

Submitter: Gerald Freeman
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB243

Testimony in Opposition to SB 243
Submitted to the Oregon House Committee on Rules

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing today in strong opposition to Senate Bill 243 as currently written. While it is presented under the banner of “community safety,” this bill fails to deliver meaningful solutions to the root causes of gun violence or hold actual criminals accountable for their actions.

Instead, SB 243 targets law-abiding Oregonians, especially those who responsibly exercise their constitutional right to keep and bear arms. Expanding local authority to restrict concealed handgun license (CHL) holders from carrying in public buildings does not deter crime — it only disarms those who are statistically the least likely to commit it. Criminals, by definition, do not follow laws or gun-free zone restrictions.

Moreover, banning so-called "rapid-fire activators," which are already addressed under existing federal law, serves as political theater rather than a productive tool for public safety. These symbolic restrictions will not prevent violent crime, will not reduce gun trafficking, and will not stop felons from obtaining weapons through illegal means.

If the legislature is serious about improving safety, it should invest in:

Enforcing existing gun laws and prosecuting gun crimes

Supporting law enforcement with tools and staffing

Expanding mental health and addiction services

Addressing gang activity and repeat violent offenders

SB 243 does none of these things. It is a distraction, not a solution.

I urge you to reject this bill in its current form and instead prioritize policies that address the real drivers of violence in our communities. Let's focus on enforcement, accountability, and root-cause solutions — not symbolic legislation that punishes the responsible while ignoring the dangerous.

Thank you for your time and consideration.