

Dear Mr. Rhoades,

Per Senator Thatcher's office, I understand that the public has until 5:00 P.M. today to submit their testimony on SB 941. Hopefully this testimony reaches you in time to be included.

Unfortunately, as we have seen many in other states, universal background check laws do little, if anything, to actually curtail criminal activity involving guns. It is no coincidence that the areas of this country with some of the largest amount of firearms-related crimes also have some of the strictest gun control measures in place. The common refrain is that police are available to protect us, and that citizens don't really need guns — except that the Supreme Court itself has ruled that law enforcement has no duty to protect individuals.

Instead, this legislation, and others like it, merely creates a new class of criminals out of hardworking citizens who choose to responsibly exercise their Second Amendment rights. Needing to add multiple exceptions and provisions to SB 941 for various unforeseen scenarios ultimately proves the fact that this legislation does nothing but burden the already law-abiding. Further evidence of this includes the many statements recently made by law enforcement agencies — the very agencies that would be forced to deal with enforcement of these issues.

If anything, spending should instead be increased for certain areas of criminal justice and mental health; not wasted on partisan politics being driven by outside lobbyist groups with large bankrolls. Strengthening our response to gang activity, human trafficking, drug crimes, and providing mental health treatment for those who need it most should be the priority here.

It also bears repeating that activities such as hunting and sport shooting significantly contribute to the state's economy, including the funding of conservation efforts. Placing an additional strain on these sportsmen and women will force them to go elsewhere, leaving another budget void to be filled. In fact, many hunters travel into Oregon from outside of the state, simply to hunt and enjoy the vast, amazing resources and activities that we have to offer. This is yet another source of tourism revenue, including everything from airline tickets to permit fees to hotel and lodge stays. Again, the potential to negatively affect this exists as well, especially in rural areas already hard-hit from the economic downturn and recession.

Finally, it is quite interesting how the public commentary period for this legislation has been limited to less than a week's time. Rushing this legislation through to accommodate biased politicians and special-interest groups, instead of everyday citizens, is quite telling. As Oregonians, we deserve better than this.

Sincerely,
Chad DiGennaro
Tigard, OR