

Dear Members,

I strongly oppose SB 941. I'm in good company. Several sheriffs have gone on record either as opposing it or with declaration that they will not enforce it. Several county commissions have also gone on record opposing additional gun-control measure of this sort. At least three recall petitions directed at the supporters of SB 941 have already been filed. The handling of this bill in the Senate Judiciary Committee has been characterized by various legislators as having been outrageous. The vast majority of law-abiding gun owners are opposed, as are the organizations that represent them. Yes, I'm in good company.

Even SB 941's supporters admit that this legislation will not, and would not have, prevented the sort of tragic events that are routinely cited as demonstrations of its need. Nor can the bill's supporters offer any examples of bad behavior that this bill will actually prevent. Nor can they seriously argue that the bill will prevent future crime.

Think about it. Murder—whether it's a one-on-one murder, shooting up a school, or shooting up a shopping center, or staging a drive-by killing spree—is already illegal. Transferring a firearm to a felon is already illegal. Being a felon in possession of a firearm is already illegal. It is already illegal for felons to attempt to buy a firearm. Selling more than a certain number of guns within a year is already a violation of federal firearms regulations. Menacing with a firearm is already illegal. Violation of restraining orders is already illegal. And so on and on and on . . .

Does anyone seriously believe that adding a misdemeanor into that mix will actually deter crime? Oh, please. No one can take that assertion seriously. Try to imagine it. A gang is on their way to a home invasion. But they decide against it because they'll have to commit a misdemeanor in order to obtain the shotgun they intend to take along. Really? If you buy that one, I've got land in Florida and a bridge in Brooklyn that I'd love to sell you.

What SB 941 will accomplish is a further invasion of privacy, add one more useless step in the private sale of firearms, and prevent any wide range of activities that are currently legal and well-advised. For example, if wish to store my firearms with a friend—say I'm going out of town for an extended period, or my house is being extensively remodeled and has crews tramping through it, etc.—SB 941 prohibits that activity. Why? No answer from the supporters. At the same time it allows me to loan a weapon to that same friend.

The huge inconsistencies within the bill itself ought to be enough to prevent its passage.

Further, SB 941 is a distraction from taking the hard choices that might actually improve public safety. Sen. Betsy Johnson in her April 17th opinion piece on Oregonlive summarized this situation perfectly.

Are there ways in which the objectives of SB 941 be accomplished without incurring is dangerous and harmful results? Yes, there are. Sen. Kim Thatcher offered a package of amendments in the Senate that would have achieved the same goal without creating undue problems and confusion. Her proposals weren't given the time of day.

Sadly, it appears that the purpose of SB 941 has NOTHING to do with public safety, that is, with actually preventing weapons from getting into the hands of people who will misuse them, and everything to do with some other objective.

There are a host of changes that could be made to the current situation that would improve public safety, that would improve firearms safety. (An improved economy, better firearms safety training, better mental health treatment, and so on.) Why are none of those proposals being given serious consideration? Why are law-abiding gun owners always on the top of the list of those to be blamed for weapons-related problems?

The answer, of course, is that the supporters of SB 941 don't care about public safety. Rather, they are riding a political hobbyhorse—one with lots of out-of-state money in its saddlebags—and are hoping to take the rest of Oregon along for the ride.

Please vote NO on this useless proposal. Please vote NO on SB 941.

Sincerely yours,

James Wilson
120 SE Mast Ave.
#16
Lincoln City, OR 97367