

Submitter:

Keith LaHaie

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB697

Dear House Committee on Judiciary,

Please reject this damaging bill which is clearly an unconstitutional infringement on Second Amendment rights. What exactly is it intended to accomplish?

Unsurprisingly, our soft-on-crime Legislature, who can't seem to solve any real crime problems, is again intent on making felons out of law abiding Oregon gun owners – but this time, you're focused on our younger citizens.

Dangerous criminals are being turned out of our jails and prisons, and our streets are flooded with the mentally ill and drug addicted, which further endangers the population. So in response, you attack young firearms owners? Wow. This bill, coupled with the many others currently on the docket in this Legislative session make it clear that our state's political class wants the law abiding disarmed and unable to protect themselves from the real crime epidemic in this state. "Death by a thousand cuts," that's for sure.

Supporters of this measure will claim that those under 21 "have not reached their full maturity or intelligence." Yet, in this country, an 18-year old can enlist to fight and die for their country, can vote, and can enter into a legally binding contract. In this state, those under 18 make major medical decisions without the consent of their parents, and there are those in the Legislature who foolishly desire to extend the right to vote to 16 year olds! Where is the consistency?

Supporters of bills like this one will also use sensationalized terms such as "assault weapons," and "weapons of war" in their testimony, which clearly demonstrates their ignorance of this situation. The vast majority of rifles and other long guns purchased by 18-20 year olds are purchased for lawful recreational activities such as target shooting and hunting. At the same time, the young perpetrators of recent high profile mass shootings committed their atrocities not because of their youth, but because they were mentally disturbed. In every case, these people were known to the education establishment and law enforcement, who wouldn't or couldn't do anything to address it.

Rifle ownership by 18-20 year olds is currently not restricted in Oregon. This bill will instantly make the 18-20 owners of certain gun types into felons. You intend to fine them, and put them into prison. You intend to take their guns away. Why are the vast majority of law-abiding 18-20 year olds being punished for the transgressions of the very few?

Bills such as SB 697 are nothing more than pandering to a radical anti-gun constituency. Put your efforts into educating youth regarding gun safety. Institute gun safety classes in our educational system. Deal with youthful offenders and those who have demonstrated a history of violence and mental disturbance. Leave the rest of us alone!

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