

Mr. Rhoades,

SB 941 may appear to some individuals as a step in the right direction regarding curbing gun violence. That idea is not correct at all. As long as we, as both a state and nation, continue to ignore our serious problems regarding mental health care, nothing will change. Whether homicidal violence occurs involving a firearm or without, it is still going to occur with or without a background check on a firearm. I am not aware of the statistics, but it has to be only a fraction of a percent of all firearms owned in Oregon that are used in any type of crime. If the firearms and the legal owners of them were the real problem, we would have hundreds of shootings each day based on the number of firearms in Oregon. We don't have that problem because nearly all legal firearm owners in Oregon are not plagued by mental issues that would make them more prone to violence.

We have had background checks for several years for all firearm purchases at gun shows. As a member of a group who hosts a gun show annually, I can tell you that these checks are taken seriously and happen for all purchases. Many people who are uninformed believe that person to person sales must occur in the parking lot at these events and circumvent the background check. This is absolutely untrue. Many people believe that you can purchase a firearm off of the internet without a background check. This is absolutely untrue. All firearms must be shipped to an FFL holder, period. Anyone shipping a firearm to someone other than an FFL holder is violating federal law.

We have plenty of laws regulating firearms at both the state and federal level already in place. We don't have a firearm problem, we have a health problem. A criminal breaking the law to acquire a firearm to then go break more laws will not be deterred by SB 941.

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