

Submitter:

Gregory McGill

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB243

I am writing to express my opposition to Senate Bill 243, which mandates the Department of State Police to conduct a study on the efficiency of firearm transfer criminal background checks. While I appreciate the intent to evaluate and potentially improve public safety processes, I have significant concerns about the implications, necessity, and potential outcomes of this legislation.

First, the current background check system in Oregon, administered under the federal National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) and state law, is already designed to balance efficiency with thoroughness. Requiring an additional study risks diverting limited resources—both financial and personnel—from the Department of State Police, which is already tasked with critical public safety duties. Without clear evidence that the existing system is failing in a way that this study would address, SB 243 appears to be an unnecessary burden on an agency that could better allocate its efforts elsewhere.

Second, I am concerned about the potential scope and intent behind this study. The bill's language does not specify what "efficiency" means in this context—whether it implies speeding up the process at the expense of accuracy or altering standards that could infringe on the rights of law-abiding citizens. Any study that might lead to recommendations weakening the integrity of background checks or, conversely, imposing more restrictive measures without public input would undermine trust in the system. Oregonians deserve clarity on how this study's findings might be used before it is authorized.

Finally, I question the practical value of this legislation. Studies alone do not guarantee meaningful action, and without a defined problem or goal, SB 243 risks becoming a symbolic gesture rather than a solution. If the concern is delays in firearm transfers, anecdotal evidence suggests these are often due to federal system issues outside Oregon's control—not state inefficiencies. If the goal is broader reform, this should be debated openly rather than delegated to a study with uncertain outcomes.

I urge you to consider the potential costs, ambiguities, and unintended consequences of SB 243. I respectfully request that you vote against this bill and instead focus on addressing any specific, documented issues with the background check system through targeted, transparent legislation if needed. Thank you for your time and consideration of my perspective as a concerned Oregon resident.