

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Institute for Legislative Action

11250 WAPLES MILL ROAD

FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA 22030



NRA

February 22, 2021

Senator Floyd Prozanski
Committee on Judiciary
900 Court St., NE S-413
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 554 - OPPOSE

Dear Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee on Judiciary:

On behalf of the tens of thousands of National Rifle Association (NRA) members in Oregon, I am writing to express our opposition to Senate Bill 554 (SB 554) and respectfully request that you oppose this legislation.

ORS 166.170 to 176, also known as "firearm preemption", was originally enacted in 1995. Prior to this statute, gun owners were subject to a patchwork of state laws and local ordinances. A law-abiding citizen traveling on I-5 from Medford to Portland would literally pass-through multiple jurisdictions with completely different laws.

The legislature, recognizing the absurdity of this patchwork, enacted state preemption so that legal gun owners would have consistent, statewide regulations. This law has served Oregonians well for 25 years. Gun owners know what is allowed all over the state. Public safety officers also know the law and application of the law is consistent statewide.

SB 554 authorizes cities, counties, metropolitan service districts, port operating commercial airports, school districts, colleges and universities to adopt ordinances or policies limiting or precluding affirmative defense for possession of firearms in public buildings by concealed handgun licensees. While the bill does require local governments post locations that do not allow guns, gun owners may not know from one district to the next what is allowed until they arrive at a building.

The bill also redefines public building to include any building owned by the state or by a city, a county or a metropolitan service district, and the grounds adjacent to those buildings. Redefining public building in this manner would subject CHL holders to confusion of what defines public buildings and the grounds adjacent. Special districts include everything from water districts to fire districts. It is unreasonable for a CHL holder to know where these special district buildings are or what defines the grounds adjacent to them until they are already there and have potentially broken the law.

Oregon has about 300,000 permit holders. These law-abiding individuals have undergone extensive background checks, met or exceeded firearms training criteria and have been permitted to carry a concealed handgun by their respective sheriff. Permit holders are authorized to carry in nearly every corner of Oregon and have done so responsibly for well over 30 years. For these, and many other reasons, we respectfully request you oppose SB 554.

Sincerely,

Roger Beyer