

Submitter: Bethany Price

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB243

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I am writing to you today in support of SB 243 as a parent and a volunteer with Moms Demand Action, a grassroots movement fighting for gun safety. I live in a home where firearms are securely stored, unloaded, in a locked safe. Even though I grew up in Texas, and I know many responsible gun owners and hunters, I have also seen the finality of gun violence firsthand. My cousin Ted was taken by gun homicide. He was at a party, and someone who was intoxicated and angry went into their bedroom and grabbed a gun and attempted to shoot everyone at the party. Ted stopped him, but lost his life.

Although I grieve the personal loss of a family member to gun violence, my reasons for working for systemic reform extend to my concern for my community. Every day in my neighborhood I pass 3 heartbreaking memorials to neighbors who were murdered in broad daylight, traumatizing our small neighborhood in NE Portland. Recently, a gun battle (likely involving a rapid fire device that this bill would ban) again left NE Portland terrorized, again in the middle of the day, on the street I travel on by bike to the grocery store. I think of these senseless acts of violence everytime my 12 year old walks down the street. I refuse to accept that her future and her freedom should be curtailed by our society's failure to enact common sense gun violence prevention laws. I want nothing more than for my child to grow up in a culture that acknowledges the inherent dangers of guns and takes responsibility for addressing the violence we currently face every day.

I know that both my cousin and his best friend (my brother-in-law), both responsible gun owners, would rather Ted be alive and with us, and acknowledge nothing in this bill would prevent them from safely owning and using their guns. I appreciate the many reasonable and rational gun owners who are willing to address the problems we have in the system and join with survivors of gun violence to make change and protect human life. I support all of the components of this bill - to ban rapid fire devices (they did it in Alabama, we can certainly do it in Oregon!), raise the age for purchase to 21, establish a waiting period, and enable local government to ban weapons in sensitive places. All of these are reasonable steps to take, and I particularly look forward to taking my child to the Oregon Zoo without having to worry that someone is walking around with a gun in a crowd of children.

I believe that we can put the value of human life and our right to walk through life

without constantly wondering if yet another mass shooting is about to happen, above the complexity of implementing laws that will reduce gun violence. This bill calls for reasonable common sense action that will move us in the right direction and I ask for your support. Thank you.