

4/1/15

To follow up on my testimony this morning regarding Senate Bill 941, as the two minutes I was allowed was not sufficient to present all the information, I believe SB 941 will place an unreasonable burden on the parties required to conduct the proposed background checks: the Oregon State Police Firearms Unit, and the dealers.

The Oregon State Police Firearms Unit is not able to process the background checks that are currently required by law in a timely manner. While a background check initiated before noon is usually processed in five to ten minutes, a background check run in the afternoon takes about forty-five minutes to an hour, and a background check ran at a very busy time can take up to two hours. Requiring the Firearms Unit to process background checks for private party transfers will slow the system down even further.

The printed information that I handed out to the committee shows the results of background checks that were not initially approved by the Firearms Unit. The number of delayed responses only includes delays that were for more than thirty days—the total number of delayed responses is higher. When a transaction is delayed, we have to hold the firearm until an approval is given. We currently have forty-eight guns that we are holding for delayed responses; one transaction is from more than a year ago. If we are processing private party background checks as well as our actual sales, we will be responsible for holding even more guns. If a private party transfer is denied, we will be required to run a background check on the seller before we can return the gun to them.

The canceled responses listed are from delayed transactions where the customer decides not to wait for an approval and requests a refund.

Because of the current amount of time it takes to process a background check for our customers, I don't know if Northwest Armory will be able to offer to process the additional background checks required by SB941 for private parties. Does the committee have any estimate of how many private party sales will require background checks under the proposed bill?

I would welcome any questions the committee might have regarding this, or any other proposed legislature regarding firearm sales by Oregon dealers.

Sincerely,

Karl Durkheimer
Northwest Armory