



# **Oregon Coalition**

*Against Domestic & Sexual Violence*

**Senate Judiciary Committee**

**Testimony Regarding SB 1172**

**March 18th, 2025**

*Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of the Committee,*

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding SB 1172, to express concerns about the impact that passage of this bill would have on victims of domestic violence.

The Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (OCADSV), founded in 1978 through grassroots organizers, works to end sexual and domestic violence in Oregon. We are a member-based organization of 56 member programs, supporting the rights of all to information, advocacy, crisis intervention, treatment, and services. Our membership are located across the entire state and are a key thread in the safety net working with their communities to provide a coordinated community response necessary to help prevent this violence, and to help victims and their families move towards safety and stability.

Gender-based violence is a state and national public health and safety epidemic. National surveys estimate that over a third of adults in Oregon experience domestic violence in their lifetimes, and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports that intimate partners are responsible for approximately one in five homicides nationwide.

Domestic violence and firearms are a lethal combination. From 2009 through 2019, Oregon's Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team identified a total of 393 fatal domestic violence incidents that resulted in 532 deaths. This is an increase from the eleven years between 2003-2014, when a total of 321 lives were lost. Deaths include victims, children and family members of the victim, responding officers, colleagues, and bystanders. Perpetrators also die, most commonly of self-inflicted gunshot wounds. The majority (at least 60%) of domestic violence deaths are by firearm. Many studies show that when firearms are in the hands of domestic violence abusers, there is a significantly greater danger of serious injury or death. Domestic violence assaults with firearms are 12 times more likely to end in a fatality.

SB 1172 would remove the crime of harassment from the list of qualifying misdemeanors, even if the harassment was committed through the use of offensive physical contact. Passage of this bill would leave Oregon law inconsistent with federal law, and more importantly, less protective for victims. OCADSV opposes any reduction in protection for victims.

Another important point to consider is that if this bill were to pass, Oregon would have to change many of its forms that provide notice of firearm prohibitions to certain Defendants. Under federal law, even if our state statute changed, Oregon would still have an obligation to provide defendants with notice of the federal prohibitions, or we would be at risk of losing important federal funding for victim services via the Violence Against Women Act:

The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2005 (VAWA), requires as a condition of eligibility for VAWA grants that the state certify that its judicial and administrative policies and practices include notification to domestic violence offenders of the requirements of the Brady firearm laws and any applicable related federal, state, or local firearms laws. Failure to notify in at least 90% of Oregon's domestic violence cases will cause Oregon to lose VAWA STOP grant funds.

Domestic violence fatalities perpetrated by offenders using firearms occur at an alarming rate. We urge the committee not to move backwards in ways that would harm victims. For all these reasons, we urge you to oppose this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your service to Oregon communities.

Sincerely,

*Keri L. Moran-Kuhn*

Keri Moran-Kuhn, Executive Director

The Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence