

Submitter: Matthew Leong
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB243

Senate Bill 243, as amended, creates unnecessary burdens on lawful firearm owners without delivering meaningful improvements to public safety. It imposes arbitrary delays, restricts rights in vague and expanding public zones, and invites inconsistent enforcement through local ordinances—all while doing nothing to deter criminals.

The bill mandates a minimum 72-hour waiting period for all firearm purchases, regardless of whether the buyer passes a background check instantly. This is a one-size-fits-all restriction that assumes every gun buyer is a potential threat. Oregon already requires comprehensive background checks. If someone is cleared, forcing them to wait three more days is punitive and unjustified. It's a policy rooted in distrust of responsible citizens.

This waiting period could have serious consequences for people in danger. Survivors of domestic violence or stalking may seek a firearm for immediate self-defense. Denying access for 72 hours—despite passing a background check—can leave vulnerable people defenseless. The state should not impose delays that endanger lives.

Additionally, the bill imposes disproportionate burdens on rural and working-class Oregonians. Many live far from gun dealers and must travel long distances or miss work to complete a purchase. Requiring two separate trips days apart adds logistical and financial strain. Rights should not be harder to exercise based on where you live or how much you earn.

The bill also expands the definition of “public building” to include commercial airport terminals and their grounds—a vague and overly broad addition. What constitutes “grounds”? Parking lots? Sidewalks? Nearby businesses? This ambiguity opens the door to accidental violations by law-abiding citizens, particularly concealed handgun license (CHL) holders who are among the most vetted and responsible gun owners in the state.

By removing CHL protections in more public spaces, the bill erodes the purpose of concealed carry licenses. These individuals have passed background checks and training. Taking away their ability to lawfully carry in more and more areas not only undermines their rights, it does nothing to stop those who carry illegally and with harmful intent.

Perhaps most concerning, the bill gives cities the authority to ban firearms in city-

controlled public buildings and make violations a Class C misdemeanor. This creates a confusing patchwork of laws across Oregon. A person could legally carry in one town and become a criminal by crossing a city line. Expecting citizens to know and navigate every local ordinance is unreasonable and invites selective or accidental enforcement.

None of these changes will deter criminals. People who use firearms to commit crimes do not follow background check procedures or waiting periods. They don't obey signs or city ordinances. The people impacted by SB 243 are the ones who follow the rules. This bill burdens the lawful without meaningfully addressing the unlawful.

If the goal is reducing violence or suicide, there are more effective approaches: invest in mental health services, improve access to voluntary gun storage programs, support community outreach, and strengthen enforcement of existing laws. These strategies address real problems without restricting rights or targeting responsible gun owners.

AGAIN, this bill does nothing to stop individuals with criminal intent. All it does is restrict the rights of law-abiding Oregonians.

Oregon deserves laws that are targeted, effective, and fair—not broad overreaches that make it harder for responsible people to defend themselves, protect their families, or exercise their constitutional rights.

For these reasons, I strongly oppose Senate Bill 243 and urge lawmakers to reject this bill.