



The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

March 7, 2023

To: Senator Michael Dembrow, Chair
[Senate Committee on Education](#)

Re: [SB 551](#) – Requires school districts to provide information related to secure storage of medications and firearms - **Support**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon has a long history of supporting policies at all levels of the community and government that promote the well-being and safety of children. This is why we strongly support SB 551, which requires school districts to provide information related to the secure storage of medications and firearms. This information consists of fact-based data and best practices on safe storage from the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and will be disseminated via the homepage of school district websites and through school districts' social media accounts. Thus, this is a narrowly written bill that addresses the public health aspect of unsecured medications and firearms.

Why is this bill needed? Here is some data from Safekids.org:

“Every 12 days, a child under age 6 in the United States dies from an accidental medicine-related poisoning. Every hour, a child is hospitalized for that same reason, and every nine minutes, a child goes to the emergency room (ER).”

And from the website of Everytown for Gun Safety:

“Guns are the 2nd-leading cause of death among children and teens in Oregon. In Oregon, an average of 31 children and teens die by guns every year, of which 63% of these deaths are suicides and 31% are homicides. In the US, 35% of all gun deaths among children and teens are suicides and 60% are homicides.”

Given the many letters opposing this bill, it is also important to mention what this bill does not do. It does not call for the banning of firearms or for interfering with the Second Amendment rights of individuals. It provides critical information that the Oregon Health Authority has a duty to share with the people of Oregon in accordance with its mission: “Ensuring all people and communities can achieve optimum physical, mental, and social well-being through partnerships, prevention, and access to quality, affordable health care.”

We urge passage of SB 551, and we thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Becky Gladstone".

Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR President

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marge Easley".

Marge Easley
LWVOR Action Committee