

Submitter: Patrick Iler

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Judiciary

Measure: HB3513

Chair Kropf, Vice- Chairs Anderson and Wallan, and members of the House Judiciary Committee,

My name is Patrick Iler. I am a veteran of the US Air Force and I have training in and am certified in suicide prevention. I am opposed to HB 3513.

Although it appears to be well intentioned, I believe it will not accomplish the goals it was drafted to address. One of those testifying in support of the bill stated that;

“Experts at the VA believe that if a person experiencing a suicidal crisis can’t access the method they planned to use, they generally do not seek out other lethal means to attempt suicide. So there is a strong indication that if a firearm is not readily accessible, an individual who planned to use their firearm to commit suicide might pause and hopefully reconsider.”

A couple of things are wrong with the above statement. First, it states that experts believe. However, belief and facts do not always line up. It is also stated there is a strong indication that if a firearm is not readily accessible, an individual might pause and hopefully reconsider. What strong indication? Where does that indication come from? Facts or wishful thinking? And there is a world of difference between “might” and “will” pause and reconsider.

I have a story based on facts and reality, not indications, beliefs, or maybes. Making a long story short, someone very close to me committed suicide a few years ago. She legally owned a semi-automatic pistol. She at one point due to her state of mind chose to have someone hold onto the firearm for her. After a significant amount of time passing, she due to her state of mind chose to commit suicide and simply used a different means, other than a firearm, to do so. As you can imagine, the story is much longer and more involved that can or should be addressed here.

The point of the story is the idea of having someone hold her firearm for her did not prevent her from committing suicide. And her story is not isolated or new. It is a fact, not an indication, that someone who has convinced themselves to commit suicide will find a way.

It is not my desire to appear pessimistic, only realistic. Like all gun laws, this too will fail to accomplish the stated goals of the proponents. But it sure makes them feel like they did something good whereas if they were to invest in legitimate and truly

effective suicide prevention measures they might actually have a real impact toward suicide reduction and save lives.

Like all gun measures, if this one passes there will be negative unintended consequences.

For example, what's the next step? What if the holder does not believe the person they are holding the firearm for is not in the right frame of mind to have their firearm back, but the owner believes they are?

What's the next step? Is someone at some point after passage going to come back and say the law should be modified to state that before the firearm owner can retake possession of their firearm from the holder, they should be required to pass a background check before their firearm is returned?

This bill will not reduce, prevent, or stop someone who is committed to taking their own life from doing so. I ask the Committee to please reject HB 3513, which is truly just another anti-firearm bill, and focus on real and effective suicide prevention measures. Thank you.

Patrick Iler
Central Point