

March 22, 2023

Members of the House Committee on Judiciary
Oregon State House of Representatives
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HOUSE BILL 2006 - SUPPORT

Dear Chair Kropf, Vice Chairs Andersen and Wallen, and Honorable Members of the Committee:

I write to urge your support for HB 2006, which proposes raising the age for purchase and possession of semiautomatic firearms from the current age of 18 to 21. I implore you as a mother of two young adults over the age of 21, as a volunteer with Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America and as a professional who left legal practice years ago after nearly a decade of providing indigent criminal defense services.

Even though young adults under the age of 21 are unable to legally purchase handguns in Oregon, they can and do legally purchase semiautomatic assault rifles. Research establishes that this demographic - those aged 18-20 years old - commit gun homicides at a rate nearly three times that of adults 21 and over. Additionally, the firearm suicide rate among this group has increased 41% in the last decade.¹

As a parent of young adults, I've witnessed firsthand the decline in reactivity and emotional extremes, commensurate with the increase in rationality, forethought, impulse control and understanding of context and consequences. It makes no sense that individuals must be 21 to purchase alcohol, and yet we allow easier access to some of the deadliest weapons available at a time where guns are the leading cause of death for kids and teens under 21.

As a former public defender, I saw on a daily basis how poor impulse control and rash action played out with devastating human consequences - to crime victims and to young adults who often lacked resources like stability, support, access to mental health care, etc..

I urge you to pass HB 2006 out of committee to help make Oregon safer. In addition to Bill 2006 on assault rifle age, I urge you to support Bill 2005 banning ghost guns, and Bill 2007, which would allow cities and municipalities to ban concealed carry weapons in city and county public buildings and other public spaces

Thank you,
Andrea Platt
Lake Oswego, Oregon

¹ <https://everytownresearch.org/rankings/law/minimum-age-to-purchase/>