

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher and Committee,

February, 9, 2024



My name is Kerry Spurgin, I am the President of the Oregon State Shooting Association (OSSA)

Over the past 4 years the OSSA and the Oregon Association of Shooting Ranges (OASR) has sponsored and driven key actions in awareness, education, and training (QPR) in suicide prevention. Through an outstanding partnership with county health organizations, we have connected expertise and resources with key target groups (rural, veterans, and firearms owners) in over half of Oregon counties. The expertise and knowledge gained from the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), Oregon Firearms Safety Coalition (OFSC), and Oregon Alliance to Prevent Suicide have brought key best methods and tools to help Oregon citizens. Please see these key references [www.ossa.org/safety-wellness](http://www.ossa.org/safety-wellness). Also, please view our informational video on suicide prevention produced just for Oregon. [Video - youtu.be/zR7JLE15wt0](https://youtu.be/zR7JLE15wt0)

Progress is made through rolling up one's sleeves and focusing on community action in awareness and training.

Unfortunately, SB 1503 failed to grasp and ignores expertise already gained in Oregon before it was initiated. SB1503 does not seek to understand current programs before starting new programs. SB 1503's initial posting demonstrated its misguided partisan agenda for firearms control instead of truly helping Oregonians. The ongoing scramble for cleanup does not hide this.

Gun violence and suicide prevention very are separate topics – They have very different solution spaces – They should not be in a single bill.

Combining them is like combining Israel, Ukraine, and Border funding – it's a good way to get NOTHING done. Bills like this are crafted on political agendas not solutions to serious problems. By separating them, one may engage the proper experts and focus true root causes to each of the serious issues.

If gun violence in our community is the priority, as it should be, let's roll up your sleeves and ask law enforcement and the department of justice to report the legislature what help they need to curb violence in our cities. Enforcing current laws, being firm on crime will come to the top, as previous studies have shown.

If suicide prevention in our community is the priority, as it should be, roll up your sleeves and ask OHA and the Oregon Alliance to Prevent Suicide (both are Oregon publicly funded groups with critical expertise, and the charter) to report to the legislature on their current programs and what help they need to help Oregonians. Fund them. Help them. I AM

Lastly, if you would like to really make progress on suicide prevention - enable the primary tool for suicide prevention which is "Creating Time and Distance" through an amended version of HB4096; amendments must be made to remove Section 1.3(b)(A) and Section 2 which were added after the experts met. See our video to realize how important time and distance are in preventing suicide. [Video - youtu.be/zR7JLE15wt0](https://youtu.be/zR7JLE15wt0)

I am Opposed to SB1503

Thank You.