

Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee:

I am writing today in support of SB 1503, the Task Force bill on gun violence prevention and firearm suicide prevention.

I am a parent, outdoor road athlete, and former educator.

I can't believe that I have to fear for my children's safety sending them off to school. That I have to worry about someone with road rage when I'm out for a morning run. That I have to talk to my kids about what to do if they find a gun in someone's house, or hear from a friend that found a gun in their house. Seeing the Michigan testimony and court decision on Jennifer Crumbley reminds me that it is the adults' responsibility to keep firearms secure. This can start before guns make it into households with policies that help protect everybody.

Every year, we lose close to 600 Oregonians to preventable firearm deaths. Black Oregonians are roughly 10 times more likely than white people to die by firearm homicide. And the firearm suicide rate in rural Oregon is 2.5 times higher than in urban areas and the state's veteran suicide rate is 37% higher than the national average.

I strongly support the SB1503, Task Force bill, and urge the Task Force to prioritize prevention efforts that are centered around those most impacted by gun deaths and shootings, as well as firearm suicides. I urge the Task Force to analyze and prioritize ongoing, sustainable funding for efforts for prevention work that is making the most meaningful, equitable impact, both for homicide and suicide prevention.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony on this issue.

Sincerely,  
Julie Baker  
Portland, Oregon