

Submitter: Jack Applegate
On Behalf Of:
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Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB243

Opposition Statement Against Proposed Anti-Gun Legislation in Oregon As a disabled veteran who has served our nation and resides in Oregon, I stand in firm opposition to the proposed anti-gun legislation that threatens the constitutional rights guaranteed by the United States and Oregon Constitutions. These bills, presented under the guise of enhancing public safety, undermine the Second Amendment and Article I, Section 27 of the Oregon Constitution, which affirm the right to keep and bear arms. This statement articulates my opposition, emphasizing the importance of preserving these fundamental liberties, the practical implications of such laws, and the need for alternative approaches to address public safety concerns effectively.

Constitutional Protections and Individual Rights

The Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution declares, "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." Similarly, Article I, Section 27 of the Oregon Constitution states, "The people shall have the right to bear arms for the defense of themselves, and the State." These provisions enshrine an individual's right to self-defense, a principle upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in *District of Columbia v. Heller* (2008) and *McDonald v. City of Chicago* (2010). As a veteran, I have defended these freedoms, and I view any attempt to restrict them as a violation of the very principles I fought for. The proposed bills, which may include restrictions on firearm types, magazine capacities, or expanded background checks, encroach upon these sacred rights. Such measures disproportionately impact law-abiding citizens, particularly those like myself who rely on firearms for personal protection due to physical limitations. Oregon's constitutional framework explicitly recognizes the right to bear arms for self-defense, a necessity for many disabled individuals living in areas where immediate law enforcement assistance may not be available.

Practical Implications of Anti-Gun Legislation

The proposed legislation is likely to have unintended consequences that undermine rather than enhance public safety. For disabled veterans and other law-abiding Oregonians, firearms provide a critical means of self-defense. Restrictive laws would disproportionately disarm responsible citizens while criminals, who disregard legal constraints, remain unaffected. In rural Oregon, where law enforcement response times can be lengthy, the ability to protect oneself is not a luxury but a necessity. Moreover, enforcing these measures would strain Oregon's law enforcement resources, diverting attention from proactive crime prevention, mental health initiatives, or combating illegal firearms trafficking. The economic impact on Oregon's firearms industry, including manufacturers and retailers, must also be considered. Overregulation could lead to job losses and economic hardship, particularly in communities reliant on these businesses.

Alternative Approaches to Public Safety

Rather than pursuing restrictive gun laws,

Oregon's lawmakers should address the root causes of violence through targeted, evidence-based solutions. Mental health crises contribute significantly to violent incidents, and investing in accessible mental health services, early intervention, and community support would yield greater results than broad firearm restrictions. Enforcing existing laws against illegal firearms trafficking and promoting responsible gun ownership through education and training programs are additional steps that respect constitutional rights while enhancing safety.

Preserving Oregon's Heritage Oregon's history is rooted in individual liberty and self-reliance, values that resonate deeply with veterans and citizens alike. The proposed bills threaten to erode these principles, undermining the trust between citizens and their government. By defending our constitutional rights, we honor Oregon's legacy.