



March 27, 2025

Senator Floyd Prozanski, Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary
900 Court Se. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: City of Eugene Supports SB 243 and -1 amendment

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee, this letter is submitted on behalf of the City of Eugene in support of Senate Bill 243 -1 amendment, specifically the 'Public Area Restrictions' contained in Section 7-10.

In 2021, under [SB 554](#), the Legislature provided similar protection for the restriction of firearms in public buildings to state owned and operated facilities, as well as schools and universities. Initially, local governments were included in the bill yet were removed from the final version. During the 2023 session, [HB 2007](#) brought forward the same protection for local governments that the state and school systems are provided in SB 554. Again, this bill did not advance. Hence, we are back in 2025 requesting that the state extend the same protections that the legislature, state agencies, school districts and commercial airports are entitled to under state law.

What is truly the 'Oregon Way' of Section 7-10 is that it extends the authority in alignment with the Oregon Constitution, extending Home Rule Authority to local governments. SB 473 -1 does not mandate that local governments prohibit firearms, rather it authorizes the governing body of a local jurisdiction to make that determination. There are likely cities and counties in Oregon that the governing body will not take this topic up and there are jurisdictions, like Eugene, that have been requesting this since 2021.

The City of Eugene operates numerous facilities open to the public that would benefit from greater security. Annually, hundreds of thousands of people visit City facilities such as the Hult Center for Performing Arts (in 2024-198,000 visitations), the Eugene Library System (in 2024-835,000 visitations), the Cuthbert Amphitheater (in 2024—48,000 visitations), and three community pools (in 2024-254,000 visitations). In addition to these facilities, the City owns and operates a number of Community Centers and Recreation facilities, providing year round programming for youth and children (in 2024-200,000 visitations). Lastly, the new Eugene City Hall is designed as a welcoming and safe place for the community to debate, inquire, provide comment, and enhance local democracy. Ensuring that the City Council can conduct open meetings in a safe manner is a core value of the Eugene community.

The City of Eugene recognizes the importance of local control for the safety and security of our employees, visitors, and the public we serve. The City continues to prioritize the health and welfare of our community and SB 243 -1 provides the Eugene City Council the ability to decide, at the local level, what common sense protections are appropriate for public buildings. The City urges you to support SB243 -1 amendment with a 'Do Pass' recommendation.

Sincerely,

Mayor Kaarin Knudson