

April 22, 2015

To: Honorable Val Hoyle, Chair
House Rules Committee

From: Lt. Wendi Steinbronn, President
Portland Police Commanding Officers Association

Re: Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 941 A

Members of the Portland Police Commanding Officers Association submit this testimony in support of Senate Bill 941.

As members of law enforcement know all too well, gun violence is not just an urban problem, or a mass-shooting problem—it is, in fact, a nationwide epidemic. Eighty-six Americans are killed with guns every day. Whether you live in a big city or a small town, we all watch and read the news about gun violence in our streets, schools, shopping malls, places of worship—and wonder if it could happen in our communities.

Here in Oregon, law enforcement officers have responded to mass shootings at Clackamas Town Center and Reynolds High School. And nearly every day, Oregon law enforcement officers have guns pointed at us by dangerous felons. This legislative session, you have the opportunity to help reduce crime and save lives by passing criminal background checks on all gun sales. Nothing can stop all gun violence, but background checks are proven to help prevent crime and save lives. In states with background checks on all handgun sales, 48% fewer law enforcement officers are killed with handguns in the line of duty.

SB 941 means that private sales and transfers will go through the exact same background check process that has been working well for gun dealers and their customers for years. It is a simple way to help keep guns out of the hands of criminals. Background checks are quick and easy, and go hand-in-hand with Oregonians' Second Amendment rights: with rights come responsibilities.

We urge you to support SB 941 and close this dangerous loophole.