

Submitter: Isaac O'Casey

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB243

I am a youth pastor in La Pine, a small rural community in Central Oregon. I have the privilege of partnering youth in our community with loving adult mentors who educate them in hunting and fishing. I've watched how young people come alive and are deeply fulfilled by playing a role in securing their food for their families through hunting and fishing. In rural communities, the provision of wild game is a sacred rite and transmission of the tradition to young people is critical to maintain this aspect of our culture. We cannot effectively mentor and train young people to hunt without their ability to learn to handle shotguns and rifles.

While all four components of SB 243 are problematic, the age restriction language contained in the bill would negatively affect our youth and young adult hunters and sport shooters. Restricting possession of semi-automatic rifles and shotguns fails to take into account the standard uses of semi-automatic shotguns in waterfowl, upland bird, and turkey hunting, as well as being a primary firearm of high school and collegiate sport shooting teams.

Additionally, due to the language stipulating that a firearm could only be transferred to a minor from a parent or guardian, firearms training and educational courses, such as the shotgun skills courses presented by Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, would no longer be able to provide temporary firearms to students under 21.

The age restriction language in SB 243 creates numerous barriers to entry for new youth and young adult hunters and sport shooters who want to participate in hunting and shooting activities and therefore I strongly oppose the bill.

Isaac