



April 14, 2017

TO: Honorable Sen. Prozanski, Oregon Senate Judiciary Committee

Chairman Prozanski and Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Oregon has the opportunity in 2017 to take an important step in preventing gun violence towards children and youth through the creation of an Extreme Risk Protective Order procedure. On behalf of the Oregon Pediatric Society board of directors, I write in support of **Senate Bill 868**, which would temporarily prohibit firearms possession by people at imminent risk of suicide or causing injury to others.

As I've learned as a member of the state's Suicide Prevention Alliance—tasked with advising on initiatives to implement the Oregon Youth Suicide Intervention and Prevention Plan—the overwhelming majority of gun deaths (83%!) in Oregon is self-inflicted. According to the Centers for Disease Control, suicide is the second-most common cause of death for Americans between the ages of 15 - 34.

The Oregon Pediatric Society trains child health providers on screening adolescents for depression and suicide risk, and referring them for appropriate treatment. The goal of physicians is to get patients the care they need before attempting suicide or homicide. However, ensuring that people do not have easy access to firearms during mentally unstable and aggressively threatening periods is critical. Ninety-five percent of suicide attempts by firearm are fatal, while those who choose other methods are more likely to survive. Temporarily limiting access to firearms for those in crisis can save child and adult lives.

An Extreme Risk Protective Order allows police, family, or household members to obtain court orders restricting firearms access for up to one year for persons exhibiting violent or dangerous behaviors. The individual subject to the order is guaranteed due process through our court system. Other states that have adopted Extreme Risk Protective Orders are seeing very positive results. Washington voters overwhelmingly adopted this policy last November through Initiative 1491. Connecticut's risk-warrant law shows that at least one life is saved for every twenty risk-warrants issued.

There is overwhelming evidence that links firearm access, personal crisis, and loss of life. The Oregon Pediatric Society urges the Oregon Legislature to adopt an Extreme Risk Protective Order policy this year, which will reduce the risk of gun suicide and violence, and start saving Oregonian lives.

Sincerely,

Julie Scholz, Executive Director