

Gun bill: ‘This is no time for an emotional response’

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Police to notify other law enforcement when they learn someone has tried to obtain a gun illegally.

Brown, a Democrat, described the bill as bipartisan, and in the House, the bill did receive support from both parties. However, in the Senate, the 16-13 vote was split along party lines with one exception.

Twelve Republicans and one Democrat — Sen. Betsy

Johnson, D-Scappoose — voted against the measure. Johnson, who has voted against gun control in the past, said she opposed the bill because it would give estranged dating partners a way to seek revenge. “This is no time for an emotional response,” she said.

Under existing law, only convicted abusers in domestic relationships, such as a spouse, former spouse, co-parent or live-in partner, are prohibited from having guns. The bill

would expand the ban to stalkers and current and past intimate partners of all kinds.

Sen. Herman Baertschiger Jr., R-Grants Pass, said existing law already bans abusers who have been in intimate sexual relationships with their victim from buying or possessing guns. He said the language in the bill is full of “ambiguity” and would likely result in other loopholes.

A study by the Oregon Department of Justice showed

that more than 16 Oregonians were killed in nine separate domestic violence incidents between Dec. 25, 2016, and Jan. 16, 2017. Not all of the fatalities involved romantic relationships. Laws aimed at keeping guns from abusers have reduced homicides of intimate partners, according to recent research published in the American Journal of Epidemiology.

Anne S. Teigen, a criminal justice expert with the National

Conference of State Legislatures, told the Associated Press that the bill’s final approval in Oregon marked the first time since the Florida shooting that a state legislature has passed a gun-control measure.

Giffords, the anti-gun violence group led by former U.S. Rep. Gabby Giffords of Arizona, who was shot in an assassination attempt in 2011, praised Thursday’s Senate vote. “Oregon is continuing to step up to keep guns out of the

hands of dangerous people,” said Robin Lloyd, the group’s government affairs director. “Guns and domestic violence are a particularly lethal combination that have deadly consequences. Once this bill is signed loopholes will finally be closed in state law that let domestic abusers possess guns.”

The Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group and Pamplin Media Group.

Sheriff: School officer never went inside to confront gunman

By **BRENDAN FARRINGTON, GARY FINEOUT and TERRY SPENCER**
Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — The armed officer on duty at the Florida school where a shooter killed 17 people never went inside to engage the gunman and has been placed under investigation, officials announced Thursday.

The Valentine’s Day shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School by a gunman armed with an AR-15 style assault rifle has reignited national debate over gun laws and school safety, including proposals by President Donald Trump and others to designate more people — including trained teachers — to carry arms on school grounds. Gun-control advocates, meanwhile, have redoubled their push to ban assault rifles.

The school resource officer at the high school took up a position viewing the western entrance of the building that

was under attack for more than four minutes, but “he never went in,” Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel said at a Thursday news conference. The shooting lasted about six minutes.

The officer, Scot Peterson, was suspended without pay and placed under investigation, then chose to resign, Israel said. When asked what Peterson should have done, Israel said the deputy should have “went in, addressed the killer, killed the killer.”

A telephone message left at a listing for Peterson by The Associated Press wasn’t immediately returned. An AP reporter who later went to Peterson’s home in a suburb of West Palm Beach saw lights on and cars in the driveway, but no one answered the door when AP attempted to get further comment.

The sheriff said he was “devastated, sick to my stomach. There are no words. I mean, these families lost their children. I’ve been to the funerals. ... I’ve been to the

vigils. It’s just, ah, there are no words.”

There was also a communication issue between the person reviewing the school’s security system footage and officers who responded to the school.

Coral Springs Police Chief Tony Pustizzi said during a Thursday news conference that the footage being reviewed was 20 minutes old, so the responding officers were hearing that the shooter was in a certain place while officers already in that location were saying that wasn’t the case.

“There was nothing wrong with their equipment. Their equipment works,” Pustizzi said. “It’s just that when the person was reviewing the tape from 20 minutes earlier, somehow that wasn’t communicated to the officers that it was a 20-minute delay.”

Pustizzi said the confusion didn’t put anyone in danger.

Shooting suspect Nikolas Cruz, 19, has been jailed on 17 counts of murder and has admitted the attack. He owned a collection of weapons.



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Warrenton Fiber’s Claremont Road mitigation project created about 50 additional acres of wetlands by replacing a dike and tide gate with a bridge.

Port: Wetland mitigation credits are required to offset development affecting wetlands

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The Port is in the permitting phase of a project to realign a taxiway on the southern side of runway 8-26 and bring the World War II-era airport up to FAA’s geometric standards. Permitting and construction are mostly funded by FAA grants.

“In order to get through the planning and permitting phase, we need to have

the credits in hand,” Gary Kobes, the Port’s airport manager, told the Port Commission on Tuesday.

Wetland mitigation credits are required to offset development affecting wetlands.

Typically, the purchase of credits doesn’t happen until the construction phase, Kobes said. But the relocation of the taxiway is expected to impact Vera Slough, a tidal inlet

winding from Youngs Bay south along the western edge of the airport, triggering an environmental assessment.

Warrenton Fiber in 2012 breached a dike on Claremont Road near the John Day River, replacing it and a tidal gate with a bridge and inundating about 50 acres of land upstream. The project also entailed converting an invasive-dominated plant community to a native, freshwater tidal wetland.

Rat wars: Astoria baits 38 manholes every month to keep the rat population down in the sewer system

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items they wanted to include in a city ordinance hewed closely to what the county officials had suggested.

By the 1950s, Astoria declared itself victorious over the rats. In 1950, E.T. Christenson, a member of the mayor’s rat control committee and plant manager of the Astoria-Pillsbury flour mill, reported it was rare to see a rat in the city dump or along the waterfront. The next year, the head of a Portland firm Astoria contracted with for rat control work estimated the rat population in Astoria had been reduced to 50 percent.

“But the fight against rats must be maintained steadily and conducted everywhere in town,” he said. “If efforts were relaxed in just one downtown block, so that the rats could find food and harborage, they would increase amazingly.”

‘Go with the territory’

Rat drama has died down over the decades, but aspects of the war continue.

Rats are the No. 1 pest A&A

Pest Control technicians deal with on the coast, followed closely by ants and wood-boring beetles. The company is based out of Portland but has an office in Clatsop County.

Reports of a rat infestation usually begin with a frantic call, technician Enrique Nieves said. When he goes to inspect a house, his first step is to try and figure out how rats are getting in.

“My rule of thumb is the rule of thumb,” he said. “If your thumb can fit in a hole, a rat can basically squish down and fit into that hole.”

Astoria baits 38 manholes every month to keep the rat population down in the sewer system. One residence contacts the Public Works Department nearly every month about rat problems. Nelson suspects something there continues to attract rats. When there are complaints about rats in a specific area, city staff will bait the nearest manhole.

The city’s building staff occasionally gets complaints from neighbors of abandoned or empty houses and properties attracting vermin. There

is little Ben Small, Astoria’s building and code enforcement official, can do other than contact the property owner and remind them it is their responsibility to make sure a building is closed up and secure.

There is no way to estimate the size of Astoria’s rat population. All Nelson knows is that one month, a block of rat poison at one manhole might be completely untouched. The next month, three blocks might disappear. Sometimes, a rat will suddenly run in front of cameras the city uses to inspect sewers and groom itself before scampering farther up the line.

There are stories about people who heard splashing in their bathroom and found a rat swimming in the toilet, and county health inspectors occasionally find evidence of rats in the restaurants they inspect. But that’s Astoria.

“Anywhere you’ve got water and harborage then there’s going to be rodents,” said Meredith Riley, a county environmental health inspector. “They just kind of go with the territory.”



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Left to Right: Unsung Heroes Steve Johnson, Barbara Acuna and Tammee Saulsbury



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