

Submitter: Brian Merriman
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3075

My name is Brian, a lifelong Oregonian, hunter, and law-abiding gun owner. When Measure 114 passed by a razor-thin margin in 2022, I felt a deep sense of oppression—not just as a citizen, but as someone whose rights, enshrined in both the U.S. and Oregon constitutions, were suddenly under attack. This measure, sold as a ‘Reduction of Gun Violence Act,’ has instead stripped me and countless others of our fundamental liberties, all while doing nothing to address the real causes of crime.

I’ve always followed the law—background checks, safe storage, you name it. But now, Measure 114 demands I jump through hoops just to exercise my constitutional right to bear arms. I need a permit to buy a firearm, something that didn’t even exist when our state’s founders wrote Article I, Section 27 of the Oregon Constitution, guaranteeing my right to self-defense. That permit process? It’s a nightmare. I’d have to pay fees—up to \$150—get fingerprinted like a criminal, and take a safety course that isn’t even standardized or widely available in my rural county. Worse, the sheriff can deny me if they think I’m a ‘danger,’ based on vague, subjective standards that invite abuse. This isn’t regulation; it’s a barrier designed to discourage me from exercising my rights.

Then there’s the magazine ban—calling anything over 10 rounds ‘large capacity,’ even though these are standard for most firearms I own. I use a 15-round magazine in my pistol for home defense, and my shotgun’s extended tube holds more than 10 for hunting. Measure 114 turns me into a criminal overnight unless I confine their use to my property or a range. If I drive to town with my gun and magazine in the truck—locked separately, as required—I’m still at risk of prosecution because the law’s so-called ‘affirmative defense’ is nearly impossible to prove. How do I show I owned these before the law passed? Receipts fade, and memory isn’t evidence in court. This isn’t safety; it’s oppression disguised as policy.

I feel this most when I think about protecting my family. Out here, law enforcement is 30 minutes away on a good day. My right to defend myself—recognized by the Second Amendment and affirmed in cases like Bruen—is gutted when I can’t access the tools I need without government permission or when standard magazines are outlawed. The state claims this is ‘reasonable,’ but history shows no such restrictions existed when our constitutions were written. Back then, Oregonians relied on the best firearms they could get—multi-shot weapons included—without permits or capacity limits. Measure 114 doesn’t just burden my rights; it denies them, plain and simple.

This law passed because urban voters outnumbered folks like me, but it's us in the rural areas who bear the brunt. It's unconstitutional—not just under the Second Amendment, but under Oregon's own charter. I'm not a lawyer, but I know oppression when I feel it: when my voice is drowned out, my rights are trampled, and my way of life is criminalized, all under the guise of a safety measure that punishes the law-abiding while criminals ignore it. That's why I stand with those fighting to strike it down."