

# Survey: Majority of Oregonians support stricter gun laws

By GARRETT ANDREWS  
Oregon Capital Insider

SALEM — A majority of Oregonians support stricter gun laws, according to a new poll by the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center.

The nonpartisan independent research group on Thursday released data reporting 59% of survey respondents say they believe the state's firearms laws should be stricter, which is in line with an April 2021 Pew Research poll finding 60% of Americans want stricter gun laws.

The beliefs center surveyed 1,446 Oregon adults between June 2 and 11 about gun regulations.

Last month, an 18-year-old man in Uvalde, Texas, used an AR-15-style rifle he purchased legally to kill 19 children and two adults and injure 17 others in an attack on an elementary school. But with that tragedy so fresh, open-ended questions about guns were not asked during the survey because it was felt the answers would be unproductive, according to an email from Amaury Vogel, associate executive



A casing discharges from a handgun.

Ryan Brennecke/Bulletin file photo

director of the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center.

Among the groups most likely to want stricter gun laws are urbanites, women, college graduates, people 75 or older and people with household incomes above \$100,000 per year.

Slightly more than half of respondents, or 54%, believe making it harder for people to obtain firearms would result in fewer mass shootings.

The survey found that nearly half of gun owners, 46%, think firearms laws

should be stricter in the U.S., and 43% believe there would be fewer mass shootings if it was harder for people to legally obtain guns.

Women are more likely than men to want stricter gun laws, and also less likely to own a gun.

In Oregon, women are also less likely than men to own a gun, 25% compared to 41%.

This is again in line with the national level: a June 2021 Pew poll found that 22% of women and 39% of men own guns.

Deschutes County resident Pat Minney was among the survey respondents.

She told The Bulletin there are "way too many guns" and would like to see a ban on military style weapons and stronger background checks. She said she's long held those beliefs, but she's watched her husband, a military veteran, soften his pro-gun stance in recent years in response to mass shootings.

"Ever since the shooting in Springfield and the shootings out East, we've just watched it get worse and worse," Minney said, referring to the 1998 Thurston High School shooting.

The survey found 90% of respondents who identify as Democrats believe gun laws should be stricter, while only 24% of those who identify as Republicans feel the same. The results suggest Oregon is slightly more

polarized on this issue than the national average. The April, 2021, Pew poll found that 81% of Democrats and 20% of Republicans favored more strict federal gun laws.

Also surveyed was Washington County resident and retired Intel employee Jim Ourada, who opposes stricter gun laws and believes every household should be armed.

"I live in unincorporated Washington County," he told The Bulletin. "It's pretty safe out here, but if you walk 6 miles to the east, it's practically a war zone. There's lots of shootings, every single day, every single night. But you know what, no one ever goes after them. What am I supposed to do, sit here and take the bullet for them?"

Ourada asked, why strengthen background checks when they're "pretty strong already?"

"The criminals, they don't use background checks, do they?" Ourada said. "The gang-bangers in downtown Portland, they aren't doing background checks, because most of them can't own a weapon anyway."

**HANLEY "NOODLE" MILLER**  
Hanley "Noodle" Miller, a 15-year-old freshman at Joseph Charter School, won the tie-down calf roping title at the Oregon State High School Rodeo Finals in Prineville earlier this month. Miller tied down 16 of 17 calves through the season and placed in 15 of 16 runs.

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## Trap check regulation worries livestock industry

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI  
Capital Press

Traps for predators must be checked more frequently under new Oregon wildlife regulations that the farm industry fears will undermine protections for livestock.

Significantly for cattle and sheep producers, restraining traps must be checked more than twice as often if they're meant to stop predators from damaging livestock operations.

Due to the long distances between many traps, agriculture groups worry the



USDA/Contributed Photo

A coyote attacks a lamb. Traps intended to stop predators from harming livestock must be checked more frequently under new Oregon regulations that worry livestock producers.

come into play when making such a significant reduction in a trap check time intervals," Smith said in an email.

The rule change fails to account for these practical challenges or the livestock losses and other costs that predators impose on rural landowners, she said.

Complying with the new rules will cause expenses to "skyrocket" for the USDA's Wildlife Services division, whose agents are often hired to trap predators, said Jim Soares, vice president of the Oregon Trappers Association.

The agency would need to spend substantially more money just to perform the same amount of work, but it's unclear where the additional funding would come from, Soares said.

"This is going to be devastating for the livestock industry," he said.

Environmental advocates, on the other hand, cheered the revised trap check requirements because shorter intervals will decrease the amount of time that animals suffer.

More frequent checks will also help prevent the unintended deaths of non-target threatened and endangered species caught in restraining traps, according to the Center for Biological Diversity nonprofit.

The regulatory decision is a "step in the right direction" and better represents "Oregon's values," but it still falls short of the 24-hour trap check intervals recommended by wildlife experts, the group said. "This change makes trapping less inhumane, but Oregon still has a long way to go."

revised rules will hinder efforts to control coyotes and other predators.

"We have a multitude of predatory animals and their populations are growing," said Todd Nash, president of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association. "The thing that seems to reduce over time is the number of capable trappers. They're spread so thin to begin with that they're covering huge swaths of land."

For traps that kill predators, the state's Fish and Wildlife Commission has reduced the time between trap checks from 30 days to 14 days, which the OCA did not oppose.

However, traps and snares that restrain livestock-damaging predators must now be checked every two days under the new regulations, compared to every seven days previously.

With the limited number of available trappers, the rule change effectively reduces the amount of work they'll be able to perform —

especially when fuel prices are so high, critics say.

"That's a game changer. You change the way you operate," Nash said.

If they're not intended to prevent livestock damage, restraining traps for predators must now also be checked every two days, down from three days previously.

Traps intended to curb livestock damage are meant to catch specific predators, they were previously given more time to work than those not aimed at particular individuals.

By "bending to urban pressure" and reducing trap check intervals, the commission has shown it's "out of touch with rural communities and land managers," said Lauren Smith, the Oregon Farm Bureau's government and national affairs director.

"Across Oregon's vast landscape, there are terrain and weather issues, lack of road access, trap efficiency and many other issues that



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