

Submitter: THOMAS KARWAKI
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB243
SB 243 as amended Testimony Senate Committee on Judiciary
Submitted By: Thomas Karwaki, Portland Oregon

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher and Committee Members:

My name is Thomas Karwaki and I live in SD22 in North Portland near a sanctioned village for houseless persons that previously was an open air drug market with over 200 residents. I strongly support SB 643 and encourage you to pass it out of committee.

In 2021 while in my front yard, I was shot at and my car and trash bin were hit during a drive by shooting that sprayed more than a dozen bullets. The semi-automatic pistol, a Glock, was recovered later by police with a device or switch that made it operate like an automatic firearm. SB243 bans such devices and bump stocks from being sold. Such devices have been used in almost every mass shooting in the US in the past decade. The US Supreme Court recently upheld Federal regulations on such devices. SB 243 provides for state jurisdiction prohibiting such devices.

SB 243 also raises the minimum age to 21 to purchase and possess semi-automatic rifles commonly known as assault rifles. This makes the age requirement consistent with state law that requires someone to be 21 to purchase a handgun. It does not ban other firearms used for hunting. This provision is critical to reduce shootings by persons under 21 at schools and communities.

SB 243 also requires a 72 hour waiting period for all firearm purchases. Oregon has an extremely high rate of suicide by firearms. SB 243 would require a cooling off period before a person who purchases a firearm. If the committee feels a shorter time period such as 24 or 48 hours is sufficient, then I would support such an amendment.

SB243 also allows municipal governments to prohibit firearms in buildings and adjacent grounds if posted. Courts and elections offices are often the targets of actual or threatened gun violence.

Together these provisions would reduce the possibility of mass shootings and suicides in Oregon particularly those involving persons between 18 and 21 years of age.

I urge you to pass SB 243 out of committee.