

Submitter: Jenny Silberger

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB243

I am writing in support of SB 243, which I believe would lower firearm-related death and injuries in our state. As a citizen and a parent, I am especially concerned about the effects of excess access and careless use of firearms in our state.

Laws requiring waiting periods for firearm dealer purchases and raising the minimum age at which one can purchase a firearm reduce the use of firearms for a suicide attempt. I have witnessed a young person struggle with depression and suicidality and the difficulty their family had in limiting access to anything that might be used for self-harm. Given the lethality of firearms, it was lucky this family did not have a firearm in the home when this young person made an attempt at suicide. This young person has grown up since the events I am sharing and has become a healthy, capable, insightful young adult who is unlikely to ever experience suicidality again. With a suicide attempt using a firearm, recovery is less likely to be an option as 90% of such attempts are successful.

I also support public area restrictions on firearms. During the pandemic, one of my children was in high school downtown. The kids were encouraged to eat outside to reduce their risk of COVID. The school campus is also near shops and the students often go buy pizza or walk to the local museum. On multiple occasions during my child's time in school in the city, parents were notified that the children were all recalled into the school to ensure their safety while a firearm demonstration was occurring nearby. People wishing to assert their right to carry their firearm in public spaces and around unarmed members of the community were marching down the streets near my child's school. It shows a horrific lack of insight into the risk associated with firearms to carry them in a public space and around members of society who need protection as well as those who are simply going around their business and their workday. There is good evidence associating carrying firearms in public places with increased risk of firearm injury.

Please pass the important collection of policies included in SB 243 into Oregon law.