a time when many of your colleagues are calling for defunding police programs and submitting bills like HB 2002 that would lower sentences for those convicted of crimes and water down their parole commitments and responsibilities, is it wise to limit an Oregonian's means of protecting themselves?

You will not stop bad people from doing bad things by taking away and the limiting the rights of law-abiding citizens like concealed handgun carriers.

I would like to add, the fact that you already have a work session scheduled on this bill only cements my thoughts and feelings that you do not care what the people have to say about this or any other issue.

Thank you,

Jordan Ohrt