

House OKs gun storage combined with partial ban on public places

By PETER WONG
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — The Oregon House, on a largely party-line vote, approved a bill that combines storage requirements for firearms with a narrower ban on guns in some public places.

The 34-24 vote on Thursday, April 29, sends the revamped Senate Bill 554 back to the Senate, which can vote to accept the changes — and send it to Gov. Kate Brown — or reject it and force a joint panel to negotiate the differences.

Support came exclusively from Democrats. Three of the 37 Democrats voted no: Paul Evans of Monmouth, David Gomberg of Otis and Mark Meek of Oregon City.

Opposition came largely from Republicans, mostly from rural areas. Exceptions were from Clackamas County, where both Democratic Rep. Meek and Republican Leader Christine Drazan of Canby spoke against it. No Republicans voted for it.

“This is a misguided proposal that will do nothing to affect gun violence in our state while criminalizing our most law-abid-



Jonathan Levinson/Oregon Public Broadcasting, File
Sgt. Brandon White of the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office puts a cable lock on a training Glock on Jan. 14, 2019, in Portland.

ing citizens,” Rep. Bobby Levy, R-Echo, said in a press release. “Meanwhile, the majority party is ignoring the serious mental health crisis among our kids that only gets worse the longer they are out of school. Science supports getting kids back to school. That’s what we should be doing instead of passing legislation that directly challenges Supreme Court rulings and violates constitutional rights.”

Two Republicans were excused.

The vote took place after close to three hours of debate.

The bill does not have an emergency clause, which means that if it becomes law, opponents have 90 days from the close of the 2021 session to obtain 74,680 voter signatures to force a statewide election. The number is set by the Oregon Constitution, which specifies 4% of the votes cast for governor in the most recent election in 2018.

Part of the revamped bill proposes requirements for firearms locks and storage already written into a separate House bill, which the House sent back to committee.

Under the revamped bill, guns must have trigger or cable locks, be stored in a locked container or in a gun room. An offense is a Class C violation, which carries a maximum fine of \$500, unless someone under age 18 obtains access, in which case it is a Class A violation with a maximum fine of \$2,000. No jail time is imposed for violations.

The bill also requires prompt reporting of stolen firearms. Its first sections are named in honor of Cindy Yuille and Steve Forsyth, who died on Dec. 11, 2012, in the Clackamas Town Center shootings. The assault-style weapon used to kill them was found to have been stolen.

The other part of the revamped bill narrows the scope of a firearms ban included in the original SB 554, which passed the Senate on March 25.

The changes would still bar the estimated 300,000 holders of Oregon concealed-handgun licenses from bringing firearms into some public places. State courts, which often are in buildings maintained by counties, already are off-limits to firearms.

Oregonians’ faith in democracy eroding

BY ZANE SPARLING
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Faith in democracy has dimmed.

After years of tumult, riots, economic uncertainty and low blow politics — not to mention a global pandemic — nearly 7 out of every 10 Oregonians believe democracy has weakened across the United States over the past four years.

Residents describe a slightly more fortified state of affairs closer to home, with roughly 6 out of 10 statewide saying democracy in Oregon has diminished over the last four years.

The Oregon Values and Beliefs Center, a nonprofit created by DHM Research founder Adam Davis, compiled those results after surveying 600 residents, selected to be statistically representative of the state, in early March. The margin of error is 4%.

Here are the hard numbers:

- More than two-thirds (69%) say American democracy has weakened in the past four years, compared with 22% who say it is stronger and 9% who were unsure. Seniors (77%) and self-identified liberals (78%) are more likely to see an attenuation of democratic strength, while conservatives (30%) and rural residents (33%) have a larger share who see American democracy as stronger now than before.

- Oregon democracy gets slightly higher marks, with one-quarter of the population (25%) saying it has beefed up in the past four years, 61% saying it has weakened and 14% unsure. White people (63%) are significantly more likely to believe Oregon’s representative government has weakened compared to non-white people (48%). Democrats (37%) and college grads (35%) are more likely to see the system as bulking up.

Despite their belief in a faltering form of government, Oregonians are essentially split 50-50 when asked to rate their satisfaction with the way democracy actually performs, on Capitol Hill and in Salem.

- Nearly half (45%) are satisfied with American democracy, compared with 51% who aren’t and 4% who are unsure. Portland metro area (49%) and Democrats (57%) are more likely to be satisfied, compared with more than half of suburbanites (56%) and Republicans (55%) who said they aren’t satisfied.

- Once again, Oregon scores a tad higher than America as a whole, with 49% satisfied with Oregon democracy and 46% unsatisfied and 4% unsure. Urban dwellers (59%) are statistically more likely to be satisfied than rural residents (34%).

The Oregon Values and Beliefs Center asked poll respondents to describe why they believe Oregon democracy has strengthened — or weakened — over the past four years. Here’s what they said: It has strengthened:

- “Because we have Democratic leadership. States with the GOP are severely hurting us.”

- “More acceptance of people of color.”

- “People in Oregon care about what is going on and take action.”

- “Because of our governor, Kate Brown.”

It has weakened:

- “One party rule. GOP has become more irrelevant and radical. No real counter to Democrats.”

- “We don’t seem to care much that our governor’s ‘emergency COVID powers’ have gone on for a year.”

- “Liberals ... they want larger government, more controls and higher taxes.”

- “An uptick in violence in the larger cities.”

Gov. Brown extends emergency as virus cases spike

Associated Press

SALEM — Gov. Kate Brown on Thursday, April 29, extended Oregon’s state of emergency for COVID-19 until June 28, saying a fourth surge of the pandemic is being driven by variants of the disease and causing increased cases and hospitalizations.

The declaration allows Brown to issue executive orders restricting activity

and helps the state utilize federal COVID-relief funds, the governor’s office said.

Brown put 15 counties that encompass the state’s biggest cities into the state’s extreme risk category starting Friday, April 30, imposing restrictions that include banning indoor restaurant dining.

The restaurant sector has objected to Brown’s action, with the Oregon Restaurant & Lodging Associ-

ation declaring the state lost more than 1,000 food service businesses in 2020 and that 200 more closed permanently so far this year.


Brown says her actions are temporary.

“I intend to fully reopen our economy by the end of June, and the day is approaching when my emergency orders can eventually be lifted,” Brown said in a statement. “How quickly we get there is up to each and

every one of us doing our part.”

Brown said more than 1.2 million people in the state have been fully vaccinated, but the “overwhelming majority” of new cases are from younger, unvaccinated residents. Oregon’s population is more than 4.2 million.

She said hospitalizations nearly doubled in the last two weeks, to more than 300.




Free COVID-19 testing coming to Umatilla County thanks to the University of Oregon’s RADx-Up team.

FREE CONFIDENTIAL COVID-19 TESTING

NO INSURANCE/IMMIGRATION STATUS NEEDED

- Local drive-through model promotes safety.
- Testing every Saturday & Sunday thru August.
- Free and confidential; no insurance or immigration status required.

SCAN TO REGISTER



Pre-Registration Available But Not Required. Results in 2 - 4 Days. <https://blogs.uoregon.edu/osjp/registro/>

<p>UMATILLA HIGH SCHOOL: 10 A.M. - 1 P.M.</p> <p>ATKINSON STAFFING: 3 P.M. - 6 P.M.</p> <p style="color: orange; text-align: center;"><i>Every First & Third Saturday</i></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"> <p>March 6</p> <p>April 3</p> <p>May 1</p> <p>June 5</p> <p>July 3</p> <p>August 7</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%;"> <p>March 19</p> <p>April 17</p> <p>May 15</p> <p>June 19</p> <p>July 17</p> <p>August 21</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>March 6</p> <p>April 3</p> <p>May 1</p> <p>June 5</p> <p>July 3</p> <p>August 7</p>	<p>March 19</p> <p>April 17</p> <p>May 15</p> <p>June 19</p> <p>July 17</p> <p>August 21</p>	<p>UMATILLA ELECTRIC: 10 A.M. - 1 P.M. HERMISTON OFFICE</p> <p>STANFIELD ELEMENTARY: 3 P.M. - 6 P.M.</p> <p style="color: orange; text-align: center;"><i>Every Second & Fourth Saturday</i></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"> <p>March 13</p> <p>April 10</p> <p>May 8</p> <p>June 12</p> <p>July 10</p> <p>August 14</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%;"> <p>March 27</p> <p>April 24</p> <p>May 22</p> <p>June 26</p> <p>July 24</p> <p>August 28</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>March 13</p> <p>April 10</p> <p>May 8</p> <p>June 12</p> <p>July 10</p> <p>August 14</p>	<p>March 27</p> <p>April 24</p> <p>May 22</p> <p>June 26</p> <p>July 24</p> <p>August 28</p>
<p>March 6</p> <p>April 3</p> <p>May 1</p> <p>June 5</p> <p>July 3</p> <p>August 7</p>	<p>March 19</p> <p>April 17</p> <p>May 15</p> <p>June 19</p> <p>July 17</p> <p>August 21</p>				
<p>March 13</p> <p>April 10</p> <p>May 8</p> <p>June 12</p> <p>July 10</p> <p>August 14</p>	<p>March 27</p> <p>April 24</p> <p>May 22</p> <p>June 26</p> <p>July 24</p> <p>August 28</p>				

Umatilla Electric Boardman Office: 3 P.M. - 6 P.M. Every Second and Fourth Friday