

March 2, 2023

Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs Sollman, Evans and Members of the Subcommittee on Public Safety:

On behalf of Gun Owners for Responsible Ownership (GOFRO), I am writing to express our support for the DOJ budget requests packages 305 and 258 in SB 5514 that provide assistance to gun violence prevention programs. These packages will help law enforcement and community organizations to more effectively implement Oregon's Extreme Risk Protection Order law and Community Violence Intervention Programs.

Extreme Risk Protection Orders allow law enforcement or family members to request a judge to order temporary removal of firearms in situations where a person is in a mental health crisis and is a danger to themselves or the public. In Oregon, 79% of firearm deaths are suicides. ERPOs can be an excellent tool to help prevent suicide but only if the public knows about them and is familiar with how to use them and who to contact in an emergency.

Other tools that can be very effective in addressing gun violence include community-based and hospital-based violence intervention programs. One of the keys to their effectiveness is that they rely on outreach workers who have ties to the local community and can act to help families before violence or self-harm occurs. We have partnered with some of these community and hospital programs to provide safe storage devices to assist in their efforts. We hope the State will continue to help support these programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and urge your support of SB 5514 packages 305 and 258.

Sincerely,

Tom O'Connor
Gun Owners for Responsible Ownership