

Submitter: Matt Laas
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure: HB2572

Chair Kropf, Vice Chair Anderson and Wallan, and members of the committee

I am writing in support of HB 2572. This bill reinforces existing laws which have been validated and reaffirmed by the supreme court since the 19th century. Presser v Illinois, 1886, clarified that the First Amendment does not ensure a “right voluntarily to associate together as a military company or organization” beyond the control of the government. The idea that a private paramilitary militia/organization is a legal right is false, and was reaffirmed in 2008 during the Heller decision. This bill is a necessary step to assist individual citizens, as well as the State, in the recovery of economic and non-economic losses to activities perpetrated by private paramilitary organizations, as clearly defined in the bill.

This bill does not affect an individual or group’s ability to demonstrate or peacefully protest. This bill does not prevent a group from organizing for the purpose of training with firearms, as long as it is not with the intent to illegally act as law enforcement, to interfere with a government proceeding or to interfere/intimidate individuals who are participating in a legal activity. This bill would affect those who train with that intent and act upon that training while armed with a firearm, explosive or dangerous weapon.

In Oregon and across the United States, there is ample evidence that violent extremist organization activity is increasing. This bill fills a necessary gap in the legal system for citizens to seek restitution for violence and intimidation brought upon them from extremist activities.

This is a reasonable, well structured, constitutionally validated measure to assist in stemming the growing tide of violent paramilitary activity in our State.