



*The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 103-year-old 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 22, 2023

To: Representative Jason Kropf, Chair, [House Committee on Judiciary](#)

Re: [HB 2006](#) - Age restriction on firearm possession - **Support**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports HB 2006 based on our gun safety and violence prevention positions. We believe it is the responsibility of government to regulate the ownership of firearms to ensure the health and safety of all. This bill prohibits those under 21 from possessing or transferring firearms with the exception of certain rifles and shotguns. Passage of HB 2006 would allow Oregon to join the 22 other states that have raised the minimum age for purchasing firearms from 18 to 21.

There is solid data from a public health and public safety perspective to back up this change in firearm law. According to Everytown for Gun Safety, “firearms are the leading cause of death for young people ages 18 to 20, and the firearm suicide rate among this group has increased 41% in the last decade. Eighteen to 20-year-olds commit gun homicides at triple the rate of adults 21 years and older.”

Science research has revealed that the developing brains of teens and hormonal changes make them more prone to risky behavior, since brain areas affecting impulse control, judgement, and long-range planning are the last to mature. Suicide prevention for this age group is a key goal. According to Giffords Law Center, “suicide attempts that result in death or hospital treatment peak at age 16 but are at the highest rates from age 14 through age 21.”

Just as we set an age limit of 21 for purchasing alcohol and tobacco products, it makes sense to do the same for handguns, which have the potential for much greater harm. The League urges passage of HB 2006, and we thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky Gladstone".

Becky Gladstone  
LWVOR President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marge Easley".

Marge Easley  
LWVOR Action Committee