

As a teacher in Salem high schools since 1986, I have led thousands of students through drills in case of fires, earthquakes, and active shooters. In the case of the latter students invariably are angry. They ask, the demand to know WHY our government has not limited access to guns, limited the types of guns available, and why careful background checks are sometimes not needed. They know about the Charleston, NC shootings, about Parkland, about Las Vegas, about the Clackamas Towne Center... about dozens of other truly preventable acts of gun violence. Since 2004 I have also taught at Chemeketa Community College, where many of my students are adults and some are gun owners. Those who own usually also complain that too many gun owners are irresponsible, own guns which are not used in hunting and are not reasonable for home protection. Some come from ranching or farming families... even then, they are angered at the irresponsible use of guns, and the use of background check loopholes. Today, as an educator, a parent of three, a person of faith, and the parent of an educator I write in support of HB 2543, closing the Charleston Loophole. This is a reasonable and timely bill, as during COVID many have applied for gun ownership and too many have taken advantage of this loophole. I write in support of SB 396, to regulate the terrible threat of undetectable and untraceable ghost guns as well as the individual parts needed to build them. And perhaps closest to my heart I write in support of SB 554. We must keep guns out of schools and off college campuses. I remember the Umpqua CC shootings. Our campus at Chemeketa was impacted dramatically. Many students and staff were angry, grieving, numb, traumatized. Lastly, we must empower local officials to make wise, experienced public safety decisions for the communities they know and serve. Thank you, you are all in my prayers.