

Comments on SB 941 by Bob Karl, West Linn, OR: I have an extensive firearms background, including inventions, running shooting ranges, and running a handgun permit certification program for the Greenwich, CT police.

The introduction of testimony by distraught relatives of shooting victims is an example of the cynical promotion of one more law that would not have stopped the shooting incidents. Most of the testimony in favor of the bill was not even about the anticipated effectiveness, but was simply anti-gun-ownership rhetoric.

While supporters of this bill deny that the bill has anything to do with infringing on the right to own firearms, it's a simple fact that the majority of those -- such as Senators Prozanski and Burdick -- pushing this additional harassment of gun owners already have a well-established record of hostility to the basic constitutional rights of firearms owners.

Statistics on deaths related to firearms, owned by legitimate citizens, are vastly inflated by creative advocates for micro-managing citizens' lives. Just two examples:

- Firearms-related death statistics commonly include deaths of those killed by law-enforcement officers.
- Suicides comprise half of all firearms deaths. So anti-gun politicians commonly cite reducing suicides as a reason for harassing firearms ownership. While it's virtually impossible for a citizen in Japan to acquire a firearm, the Japanese suicide rate is double that of the US. They simply use an alternative method to kill themselves.

If we eliminate those two statistical components, motor vehicles are involved in far more deaths than are firearms.

Yet, there are no background checks required to transfer motor vehicles. Since motor vehicles are involved in far more assaults and homicides than are firearms, if the bill's sponsors really were interested in reducing injuries and deaths, and if they really believed that criminal background checks make sense in reducing crime, they -- long ago -- would have worked to require background checks for transferring motor vehicles... and that wouldn't be encroaching on anyone's constitutional rights.

Meanwhile, known violent felons -- already convicted and sentenced to long terms -- are prematurely recycled... let loose to again commit violent crimes upon an unsuspecting public. Why have the sponsors of this harassment of gun owners been party to allowing known felons to victimize the general public?

All of the firearms dealers who have testified have indicated that they have little interest in handling the transactions the bill requires, and that they oppose the bill. This means that it would be impossible for many such otherwise legal transactions to even take place in a timely manner. Moreover, the various shipping charges and transaction fees would amount to most of the value of the firearm being sold, placing an unreasonable burden upon the seller and buyers.

All of the above problems that the bill presents make it unworthy of passage.