



# Oregon State Sheriffs' Association

*Conservators of the Peace*

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**March 31, 2015**

**To: Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee**

**From: John Bishop, Executive Director  
Oregon State Sheriffs' Association**

**Re: Position on SB 941**

Chair Prozanski and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, for the record my name is John Bishop and I am the Executive Director of the Oregon State Sheriffs' Association. This letter is on behalf of the Oregon State Sheriffs' Association to express our decision as an Association not to take a position on SB 941. It should be noted many individual Sheriffs oppose this bill, and we would like to express a few concerns that have been raised:

- While we believe SB 941 will prevent some from purchasing a firearm they are not legally entitled to own and possess, we aren't convinced that the bill will prevent criminals from obtaining access to firearms.
- As law enforcement resources are stretched thin, especially in rural parts of Oregon, we are concerned about the potential increased workload created when a background indicates that a person is trying to obtain a gun illegally.
- We are concerned by the impact that increase background checks will have on our already overloaded firearm background system.
- We are concerned that the background check requirement will be onerous and potentially expensive for law-abiding citizens. We are concerned about the limited availability of dealers in small communities and the fees that dealers they may charge citizens if they see these transactions as a direct competition to their own gun sales.

We applaud the Legislature's work to provide on-going and additional mental health investments for local communities. We believe that these investments go much further to reduce gun violence and to keep those suffering from mental health crisis out of the public safety system. We encourage you to focus efforts in the areas that have the most impact on the issue at hand. Ultimately, we don't believe that Senate Bill 941 will keep most criminals from gaining access to guns and we are concerned about the potential impact on the law-abiding citizens we serve and protect.