



## **SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE**

Salem, Oregon  
Oregon State Legislature

### **Press Release**

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CONTACT: [Amanda.Kraus@OregonLegislature.gov](mailto:Amanda.Kraus@OregonLegislature.gov)

Amanda Kraus, 503-986-1074

### **Bill to Protect Schools and Public Buildings Moves to the Senate Floor for a Vote**

SALEM – This morning, the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Measure 110 Implementation voted to send Senate Bill 554, which allows local jurisdictions to decide whether to allow guns in public buildings, to the floor of the Oregon Senate for a vote of the full chamber.

“In light of increasing violence and threats of harm by extremists, we cannot wait any longer to pass Senate Bill 554. The growing number of firearm purchases and applications for Concealed Handgun Licenses is concerning,” said Senator Burdick (D-Portland) who introduced Senate Bill 554. “This bill will allow local entities to determine if they should allow or disallow loaded firearms in their buildings or on their property. That way, the decision is made at the local level, and local leaders can choose what’s best for their own community.”

Under current Oregon law, concealed handgun license holders have an affirmative defense for the crime of possessing a firearm in airports and public buildings – including schools. Senate Bill 554 allows school districts and local governments to choose to remove that affirmative defense, effectively banning firearms on their premises.

“As former military, and a former law enforcement and corrections officer, I am proud to Chief Sponsor Senate Bill 554. In those roles, I saw time and again that the presence of firearms among civilians did not prevent violence, but made the situation more dangerous,” said Senator James Manning Jr. (D-Eugene). “Even if it is a ‘good guy’ with a gun, that gun can be misused, or used against the ‘good guy.’ Limiting the places and buildings where we allow firearms is a commonsense measure which will improve Oregonians’ safety, especially the safety of government employees who work on behalf of Oregonians in every corner of this great state.”

Senate Bill 554 will also require public buildings that have opted out of allowing firearms to publicly post a notice at all entrances with a universally-understood symbol to notify those seeking entry to the building.

Senate Majority Leader Rob Wagner (D-Lake Oswego) is also a Chief Sponsor of Senate Bill 554. “As a father of teenagers, the conversations around safety in schools and the risk of gun violence are all too frequent. Guns have no place in schools. Senate Bill 554 takes a reasonable and commonsense step to improve the safety of our kids. I’m proud to support this bill,” said Senator Wagner.

In recognition of the realities of gun violence, Senate Bill 554 saw broad support from community members and stakeholders. The measure passed out of committee on a party line vote, and now moves to the Senate Floor for consideration.

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