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On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3076

I strongly oppose Oregon House Bill 3076, which mandates the Department of Justice to study a state gun dealer licensing program. While presented as a neutral study, this bill is a thinly veiled step toward imposing unnecessary regulations on law-abiding gun dealers and, by extension, infringing on the rights of Oregonians. Here's why this proposal is misguided and should be rejected.

First, Oregon already operates under a robust federal framework for firearm sales. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) oversees Federal Firearms Licensees (FFLs), requiring background checks, record-keeping, and compliance with strict regulations. Adding a state-level licensing layer duplicates effort, wastes taxpayer resources, and burdens small businesses without clear evidence of need. National data shows that licensed dealers are not the primary source of crime guns—most stem from illegal trafficking or theft, areas this bill ignores.

Second, the bill's premise assumes a problem that lacks substantiation. Proponents may claim it's "just a study," but the intent is obvious: paving the way for more restrictions. Oregon's gun violence rates are often mischaracterized; per the CDC, our firearm homicide rate is below the national average. Studies like those from the Rand Corporation find no conclusive link between dealer regulations and reduced crime. Why fix what isn't broken?

Third, this bill threatens economic harm. Many gun dealers in Oregon are small, family-run businesses. Additional licensing would impose costs—fees, compliance, and time—that could drive them out of business. In rural areas, where dealers serve hunters and sportsmen, this could limit access to a constitutional right. The state should focus on supporting, not strangling, local economies.

Fourth, HB 3076 erodes Second Amendment rights. The right to keep and bear arms includes the right to acquire them. Over-regulating dealers creates a chilling effect, reducing availability and affordability of firearms for law-abiding citizens. History shows that incremental laws—like this "study"—often lead to broader restrictions. Look at California: its dealer licensing regime has shrunk the number of FFLs while doing little to curb violence.

Finally, the bill diverts resources from real solutions. If the goal is public safety, why not target enforcement against straw buyers, felons, or mental health interventions? A 2021 DOJ report found 85% of crime guns come from unlicensed sources—street deals, not dealers. Studying a redundant licensing scheme distracts from these root causes.

I urge lawmakers to reject HB 3076. It's a solution in search of a problem, risking rights and resources for no proven gain. Oregonians deserve better than symbolic

gestures that burden the innocent while ignoring the guilty. Focus on enforcing existing laws, not layering on more bureaucracy. Respect our Constitution, our businesses, and our common sense.