

ALLIANCE FOR A  
**SAFE OREGON.**  
ACTION

March 20, 2025

**To:** Chair Kropf, Vice Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, and House Judiciary Committee Members

**From:** Asianique Savage  
Director of Metro Violence Prevention  
Alliance for a Safe Oregon Action

**Re:** Support for HB 3076

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Chair Kropf, Vice Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Asianique Savage. I am Director of Metro Violence Prevention with the Alliance for a Safe Oregon Action. We are a nonprofit organization on a mission to end gun related tragedies and build communities where all Oregonians feel safe and have opportunities to thrive.

Our team and our supporters are very diverse. Veterans who have lost friends to firearm suicide. Black and brown Oregonians who have lost family members to firearm tragedies. Young people who want to focus on school lessons rather than school safety. And gun owners who are steeped in the traditions of responsible ownership. Our work focuses on advancing evidence-based policies to reduce firearm tragedies in Oregon.

In my role as Director of Metro Gun Violence Prevention, the one consistent question that was always asked – whether by survivors of gun tragedies, parents, law enforcement, community organizations, schools – is why are there so many guns on the street and where are they coming from? Their questions make sense as data shows from 2019 through 2023,



27,765 firearms were recovered and traced in Oregon. Let me repeat that: 27,765.

To answer the question of why there are so many guns, our organization conducted an extensive analysis of records from the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) we were able to obtain a list of federally-licensed gun dealers in Oregon that were subject to ATF investigations because they had an unusually high number of firearms that were linked to criminal investigations. Through a FOIA, we also were able to review all FFLs that had compliance violations in Oregon in 2022 and 2023. In addition, the ATF provided us information on total overall inspections for new FFLs, as well as total compliance inspections.

Our research showed that Oregon firearm dealers are the primary source of crime guns recovered across the state, not just in the metro area – a finding that runs counter to the common assumption that guns used in the commission of a crime are trafficked from other countries or across state borders.

There are three main ways illegal guns are showing up:

Primarily, we found crime guns come from trafficking or straw gun sales from dealers which you will hear more about today. The data is backed up by community testimonies. We heard stories of women going into gun stores and buying guns for their boyfriends who were prohibited purchasers, with the male clearly picking out the gun and the girlfriend being allowed to purchase it on his behalf.

Second, we saw in the data examples of dealers who are bad actors. In fact, ATF the inspection reports show a dealer who is still operating in

# ALLIANCE FOR A SAFE OREGON. ACTION

Oregon after being recommended for license revocation. And, our interviews with community members uncovered stories of that same dealer engaged in very questionable behavior.

One the ground insights from interviews, combined with the ATF data show, dealers who are bad actors can sell firearms to prohibited individuals, not report the sales – which today, law enforcement would have absolutely no way of knowing happened – and later just mark it as “missing inventory.”

While only a small fraction of dealers are likely intentionally bad actors, fully 30-50% of dealers show ATF violations when inspected. We need to take this data and these concerns seriously.

And there is a third category that is also equally important: Theft from gun dealers. You often hear about theft from individual firearm owners from cars or trucks for example, but for guns used in crime and trafficking, there are actually far more firearms stolen from gun dealers than from private individuals.

Here are just a few examples:

- In Portland, 47 guns were stolen from a pawnshop after five thieves broke in.
- In Bend, a man broke a window at a gun dealer, reached inside, and took a short-barrel rifle with a green-dot sight system and a silencer.
- In Roseburg, a man walked into a retailer and stole multiple firearms right off the shelf.
- In Beaverton, a thief broke into a pawnshop and stole 20 semi-automatic pistols.
- In Eugene, a man asked to see a handgun at a gun shop and then fled with the gun in hand.

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- In Woodburn, a man used a blowtorch to break into a farm store and steal two AR-15-style assault rifles.

Under HB3076, gun dealers would be required to implement basic theft prevention measures: inventory security controls, exterior building security such as grates over windows, working deadbolts or steel doors, alarm systems and security cameras.

Many other industries in Oregon that are far less deadly have far stricter requirements. In other states, like Illinois, gun theft from gun dealers dropped 92% when these kinds of security measures were implemented, keeping illegal guns out of crime. We should have these requirements in place in Oregon gun shops.

Our goal in supporting this policy is to improve community safety by reducing the flow of guns from Oregon gun shops into the hands of people who seek to do harm to others. Our goal is to save lives.

Thank you for your time.



# ILLINOIS STATE POLICE

## NEWS RELEASE

*Brendan F. Kelly - Director*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 23, 2025

**CONTACT: ISP Public Information Office**

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### **GUNS STOLEN FROM FIREARMS DEALERS DROPS FOLLOWING ILLINOIS STATE POLICE INSPECTIONS**

**SPRINGFIELD** – Since the Illinois State Police (ISP) began conducting inspections of Federal Firearms License (FFL) dealers, the number of guns stolen from dealers has decreased. In 2024, the number of firearms stolen from FFL dealers in Illinois dropped almost 80% compared to 2023, and 92% compared to 2022.

“Five years ago, I signed a bipartisan law to combat illegal gun trafficking—and the data ISP released today demonstrates that state oversight works,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “Too many Illinoisans know the pain of gun violence and the added security measures enforced by ISP are ensuring that guns don’t fall into the wrong hands.”

“Stemming the flow of stolen guns used in crime is one way we are fighting gun violence,” said ISP Director Brendan F. Kelly. “Inspections, which ensure firearm dealers have security measures in place, reduces the number of guns stolen often later used to commit violence, and this effort appears to be producing good results.”

To help address the problem of illegal firearms, the General Assembly passed the Firearm Dealer License Certification Act ([430 ILCS 68](#)), which went into effect January 18, 2019. Under the Act, each certified FFL dealer was required to have a video security system by January 2, 2021. To help ensure dealers complied, ISP began conducting site visits in 2021, and inspections in 2022. Since the implementation of the Act, but specifically since ISP inspections began looking at security measures, the number of firearms stolen from dealers has dropped.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Firearms Stolen<sup>1</sup></u>
2020	291
2021	100
2022	103
2023	39
2024 <sup>2</sup>	8

Today’s announcement arrives a week after ISP released the [2024 interstate shooting data showcasing a 31% decrease in shootings](#), compared to 2023. ISP’s continued dedication of resources and enforcement actions are effectively reducing the illegal possession of firearms and potentially related gun violence, keeping roads and communities safer statewide.

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<sup>1</sup> ATF data - <https://www.atf.gov/resource-center/data-statistics>. Burglary, Larceny, Robbery

<sup>2</sup> Preliminary data not finalized.

# Where are all the guns coming from?

An Analysis of  
the Links  
Between  
Oregon Gun  
Dealers  
and Firearms  
Used in the  
Commission of  
a Crime

2024



# About Us

The Alliance for a Safe Oregon connects people from across the state — including survivors of gun-related tragedies, gun owners, rural and urban residents, veterans, doctors and nurses, first responders, and local community members and leaders — in a collective effort to create safer communities for everyone.



In a state where firearms are in about 50% of households and an important part of many families' lives, we believe it's possible to respect firearm ownership while also improving community health and safety for the long term.

[www.alliancesafeoregon.org](http://www.alliancesafeoregon.org)


# Background

Public safety remains a top concern for Oregonians, particularly as gun-related violence has escalated across the state. Firearm homicide in Oregon has increased 172% over the past decade, a trend accompanied by a rise in the number of firearms associated with crime.

This report examines the flow of firearms from federally licensed gun dealers in Oregon to crime scenes within the state and offers a comparative perspective to better understand factors that may contribute to this trend.

Information sources for this report include publicly available data from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), a review of ATF data made available via a Freedom of Information Act request from Brady United Against Gun Violence, a survey of news coverage and informational interviews with firearm dealers, law enforcement, and former gang members.

As Oregon explores solutions to reduce gun violence, one of the most urgent questions is, Where are all these crime guns coming from? This analysis finds that the majority of firearms recovered by law enforcement as part of criminal investigations and traced to their original owner were sold by nearby federally licensed gun dealers in Oregon.




**“Portland is just awash in guns in the hands of the wrong people.” FBI Special Agent Kieren Ramsey, former Portland Bureau Director**



# Executive Summary

- An analysis of federal ATF data shows that Oregon firearm dealers are the primary source of crime guns recovered in Oregon, contradicting the belief that guns used in the commission of a crime are trafficked from other countries or across state borders.
- Because federal oversight of gun dealers is chronically underfunded, the average gun dealer is inspected only once every 10 years, despite the fact that nearly half of inspections find violations.
- The lack of state-level regulations for Oregon's 2,100 gun dealers means there are no basic security standards for inventory control, security and employee training.
- Frequent instances of straw purchases and other risky and illegal behaviors, coupled with retail theft from gun shops, provide a steady stream of firearms into the illegal market.
- Records obtained by Brady show that a minority of Oregon dealers are disproportionately supplying Oregon's crime guns, underscoring the need for sufficient gun industry oversight and enforcement.
- Research shows that states with state-based licensing and inspection requirements for gun dealers are succeeding in cracking down on this illegal gun trade, lowering rates of crime gun trafficking and reducing firearm-related deaths.



“Community safety is paramount to Portlanders. ‘Safe’ is the most common word they use to describe the city they want Portland to be in 20 years. The perceived lack of action on crimes and public safety contributes to the belief that city government is ineffective.”

Oregon Values and Belief Center, 2024

## What is a ‘crime gun’?

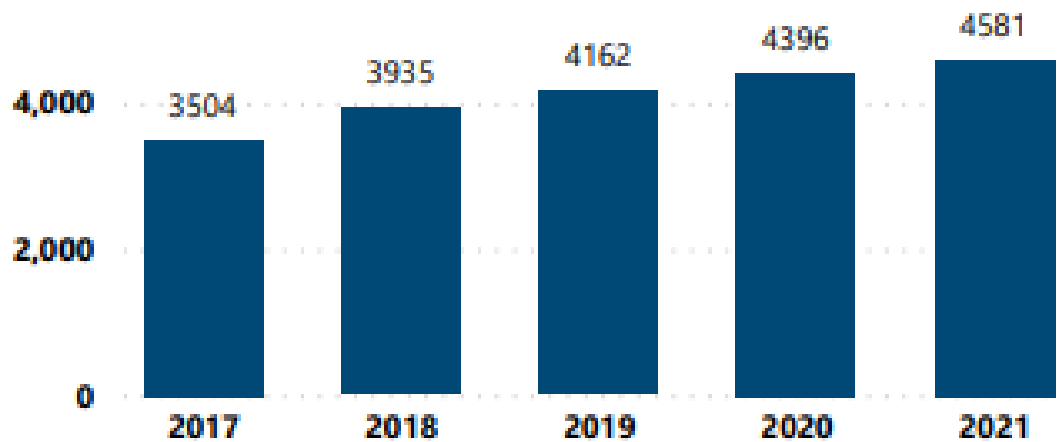
A crime gun is a gun found at the scene of a crime, suspected to have been used in the commission of a crime, or was purchased or possessed unlawfully. Using serial numbers, law enforcement often traces these guns to their original point of sale to understand how they got into the wrong hands and where they originally came from to help prevent future crimes. In Oregon, many, but not all, firearms found at crime scenes are traced to their original point of sale.

## The volume of guns used in the commission of crimes in Oregon

A comprehensive review of available data makes one thing clear: Guns used in the commission of a crime in Oregon originate primarily from local gun shops.

According to federal ATF data, in the five-year period between 2017 and 2021, law enforcement officials recovered and traced 26,046 crime guns within Oregon, an average of 100 crime guns recovered every week for five years.

1 **Crime Guns Traced to a Known Purchaser by Year**



Of these, law enforcement traced 19,501 to a known purchaser. And in 14,502 of these instances, the crime gun was originally purchased from a licensed firearm dealer in Oregon. In most of these instances, the crime gun was originally purchased within 25 miles of where it was recovered as part of a criminal investigation.

## **74.4% of crime guns traced to a known purchaser were originally purchased at in-state gun dealers.**

Furthermore, over 50% of shootings and firearm homicides in Portland are unsolved. Instances of shootings where no firearm is recovered significantly outnumber those where a crime gun is recovered. As such, this data only accounts for a portion of the actual crime gun usage — meaning Oregon’s crime gun problem is worse than the data shows.

## **Weaknesses in federal oversight of gun dealers**

To legally engage in the business of selling firearms in the United States, individuals or businesses must apply to be a federal firearms licensee (FFL) through the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. But years of underinvestment from the federal government, coupled with a massive increase in gun sales nationwide, have sharply limited the agency’s capacity to enforce its own regulations.

On average, gun dealers are inspected once every 10 years, despite the fact that nearly half of all ATF inspections result in violations.<sup>2</sup> Common violations include failing to report sales of multiple handguns, selling to people self-identifying or appearing to make a prohibited purchase, failing to report missing firearms, and failing to conduct background checks.<sup>3</sup>



Even when gun dealers are found with repeated violations, their licenses are only very rarely revoked, allowing those with significant violations to continue operating with little more than a warning. Furthermore, audits from the U.S. Department of Justice show the ATF is out of compliance with its own regulations.<sup>4</sup>

While a number of states have enacted state-level regulations for federal firearm licensees, gun dealers in Oregon face no state oversight of the industry.

**On average, ATF  
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# How does so much Oregon gun shop inventory end up in the wrong hands?

## Analysis of the flow of firearms from Oregon gun shops to local crime scenes

Oregon's crime guns appear to enter the illegal market through several channels, including straw purchases, thefts from dealers, and possible collusion by a small fraction of dealers. Evidence suggests that the weakness in federal oversight and the total lack of state-level oversight may facilitate these patterns.

**1) Straw Purchases and Trafficking:** A straw purchase involves a buyer who can pass a background check acquiring a firearm on behalf of another individual who is prohibited from owning the firearm or with the explicit intent to resell the firearm in the illegal market.

Examples of illegal straw purchases of firearms in Oregon include the following:

- **Sixty-four firearms purchased through straw sales trafficked to gang members in the Portland area.** Between April 2020 and September 2021, Edward Charles Green legally bought 64 firearms from gun dealers, which were then sold or traded to local Blood gang members. Only 12 of the firearms have been recovered.

Green often bought multiple guns at once, a sign of firearm trafficking,<sup>5</sup> including 46 firearms from a single dealer.

- **One hundred fifty high-powered assault rifles trafficked from Oregon to Mexico.** The 51-year-old leader of a local gun trafficking cell, David Acosta-Rosales, bought and smuggled nearly 150 high-powered assault rifles to the Jalisco New Generation Cartel in Mexico. Acosta-Rosales recruited straw purchasers to buy the rifles at gun stores in the Portland and Salem areas. He would then obliterate serial numbers on the rifles before managing their transfer to a courier for shipment to Mexico.<sup>6</sup>
- **Portland gang member used text messages to acquire firearms illegally.** Anthony Devalin Brant Jr., a member of a Portland street gang, exchanged text messages to arrange illegal firearm purchases. He sought handguns, known in slang as “hand thangs,” with no preference for whether the firearm had a serial number, indicating a lack of concern for traceability. Brant was later found with a stolen 9mm linked to two Portland shootings, which he acquired through this illegal market. According to The Oregonian, the federal case against Brant was his fourth prosecution involving guns.<sup>7</sup>



**Oregon gun dealers are not required to provide employees with training to prevent straw purchases or gun trafficking, despite the clear warning signs of such activity. Recognized red flags are the purchase of two or more of the same handguns within 30 days and suspicious behavior, such as one person paying for a gun while another individual completes the background check.**

2) **Theft from Gun Shops:** Theft from gun dealers is a frequent source of crime guns, with the ATF reporting 83 incidents of theft with hundreds of firearms stolen from FFLs from 2017 to 2021. Stolen firearms often resurface with serial numbers obliterated, complicating law enforcement efforts to trace them. In recent years, Oregon has seen thefts involving multiple firearms from a range of sources, from gun stores to pawnshops. Many stolen guns have subsequently been linked to criminal activities as well as international trafficking.



Theft from gun dealers, outdoor retailers, and pawnshops puts communities at risk. Below is a sampling of the ongoing and increasing theft from dealers across the state:

- In Portland, 47 guns were stolen from a pawnshop after five thieves broke in with a sledgehammer.<sup>8</sup>
- In Bend, a man broke a window at a gun dealer, reached inside, and took a “Noveske short-barrel rifle with a green-dot sight system and a silencer.”<sup>9</sup>
- In Roseburg, a man walked into a Bi-Mart and stole multiple firearms off a shelf.<sup>10</sup>
- In Springfield, teenagers broke into a pawnshop and stole five handguns.<sup>11</sup>
- In Grants Pass, a man crashed a pickup truck through the doors of a gun shop and made off with firearms.<sup>12</sup>
- In Beaverton, a thief broke into a pawnshop and stole 20 semi-automatic pistols.<sup>13</sup>
- In Eugene, a man asked to see a handgun at a gun shop and then fled with the gun in hand.<sup>14</sup>
- In Woodburn, a man used a blowtorch to break into a farm store and steal two AR-15-style assault rifles.<sup>15</sup>

Researchers for this report traveled to a variety of federally licensed firearm dealers across Oregon and found unsecured firearm storage in a number of gun shops. Examples include weapons leaning against floors and counters at entryways, handguns stored in open-front cases and many types of firearms stored unsecured on open shelving.

## Insights from interviews

Key themes emerged from our informational interviews with law enforcement, former gang members, and gun dealers:



## Prevalence of firearms

Consistent across all interviews was an emphasis on the high number of illegal firearms available, in particular in the greater Portland metro area and in Salem.

**“In my day, no one had any ammo, and it was hard to get a gun. Now everyone — even kids — has AR weapons and clips. Where are they coming from? We need to get real about figuring that out.”** (Violence interrupter/former gang member)

**“I am afraid for my children every day. They attend a PPS middle school, and there have already been incidents involving students having guns on school property.”** (Community leader)

## Known bad actors have a big impact on flow of guns

Interviews with community leaders and former gang members identified a small number of dealers who are bad actors. Two gang members described how a “well-known” gun dealer will collude with gang members. The gun dealer will sell guns to gang members and either allow these firearms to be “missing” from their inventory or later report them stolen.

**“What scares me is that the youth these days have way more access to firearms and are engaging in criminal activity rapidly. What’s sad is that some of the gun stores in Portland are aware of straw gun purchases and simply don’t care.”** (Violence interrupter/former gang member)

**“I have made straw purchases, and the dealership knew, and they still sold the guns to me.”** (Partner of a former gang member)

While a very small percentage of firearm dealers are responsible for the vast majority of crime guns, these dealers account for a high volume of firearms in our cities.

**“It just takes one or two bad actors in the metro area to have a huge impact on the number of guns in Portland.”** (Law enforcement)

## State licensing of firearm dealers

Already, 15 states, including both Washington and California, have implemented various dealer licensing requirements, inspections and accountability standards. These often include requirements for enhanced record keeping, background checks for employees, more inspections and more frequent reporting for firearm thefts.



In Oregon today, there are no state policies requiring gun dealers to track inventory or implement basic security measures, such as security cameras or storage requirements that prevent access to remove inventory.

The shortcomings in federal regulation, oversight and inspection of gun dealers have led a number of states to implement state-level gun dealer licensing policies to achieve a higher level of accountability in the industry.

Evidence suggests that states with licensing and inspection requirements for gun dealers have lower rates of crime gun trafficking and reduced firearm-related deaths.

In states with strong gun dealer regulations and oversight, gun trafficking is 64% lower.<sup>17</sup> Strong dealer licensing and inspections are associated with a 36% reduction in rates of gun homicides.<sup>18</sup> Further, dealers that are noncompliant with inspections and regulations have been shown to nearly double the neighboring communities' risk for gun homicides.<sup>19</sup>

**Strong dealer licensing and inspections are associated with a 36% reduction in rates of gun homicides.**

## Recommendations for Oregon policymakers

Oregon is home to 2,100 federally licensed firearm dealers, 57% of which are residential addresses.<sup>20</sup> While Oregon actively regulates other industries, the state lacks meaningful oversight of its gun dealers.

This analysis indicates that Oregon would benefit from enhanced state-level oversight of gun dealers. A review of state policies across the country provides insight into the components of this kind of regulatory framework:

- 1) **State Licensing:** Implement a licensing requirement for gun dealers with annual reporting to monitor compliance.
- 2) **Inventory Control:** Require inventory tracking and reporting.
- 3) **Security and Storage:** Mandate secure inventory storage practices\* and the use of security cameras at the point of sale to deter theft.
- 4) **Employee Background Checks and Training:** Require background checks for all employees involved in firearm sales and training to recognize and prevent straw purchases and trafficking with clear protocols for reporting suspicious activity.

As part of implementation, the following should be considered:

- **Small Business Engagement:** Develop small business training or grant programs to support smaller gun dealers seeking to meet new requirements and make upgrades.
- **Industry and Law Enforcement Engagement:** Bring together law enforcement leaders and federal firearm licensees with strong, ethical business practices to ensure successful implementation.

Finally, state and local law enforcement policies surrounding firearm trace requirements need further review. Law enforcement should be incentivized to collect and report on annual data regarding where and how guns are entering our communities.

\*Oregon's child access law today requires firearms to be sold with a trigger lock or other locking cable, but there are no requirements for storage of inventory behind bars or in safes, etc., which allow easy access for criminals to break in and steal firearms as well as ammunition.



## Comparing Oregon to New Jersey<sup>21</sup>, a state with a strong firearm dealer licensing policy

- In Oregon, approximately 6,134 crime guns were recovered per million residents between 2017 and 2021.
- In New Jersey, about 2,315 crime guns were recovered per million residents in the same time frame.

This means that Oregon has a crime gun rate per capita 2.65 times higher than New Jersey.

Not only does Oregon have a higher rate of crime guns per capita, but also a much larger portion of those traced guns were purchased within the state.

- Of the traced crime guns, 74.4% in Oregon were originally purchased from in-state dealers.
- In New Jersey, only 18.2% of traced crime guns were purchased in the state.

# Conclusion

This report underscores the potential benefits of adopting state-level measures to manage the flow of firearms and address public safety concerns. By exploring licensing, inventory control, and security measures, Oregon has the opportunity to reduce the number of crime guns entering its communities and enhance public safety.



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# Our Mission

The Alliance for a Safe Oregon is on a mission to end gun-related tragedies and build communities where all Oregonians feel safe and have opportunities to thrive.

# Our Values

We're practical and proactive, developing programs and supporting policies based on evidence, guided by healthcare experts, grounded in real-world experiences, and designed to save lives.

We partner with the people most likely to experience gun-related tragedies — including Black and Brown Oregonians, rural residents, tribal community members, firearm owners, veterans, and young people — to understand where and how our work can make the biggest difference.



## **Additional Resources**

ATF Oregon FOIA Request Data, publicly available here:

<https://brady-2-stage.s3.amazonaws.com/Public-Version-Demand-2-Letter-Sheet-March-11.xlsx>

Gun Store Transparency Project

<https://gunstoretransparency.org/?state=OR&table-page=1>

ATF Trace Data Oregon

<https://www.atf.gov/resource-center/firearms-trace-data-oregon-2021>

ATF Trace Data New Jersey

<https://www.atf.gov/resource-center/firearms-trace-data-new-jersey-2021>

Oregon Firearm Death and Injury Rates

<https://visual-data.dhsoha.state.or.us/t/OHA/views/FASTER1000/ExtendedDashboard>