

Submitter: James Cornelius
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3075

As a lifelong law-abiding, safe and responsible firearms owner, I experienced the passage of Measure 114 as a profound betrayal of values. I once believed — naively, I suppose — that people like us could and should engage in a good-faith effort to craft “gun safety” measures to “keep the drunks away from the car keys,” to apply a reasonable analogy. Good faith efforts cannot be undertaken with bad faith actors.

The measures currently undertaken in this state have nothing to with public safety. They are a calculated effort to criminalize law-abiding citizens, and to drive firearms-related enterprises out of business. The permit-to-purchase system of 114 is built to fail, imposing an unfunded administrative burden on law enforcement that will cost local departments significantly, and take resources away from actual public safety work. HB 3075 offers no improvement and makes the process more restrictive by increasing fees and waiting periods.

It leaves legitimate, law-abiding gun purchasers high and dry, mandating training that it makes no provision to provide or even to make accessible, creating a redundant system of background checks. It could take months or years to obtain a permit. The magazine restrictions are arbitrary, and criminalizing possession of lawfully purchased property is simply wrong. Modifications are inadequate to protect law-abiding firearms owners from potential prosecution under arbitrary standards and powers.

Treating thousands of law-abiding and upstanding citizens as potential criminals is corrosive to the values of the state of Oregon, fosters deep distrust of government, exacerbates a deep and painful urban/rural divide, and does nothing at all to address the fundamental social issues that underpin violent crime.

It is highly probable that these measures will find themselves before the the U.S. Supreme Court, and we can expect our rights to be vindicated — but it will take precious years, and the damage to our rights and our way of life will have already been done.