

Gun tragedies in Oregon

**Our laws are working.
Yet with ~625 lives lost each year, we must do more.**

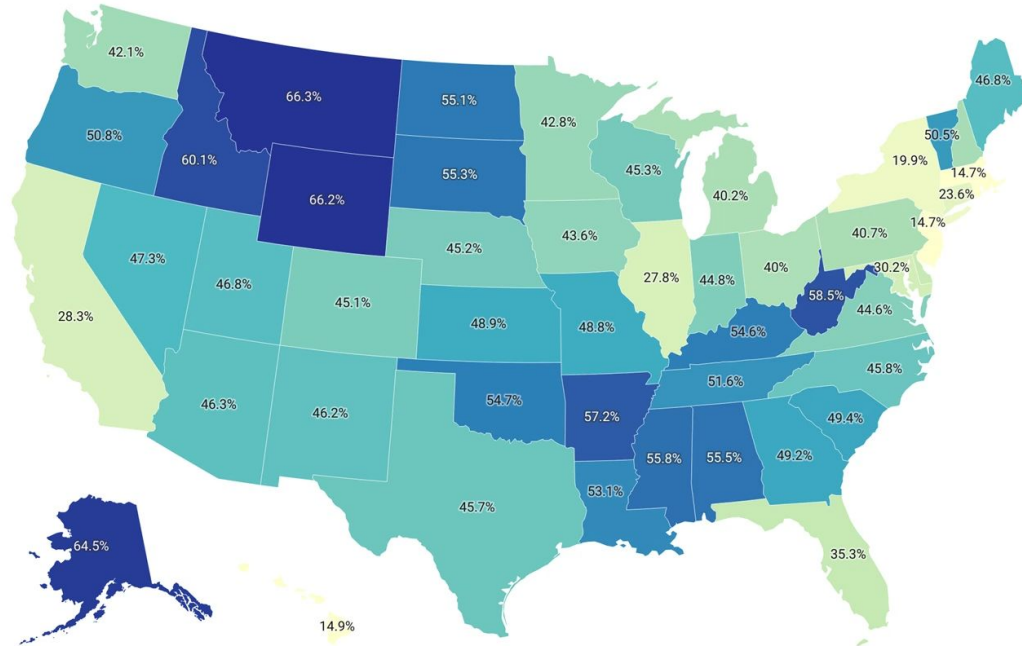
Jess Marks, MPA
Executive Director, Alliance for a Safe Oregon Action

~625 Oregonians are lost to gun related tragedies each year.

Oregon's gun death rate is 14.4 per 100,000, which is 25th highest in the nation. (CDC Wonder, Johns Hopkins, 2024),

Oregon's rate of gun ownership is 14th highest in the country (Rand, 2023).

Gun Ownership Rates By US State



Source: <https://brilliantmaps.com/gun-ownership-state/> - Created with Datawrapper

<https://www.visualcapitalist.com/mapped-u-s-states-with-the-most-guns/> or <https://www.rand.org/pubs/tools/TL354.html>

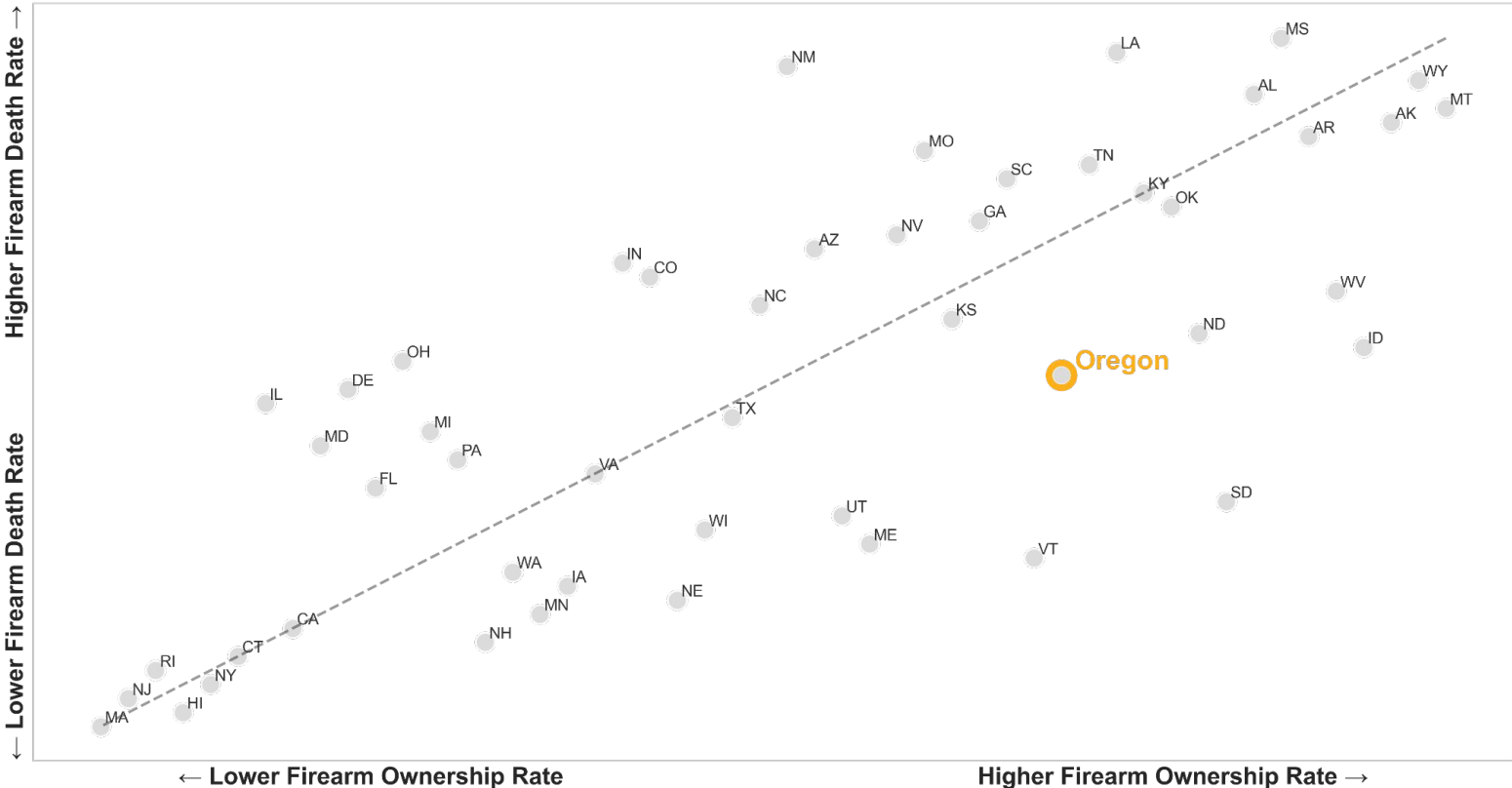
Firearm ownership is strongly correlated to higher rates of gun deaths and injuries.

Extensive evidence shows higher rates of firearm ownership are linked to significantly higher:

- Rates of firearm suicide for adults (10-16%) and youth (25%) ([Siegal & Rothman, 2013](#));
- Rates of homicides (1 to 1% increase) and ([Christopolous, 2023](#) & [Siegel, Ross & Ill, 2013](#)); and fatal domestic violence (5x) ([Tobin-Tyler, 2023](#));
- Rates of unintentional firearm injuries, especially for youth in rural areas ([CDC, 2023](#)).

Our gun tragedy prevention policies are saving lives.

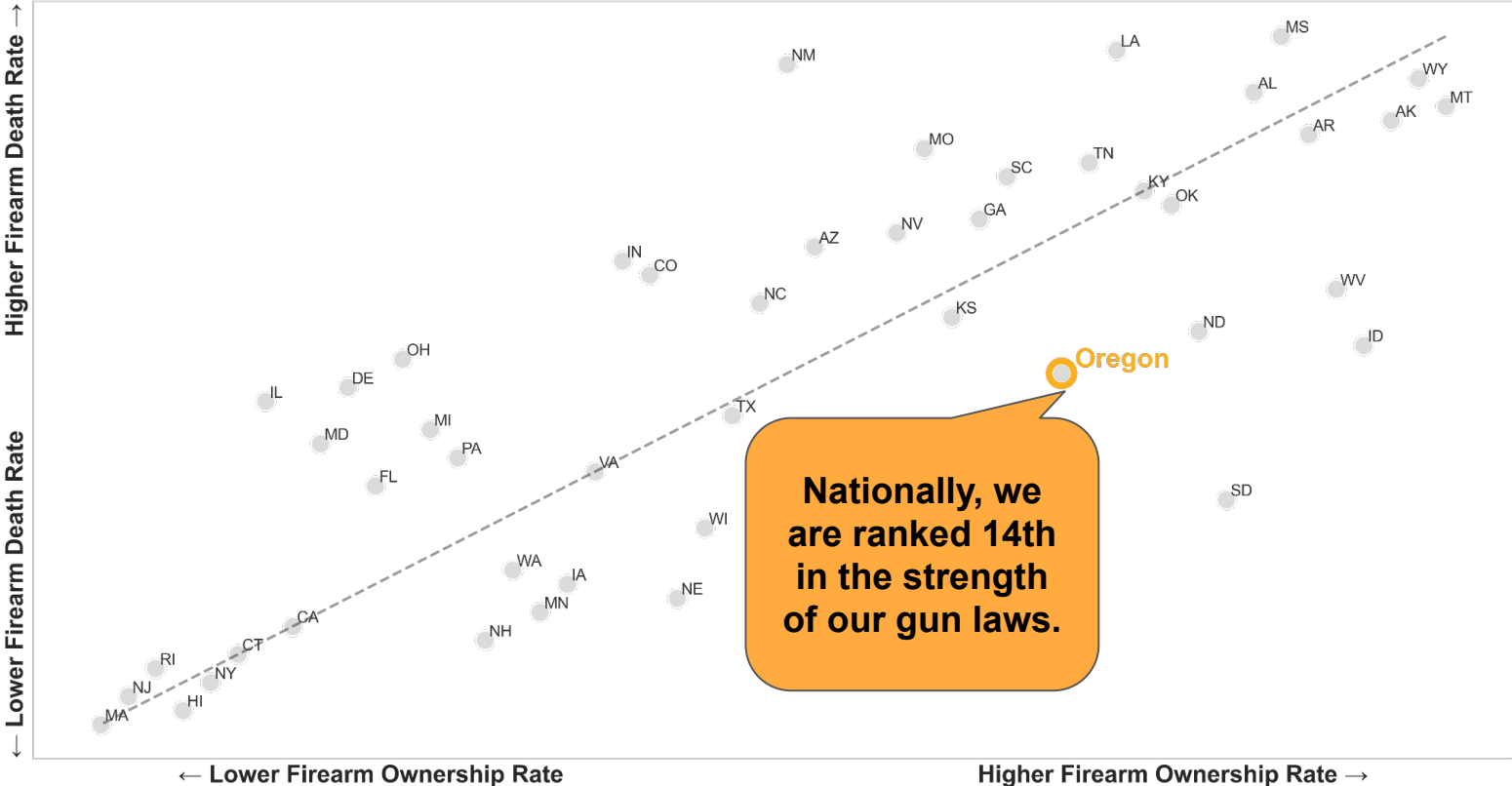
Firearm Ownership and Death Rates by State



Data from Pew 2023 and CDC 2024

Our gun tragedy prevention policies are saving lives.

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Our gun laws save lives while respecting responsible ownership:

- 1) Background checks**
- 2) Banning ghost guns**
- 3) Child Access Prevention law; and**
- 4) Extreme Risk Protection Orders.**

Evidence shows these laws are working:

Preventing homicides, shootings and gun crimes:

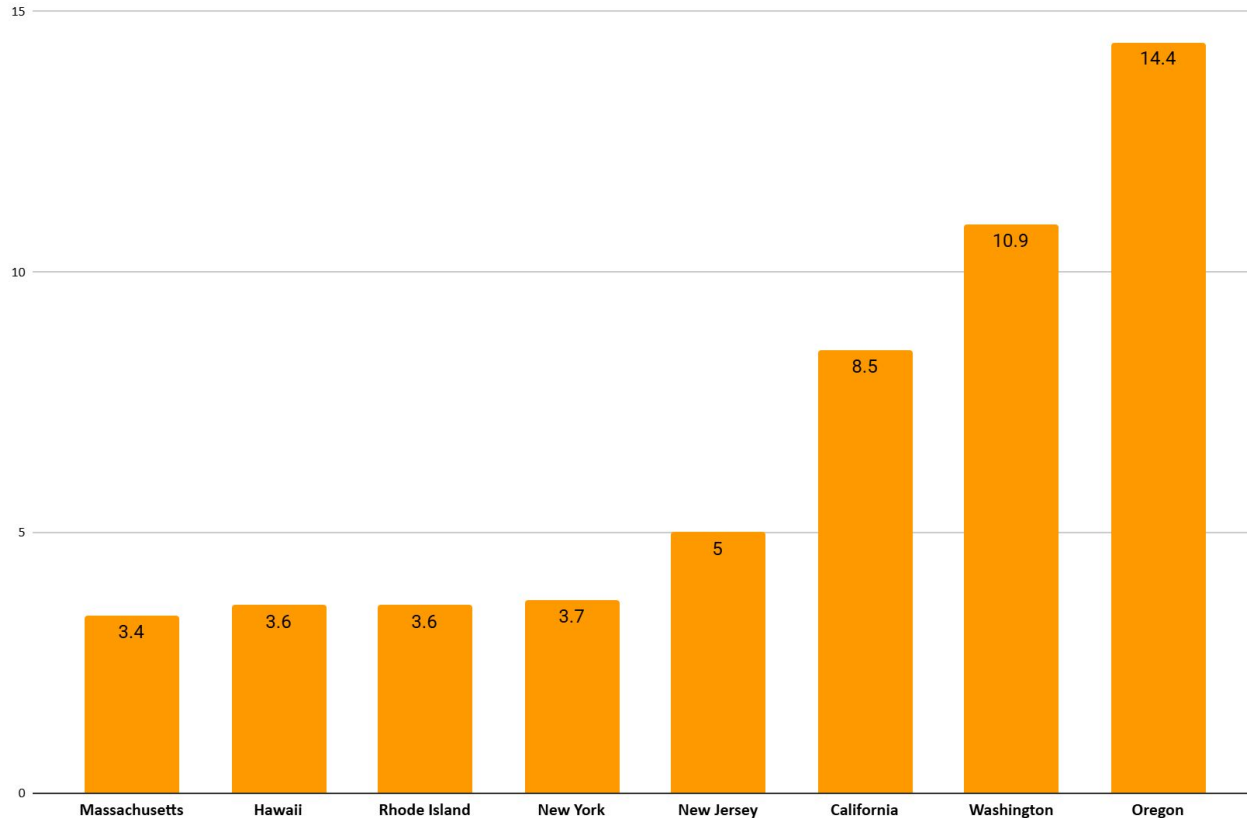
- **Background checks:** Evidence shows background checks reduce violent crime. From 2018-2022, 10,366 firearms were not transferred in Oregon, preventing felons from access. *Yet, our 48-hour loophole remains.*
- **Ghost Gun law:** While other states have seen a dramatic increase in crime with ghost guns (1,000% according to the ATF), [anecdotal evidence](#) (as the law is so new) shows Oregon Law Enforcement can intervene in ghost gun production, keeping illegal weapons off our streets.

These laws are working:

Preventing firearm suicides and Keeping kids safe

- **Child Access Prevention law:** Recent research from 2024 shows states with [Child Access laws have 25% lower rates of youth firearm suicide.](#) While we need a comprehensive study on Oregon, data shows, our firearm suicide rates for youth under 18 have gone down since 2018.
- **Extreme Risk Protection Order law:** Research shows ERPOs have reduced suicides and often are [used to prevent violence towards others or mass shootings in Oregon.](#) From 2018-2024, 1039 ERPOs were filed. *While the law remains underutilized and needs funding to be fully implemented across the state, [research shows for every 10-17 ERPOs, one life is saved.](#)* This means ~100 Oregonians are alive today who otherwise would be gone.

Yet, we remain behind, with too many lives lost to preventable tragedies.



Our gun laws are also behind our neighbors

Policy	Oregon	Washington	California
Rate of gun deaths	14.4 per 100,000	11.2 per 100,000	8.5 per 100,000
State Gun Dealer Licensing	No	Partial - No Inspections/Enforcement	Yes
Rapid Fire Device Ban	No	Yes	Yes
Waiting Periods	No	Yes	Yes
Age 21 to Purchase Military Style Rifles	No	Yes (ban military style weapons)	Yes (ban military style weapons)
Waiting Periods	No	Yes	Yes
Hate Crime Prohibitor	No	Yes	Yes
State Office for GVP	No	Yes	Yes
Industry Liability	No	Yes	Yes

Oregon can be a national leader that respects responsible firearm ownership while saving lives.

In the rest of today's hearing, you'll hear:

- **Data on who is most impacted by gun tragedies in Oregon**
- **Evidence on meaningful policies that will save lives**
- **The urgency of this work.**

It is possible to save lives and create a better future – but it will take courage, and all of us, working together.