

March 27, 2025

To: Chair Prozanski, Co-Chair Thatcher and members of the committee – thank you for the opportunity to address SB 243-1.

My name is Raquel Moore-Green, my family and I have called Salem home for the last 30 years. We have seen people come and go. We have shared the joys of family life as well as some of the darkest and deepest sorrows of life.

One of the darkest and deepest sorrows I carry is that of our beloved son in-law Pablo Nowell. Eight years ago our family lost a father, a brother, a son, and an uncle the day he took his life with a fatal dose of over-the-counter aspirin. I will repeat that – over-the-counter aspirin.

I have contemplated long and hard about coming before this committee as you attempt to stem the tide of suicide in Oregon.

Your laser focus on guns as the method by which to commit suicide is disingenuous and disrespectful to the thousands of Oregonians that have lost their loved ones by way of suicide to poisoning, hanging/suffocation, fall, sharp instrument, drowning, motor vehicle, and/or fire/burn.

The last time that OHA reported on the method of suicide was 2012. Since that time there have been no detailed reports providing the statistics on method of suicide.

In 2012 the age-adjusted suicide rate among Oregonians was 17.7 per 100,000, 42 percent higher than the national average.

The CDC reports Oregon's suicide rate today at about 19.3 suicides for every 100,000 people in Oregon. A 2.4 per 100,000 increase since 2012.

I submit that any increase is deeply troubling. The efforts that have been made to outlaw one method of suicide – firearms – not the other seven, yes seven methods to commit suicide is a disservice to Oregonians. This is not the whole truth about suicides.

Rather OHA, by not reporting and addressing the root cause of suicide has chosen to marginalize those precious loved ones lost to poisoning, hanging/suffocation, fall, sharp instrument, drowning, motor vehicle, and/or fire/burn.

Your discussion about reducing suicide to the restriction of guns is not about reducing suicide, it is about controlling guns, not behavior.

During my tenure in the Oregon House of Representatives, I served as vice-chair in the Behavioral Health Committee and one of my greatest regrets of not continuing that service

is the failure of this body to, as the late Honorable Mitch Greenlick so passionately stated “we need to create a behavioral health road map” addressing the chronic mental health crisis that continues to grow in Oregon.

I urge this committee and your colleagues through out this building to address the root causes of suicide. There will always be a method.

Thank you, rmg
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