

Submitter: Sylvia Banks
On Behalf Of: myself
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3076
Firearm Dealer Licensing and Enforcement

Dear Chairman Kropf, Vice-Chair Chotzen, Vice-Chair Wallan, and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. My name is Sylvia Banks. I live in Albany.

I became a passionate advocate for gun violence prevention following the death of my dear, sweet grandson, Micheal. Micheal died by suicide nearly 9 years ago at the age of 10, and the lives of all who loved him have been forever altered.

Micheal was a bright, caring, compassionate kid. He loved sports, especially baseball and basketball, and was really good at them. He also loved tractors. Nothing would ever lead anyone to believe he was a suicide risk, but he took his own life with a gun that was stored in the top of his parents closet, loaded and ready to protect his family in case of an intruder. The real danger to the family came from that loaded gun, not from some unknown potential intruder.

Nothing can bring our sweet Micheal back, but I can lift my voice in the effort to prevent unnecessary deaths from happening in the future.

I am here today to ask you to support HB 3076 - the Firearm Dealer Licensing and Enforcement bill. Firearm dealers are the first line of defense against gun trafficking. Yet, they are one of the least-regulated businesses in our state. From 2017-2021, more than 26,000 firearms were recovered at crime scenes in Oregon and more than 55% of those firearms were purchased from licensed firearms dealers.

Like other states in the region, Oregon should create a state firearm dealer licensing and inspection program to ensure dealers are securing their inventory against theft, maintaining sales records to aid investigations of gun crimes, and training their employees to look for signs of straw purchases. As it sits right now, gun dealers operate with few regulations. All other industries - food trucks, beauty salons, nail shops, etc. - are inspected. We must ensure the most deadly industry is held accountable to basic business standards. The ATF is not able to do their job and the state must fix this.

Far too many people are losing their lives to gun violence in this country. In Oregon, more than 650 people die each year. States with gun dealer licensing have reduced gun trafficking by 70% and gun homicides by 36%. We need to do more to curb the

epidemic of gun violence. Please join me in supporting common gun legislation by voting for HB 3076.