**Let’s Save Lives!**

**Let’s Save Oregon Lives!**

I hope we all can agree we should act on effective measures to save as many Oregonian lives as possible.  The latest posted numbers (reflecting 2020) from the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) indicate sobering statistics - Drug related deaths 900, Suicide 835, Transportation 579, Drunk Driving 185, Homicides 158.   Within these statistics are all factors (crisis, accident, mental illness, addiction, …) and methods (drugs, automobiles, firearms, …)  For each of these we need to drill into the true factors and causes to find effective preventative actions.

Today, I want to focus on a hot issue in our state – Ballot Measure 114.  Will BM114 save lives, or will BM114 cost lives? BM114 requires a permit to purchase and restricts magazine size to 10.

For focus, let’s reduce the statistics to just those where firearms were involved.  OHA statistics for 2020 indicate firearm involved Suicide (455) and Homicide (110) as clearly the top categories.  The 2021 numbers are higher, but not formally published.

How does BM114 impact Suicide and Homicides?

Over the last 2 years I have devoted my free time to suicide prevention.  I have had the opportunity to partner with local, county, state, and national health and suicide prevention agencies and organizations.    I have learned a great deal on the factors and lead a team on implementing groundbreaking prevention strategies, gathered from suicide prevention experts, to save Oregonian lives.   We are making great progress and being held as a model for other states.

Unfortunately, BM114 blocks these efforts as the permit to purchase disables the ability of a trusted friend to assist in proactively creating time and distance (key factors) for firearm owners.   This will cost Oregon lives!

On homicides we also look for patterns and strong data.  Standing out in the data are that 45% of homicides are within just the 3 counties connected to Portland (OHA data).  This led to a recent study, commissioned by the City of Portland, and reported in July of 2022, highlighting key issues.  Quoted directly from the study: “About 70% of victims and suspects had prior criminal justice system involvement.” And “Consistent with the national research, we found that social networks are a key predictor of risk of being involved in gun violence in Portland.” The study advocates “When implementing strategies to reduce gun violence utilize available data to focus on the largest known driver of gun violence.” and “Work with probation/parole on risk assessments for those most likely to be involved in gun violence.”

As per the study implementing programs to address these groups are key.  Assuming law enforcement is involved, I looked at their stance.   In the Oregon Voters Pamphlet, the Oregon State Sheriff’s Association and the Chiefs of Police Association were clear.  BM114 is not enforceable, even with adjustments to correct its many errors.   BM114 is unfunded and will pull funding from first responders thus making our communities less safe.

Again, BM114 will cost Oregon lives!

Considering the above, If I want to Save Oregon Lives, I must VOTE NO! on BM114.

What would you like to do..?

Kerry Spurgin

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