

Kevin Herman

Oregon House of Representatives
Salem, OR. 97301

April 21, 2015

Dear Honorable Representatives:

SB 941

It has come to my attention the intentions of some of your colleagues to pass a universal background check law that would make it illegal for private gun sales to take place without a background check being conducted on the buyer. Although I live in Washington, I shop frequently in Oregon, as it is closer and more convenient to do so. I also work in Oregon, thus, I pay Oregon tax. I oppose SB 941.

When I purchase firearms in Washington, or transfer a firearm from an Oregon FFL dealer to a Washington FFL dealer, the dealer in Washington runs the check through the NICS which, as you know is ran by the FBI. I have had minimal difficulty with this process.

When an Oregon FFL dealer runs a background check, they do it through the Oregon State Police. It has turned into a long process for many people—including me. When I was 18 I behaved badly and was charged with indecent exposure. The charges were dropped soon after my arrest and after I had made amends to the victim and the Sheriff's deputy who made the arrest. When purchasing a rifle, I was delayed by the O.S.P twice because of this old arrest which still lingered in the system. I was delayed twice! I waited almost two months before finally calling Oregon Firearms Federation to ask for help, which they did.

I oppose this bill for a few reasons; none of which have to do with the act of actually going through a background check.

1. It's well known that there are rare circumstances of the O.S.P. following up on cases where a person who's attempted purchase draws a red flag and is prosecuted for attempting to buy a gun. Is that because they find there is no serious threat in many of these cases, or because they can't possibly be everywhere at once?
2. At what point is my right to bear arms being infringed? After one week; two weeks or a month? I waited almost two months, and the reason O.S.P. gave me was that they needed paperwork showing that a misdemeanor charge from that sixteen year old arrest had been resolved. It wasn't even a felony charge!
3. I see this bill not having an impact on anyone except honest gun owners who will have to be inconvenienced for no good reason. The large majority of gun violence occurs in the Portland Metro area, so why is it not being addressed at a local level and instead affecting people in all four corners of Oregon and beyond?
4. The final reason I oppose this bill is the most important: What new law will you impose on gun owners in the future? When will you be appeased? I believe this is just the beginning of a long road to making Oregon to look like other states where the Second Amendment is little more than an idea living in the past, and that after this law passes more will follow. In fact, there is already another gun control bill in the legislative process. I will write in opposition to that as well.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,
Kevin Herman