

Honorable members of the Oregon Senate Rules committee, I am writing to oppose SB 243.

None of the proposals in this bill will prevent crime or help law enforcement catch criminals. Instead, Section 3 creates both misdemeanor and felony non-violent possessory offenses. It is unwise to dedicate law enforcement resources to prosecuting non-violent possession charges when Oregon's courts are already overwhelmed with more serious cases. As an example of the strain that our judicial system is under, OPB published a March 13th article detailing that,

At the end of January, there were 4,178 individuals who didn't have an attorney statewide. The highest number of individuals in this situation are in Multnomah (1,172), Marion (756), Jackson (754), Washington (628), Douglas (253) and Coos counties (99). The numbers are constantly fluctuating, but the end-of-January numbers were an all-time high.

There were about 730 people who had been without representation for more than six months. Most of the people waiting for counsel are not currently in jail. But, at the end of January, there were 191 people in custody who didn't have an attorney.

The majority of cases are misdemeanors...

<https://www.opb.org/article/2025/03/13/oregon-counsel-unrepresented-attorneys-crisis-misdemeanors-felony-cases/>

SB 243 creates more crimes and will make the "unrepresented crisis" worse.

The waiting period in Section 2 will only inconvenience legal purchasers, particularly those in rural areas who may have to drive long distances to a dealer to complete a transfer.

Sections 4 through 6 expand the number of areas where concealed handgun license (CHL) holders are forbidden from carrying. CHL holders pose no threat to public safety in the locations added to the list of places where they may not carry. CHL holders have been carrying in these locations for years, so if a problem existed proponents would cite examples. When a CHL holder commits a violent offense, the appropriate action is to prosecute the individual, not punish all CHL holders by forbidding carry in more locations.

Please vote no on SB 243.

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