

Submitter: Dennis Witmer
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB243

??? Opposition to SB 243 – Excessive Measures That Miss the Mark

1. Overreach and Constitutional Concerns

SB 243 bundles several major gun-control measures into a single bill—72-hour waiting period, CD age restriction, rapid-fire device ban, and expanded gun-free zones—without separate votes, diluting transparency .

Questionable constitutionality: raising the purchase age to 21 penalizes lawful adults (18–20) who vote and serve in the military . As one Reddit commenter noted:

> “Raise the minimum age for legal firearm ownership to 21, even for adults who vote, serve in the military, and live independently...”

2. Unnecessarily Punitive Waiting Period

A mandatory 72-hour wait delays access—even after background checks have cleared. Victims of violence or stalking may be left defenseless .

Delays and fees may erode trust in legal transactions, pushing people toward illicit channels—a point repeatedly raised by gun-rights advocates .

3. Vagueness Creates Legal Traps

The bill expands “gun-free zones” to include adjacent grounds, an undefined category that may cover sidewalks, parking lots, etc., putting lawful carriers at risk of unintentional violations .

Local governments and school boards can enact patchwork bans on CHL holders, risking chaotic enforcement and confusion .

4. Fails to Address Root Causes

Between 2019 and 2023, 77% of Oregon’s gun deaths were suicides—yet SB 243 focuses on access restrictions, not mental-health care or enforcement of existing laws .

Reddit voices emphasize:

> “If your goal is to reduce gun deaths... it would be better to focus on mental health... about another 30%... gang related.”
“Measures like M114, SB243... only make it more difficult for responsible gun owners...”

5. Economic and Rural Equity Impacts

Rural dealers and customers will be disproportionately affected—facing burdensome delays, extra fees, and long drives to permit offices .

Small business advocates warn this may drive customers away and threaten local commerce .

? Recommendations for Responsible Reform

Approach Details

Separate the Issues Vote on each measure individually—e.g., waiting period, bump-stock ban—to allow transparent debate.

Mental Health First Fund mental-health services and suicide prevention programs—responsible gun use doesn’t begin with prohibition.

Enforce Existing Laws Focus on prosecuting criminals, improving storage laws, and strengthening theft recovery—most deaths involve unlawfully obtained guns.

Clear Definitions & Fair Access If waiting periods apply, tie them to mental-health holds. Define “adjacent grounds” precisely. Ensure rural residents have efficient permit access.

?? Conclusion

While SB 243 may be well-intentioned, in its current form it's overbroad, constitutionally questionable, and misaligned with the real drivers of gun deaths in Oregon. Instead of erecting barriers for law-abiding citizens, lawmakers should focus on targeted solutions: mental-health funding, law enforcement, better education, and transparent legislation. I urge you to oppose SB 243 and demand a smarter, more balanced path forward.

Done