

Supporting Testimony of Paul Kemp

Thank you, Chairman Kropf, Vice-Chairs Chotzen and Wallen, and the members of the Committee, for holding this important hearing on HB 3076 – Relating to Gun Dealer Licenses.

My name is Paul Kemp. I've been an Oregon resident since 1985. I am a gun owner and have both handguns and rifles. I am also a founding board member of Gun Owners for Responsible Ownership.

This is a critical policy that will prevent firearm tragedies and save lives here in Oregon.

All of us should be safe from violent gun crimes in our neighborhoods, no matter our race, income, or zip codes. We have laws and regulations for operating motor vehicles, and safe food handling laws and regulations for grocery stores and restaurants to keep us healthy, we ought to have firearm dealer regulations to keep us all safer.

Holding gun dealers to basic standards of safety and theft prevention is critical to the broader effort to prevent gun tragedies and protect our communities. 17 other states have enacted gun dealer licensing laws. Plus, research shows gun dealer licensing reduces gun diversions for activity by 60% and homicides by almost 40%. Given that reports show in Oregon almost 75% of roughly 26,000 guns recovered in crimes from 2017 to 2021 were bought from in-state firearm dealers.

However, this is an issue I care deeply about because my family has been deeply affected by a gun tragedy. Over the last 13 years as I've advocated for improving gun safety laws here in Oregon, this is one more tool in the toolbox to stop preventable firearm tragedies.

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Today, the ATF has poor leadership at the helm due to the current sitting president who panders to the firearm industry. The ATF has also been chronically underfunded and understaffed, so the ATF cannot provide regular inspection of Oregon's gun dealers. The state must make up for these federal agency shortcomings to protect our residence. We can't rely on a federal agency that is only inspecting Oregon gun dealers once a decade and even when they are found to have significant violations they are often not being shut down. Gun dealers play a critical role and should be held responsible for fostering a culture of responsible gun dealing, purchasing, and ownership.

Again, we have many businesses such as pharmacies, liquor stores and food trucks throughout the state of Oregon that can comply with various laws and inspections that are aimed at protecting the public, why are we making an exception for gun dealers?

Passing HB 3076 will make our Oregon communities safer places to live, work, learn and play. I urge you to vote yes on HB 3076.

Thank you.

Paul Kemp

Happy Valley