

Submitter: Jordan Wales

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB429

I write in opposition to Senate Bill 429, which mandates a 72-hour delay on firearm or unfinished frame/receiver transfers, even after the Oregon State Police have approved the required background check. While the aim of enhancing public safety is commendable, this legislation introduces a mandatory waiting period that is neither evidence-based nor practically justified.

At its core, SB 429 seeks to impose a fixed temporal barrier on firearm transactions, but it does so indiscriminately—applying the delay even in cases where the state has already verified that the individual poses no legal risk. The implication is that time, rather than due process or objective criteria, is the primary safeguard. This is a deeply flawed premise. Public policy should be driven by evidence and effectiveness, not arbitrary timelines.

The existing background check system is already designed to prevent prohibited individuals from acquiring firearms. When the Oregon State Police issue an approval, it signifies that the purchaser has passed all legal thresholds. To require an additional three-day delay in the absence of any new or disqualifying information is redundant. It burdens lawful citizens without advancing public safety in a meaningful way.

Moreover, the bill fails to account for urgent, real-life scenarios in which immediate access to a firearm may be critical. Individuals facing credible threats—such as survivors of domestic violence or stalking—may find themselves defenseless during this mandated delay, despite having passed a background check. In such cases, the delay not only lacks justification but could actively place lives at risk.

From a policy standpoint, the efficacy of waiting periods is far from conclusive. While some studies have explored their potential impact on impulsive acts of violence or suicide, those findings are context-dependent and do not necessarily apply to a state like Oregon that already mandates background checks for all sales. Without compelling data that SB 429 would reduce harm, the state should be cautious about restricting a constitutional right through legislative guesswork.

Economically and logistically, this bill introduces complications for licensed dealers. Mandating that firearms be held post-approval increases the risk of theft, loss, and inventory mismanagement. It also shifts liability onto businesses that are already compliant with existing laws. For small or rural gun shops, this could represent a significant operational burden.

On a broader level, the passage of SB 429 sets a troubling precedent. It normalizes the idea that government may delay the exercise of constitutional rights without individualized cause. This principle, if extended to other rights—such as speech, due process, or assembly—would be seen as plainly unacceptable. The Second Amendment should not be treated differently.

In conclusion, SB 429 does not offer a smart or effective solution to gun violence. Instead, it relies on delay as a proxy for diligence, ignoring the real-world implications for both public safety and civil liberties. Rather than layering additional barriers onto a functioning system, lawmakers should focus on strengthening enforcement of existing laws, improving mental health access, and targeting criminal misuse of firearms—not lawful possession.

For these reasons, I urge you to oppose SB 429.