

Submitter: Robert Thomas
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure: HB2007

To allow other than state laws to apply to areas where concealed carry is allowed is asking for law abiding citizens to not only be unprotected in areas where they may be dealing with criminals in public, it may unwittingly make them criminals by making a hodge podge of restrictions that vary from one city or county to another. That is not acceptable. Law abiding citizens are not the ones causing crime, yet we are the ones paying the penalties, when it rightly belongs to the law breakers. There is no punishment for them, they are already breaking the law by being a criminal, so they have no incentive to obey yet another ineffective law or in this case laws. All these do is punish people who are the responsible citizens, who pay taxes that support the local, state, and federal governments, have jobs and are productive, and deserve the right to protect themselves, their loved ones, and random innocent people they may encounter. I know this from personal experience. Some years back, I had 4 guys on drugs, probably at the time, meth, pounding on my apartment door in the middle of the night, where I lived at the time. I had a gun in my hand but did not point it at them or threaten them, they mumbled something and left. A few months later, another group of four came and did the same thing. I did too, they left me alone. Fortunately, my neighbor, who turned out to be a drug dealer, wasn't home when they broke in and ransacked his apartment as I was getting ready for work. He was soon after made to leave. Just a few years ago, I stopped at a rest area on I-84. When I pulled in, I was the only one there, I thought. However, as I got out, a young man was darting in and out of the restrooms. There were businesses across the street and a block away, but as he also obviously was on something, he didn't seem to notice. As I am an older person, and really needed the facility, I walked toward him and let him see, without drawing my holstered gun, which would be wrong, that I was armed, as it is legal in Oregon to have open carry. Again, he left me alone, but didn't leave and actually went in and out of the facility while I was in there. I got back to my vehicle, called the police and told them what happened. They said I was fine, and they would try to get someone out there. I stayed until dark, however, he snuck off at some point. During that time, I made sure that those who pulled in knew the situation and they went down the street to the gas station nearby. That was one young couple and a younger mom and two kids. Had I not had a gun and he being aware of that, and as an almost senior citizen, with a bad back and other physical issues, I would probably not have been a match for the taller and much younger man on drugs, which medical people I know have assured me makes him and others quite dangerous and unpredictable. If that city had their own set of rules, or had the state been foolish enough to not allow me to carry in that area, I could have been arrested for keeping myself safe and five other people waiting for the cleanup crew, as police so often are unfortunately, to arrive, which in the 30-40 minutes after I called, they never did.

Fortunately, no one was harmed in any of those three situations, but lacking a gun that the criminals could see, could easily have resulted in my injury or possibly death, and who knows about the others. Other states have done what you are proposing and it's a mess. I would urge you to drop it from consideration, to avoid a similar situation here. There is no valid reason for it, or really any of the anti-gun bills here being considered, again, because they have no effect on criminal behavior, as disobeying the law is in their job description. We are not the problem; you are looking at and punishing the wrong group of people and accomplishing nothing.