



Oregon Pediatric Society

A Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Incorporated in Oregon

DATE: March 27, 2025

TO: Senator Floyd Prozanski, Chair; Senator Kim Thatcher, Vice-Chair;
and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Alanna Braun, MD, FAAP
Oregon Pediatric Society Board Member

SUBJECT: Support for SB 243

For the record, my name is Alanna Braun, MD. I am a pediatrician in Portland and a member of the board of the Oregon Pediatric Society, the state chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. I write today in strong support of SB 243, putting in place common sense firearm safety laws.

Since 2020, firearm-related injuries have been the leading cause of death in children and teenagers between the ages of 1 and 19. During my pediatric training, treating children for firearm injuries was far too common – many of these children died, and the children that survived (and their families) were never the same. Families live in fear when they send their children to school, because mass shootings in our communities have become so common. That we have come to expect active shooter drills as routine for our children now shows how completely we have failed them. As pediatricians we talk about the effectiveness of upstream or preventive policies: they cost less and do more good than downstream policies. We have seen in communities all over the US that downstream firearm safety policies like putting more guards around schools and installing more school metal detectors do not protect our kids. SB 243 proposes several common-sense upstream policies that would save countless lives in Oregon if implemented.

Semi-automatic rifles are commonly used in mass shootings. The federal age to purchase a handgun is 21, and yet, in Oregon, 18-year-olds can purchase semi-automatic rifles. Increasing the ownership age to 21 would be more in line with federal policy and better protect our children. Older adolescents (age 18-21) are known for impulsivity and risk-taking behaviors, and they are not ready for the responsibility of owning semi-automatic rifles. Similarly, rapid-fire devices – which turn these rifles into machine guns – have been recovered at some of our nation's worst mass shootings. There is no justification for these assault weapons in our communities. 17 states have implemented rapid-fire device bans, often with bipartisan support. Oregon's children deserve to have access to an education in safe communities, without fear of being gunned down, and caring for our children is a bipartisan value. As a parent and a pediatrician, I want for my child and my patients a state where our hearts don't stop



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every time we hear a notification of a school shooting – praying that it isn't our child's school, that it isn't happening in our community.

Another common-sense policy that would better protect our children from impulsive decisions is to enforce a 72-hour waiting period on firearm purchases. Suicide is often a very impulsive decision, and states that have implemented waiting periods have seen reduced rates of firearm suicide. Reducing firearm suicides can result in an overall 20 - 38% decline in suicide deaths because guns are the most lethal means used with suicide. These policies are not burdensome and save lives.

SB 243 is essential in making our Oregon communities safer for our children. When we have conversations about rights, it is essential to focus first on the right of our children to live in safe communities. To be free from the fear of being shot at school, or a mall, or a concert. This bill puts in place simple common-sense policies that would limit making firearms deadlier in our state and would improve the vetting process for people attempting to purchase these lethal means. It is essential that we uphold our obligation to our children and make our communities safer. The Oregon Pediatric Society and I urge you to vote yes on SB 243. Thank you for your consideration.