

Amendment

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Residents in opposition also questioned the timing of the resolution, since it was brought up a week after state lawmakers passed Senate Bill 554. The new law bans the possession of guns in the state Capitol and Portland International Airport and requires gun owners to securely store their guns when not in use.

"Why now?" Madras resident Vickie Johnson asked at the Wednesday meeting. "I think this piece of illegal nullification is an attempt to side-swipe the governor's signature on Senate Bill 554."

Fording and fellow commissioners, Kelly Simmelink and Mae Huston, insisted the resolution was in response to several residents asking for the local designation.

"I just feel a very strong obligation to represent the people who have asked us to do this resolution and it has been done elsewhere and I'm very strongly in support of it," Huston said.

Jefferson County Sheriff Jim Adkins was among those Wednesday who spoke in favor of the resolution.

The sheriff described himself as a supporter of the Second Amendment. In his 35-year law enforcement career, he has never felt unsafe interacting with armed individuals, Adkins said.

In fact, Adkins would like to

Idaho governor signs bill to halt Biden's executive orders on firearms

BOISE, Idaho — Idaho Gov. Brad Little has signed legislation aimed at thwarting a half-dozen executive actions by President Joe Biden to combat gun violence.

The new law came less than a week after a shooting at an eastern Idaho middle school injured two students and a custodian.

The Republican governor signed the measure Monday. It passed the Idaho House and Senate with veto-proof majorities and carried an emergency notice, meaning it went into effect with Little's signature.

The new law is retroactive to Jan. 20, the day Biden was sworn in as president. It prevents all Idaho government entities from enforcing executive orders, federal laws, treaties, agency orders and rules of the U.S. government involving firearms, firearm components and accessories, or ammunition that conflict with the Idaho Constitution.

— Associated Press



U.S. Attorney's Office Seattle via AP, file

A homemade firearm that federal agents say was recovered from a Washington home last year. Idaho's newly signed measure targets the president's crackdown on "ghost guns" — homemade firearms put together from purchased gun parts that lack serial numbers to trace them.

see more law abiding citizens own guns, he said.

"It's not something that we fear," Adkins said. "I ask that you as citizens protect yourselves and be prepared."

A portion of the resolution says the County Commission believes the criminal misuse of firearms is due to criminals not obeying the law and that misuse is not a reason to deny the rights of others.

The focus on criminal misuse reminded Madras resident Judy Embanks of the quote from National Rifle Association Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre, who said, "The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun, is a good

guy with a gun."

Embanks, and others who spoke in opposition, said that quote is an oversimplification and does not account for other factors that have led to mass shootings, such as easy access to guns during a mental health crisis.

"If everyone who supports this resolution is a good guy

with a gun, why do we need this resolution," Embanks said Wednesday. "Where were all the good guys at Columbine, Sandy Hook, Florida Pulse (nightclub), Mandalay Bay, Virginia Tech, Umpqua Community College, Charleston, South Carolina, etc., etc."

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U.S. virus deaths dip to lowest level in 10 months

Associated Press

COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. have tumbled to an average of around 600 per day — the lowest level in 10 months — with the number of lives lost dropping to single digits in well over half the states and hitting zero on some days.

Confirmed infections have fallen to about 38,000 per day on average, their lowest mark since mid-September. While that is still cause for concern, they have plummeted 85% from a peak of more than a quarter-million per day in early January.

The last time deaths were this low was early July, nearly a year ago. COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. topped out in mid-January at an average of more than 3,400 a day, just a month into the biggest vaccination drive in the na-

tion's history.

Dr. Amesh Adalja, an infectious disease specialist at Johns Hopkins University, said that vaccinations have played a crucial role even as the nation struggles to reach herd immunity. "The primary objective is to deny this virus the ability to kill at the rate that it could, and that has been achieved," he said.

DEATH NOTICES

Deanna M. Balon of Bend, OR September 16, 1940 - May 6, 2021

Arrangements: Niswonger-Reynolds Funeral Home is honored to serve the family. 541-382-2471 Please visit the online registry for the family at www.niswonger-reynolds.com

Services: Private family Catholic Mass with interment in Greenwood Cemetery *Contributions may be made to:* St. Francis Catholic Church 2450 NE 27th St, Bend, OR 97701 or Heart & Home Hospice 745 NW Mt Washington Dr Ste 205, Bend, OR 97703

Thomas Michael James Condon of Bend, OR Dec 12, 1953 - May 6, 2021

Arrangements: Niswonger-Reynolds Funeral Home is honored to serve the family. 541-382-2471 Please visit the online registry for the family at www.niswonger-reynolds.com

Services: Saturday May 15, 2021 at 11:00am Bend Church of the Nazarene 1270 NE 27th St, Bend, OR 97701

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Mining ban considered to protect sage grouse in West

Associated Press

The Biden administration announced Tuesday it will consider a ban on new mining on large expanses of public lands in Western states to protect a struggling bird species, the greater sage grouse.

The Interior Department review comes in response to a federal court order and is expected to cover millions of acres of sage brush habitat considered crucial to the bird's long-term survival.

A temporary ban on mining was imposed under former President Barack Obama but dropped by the Trump administration. The affected lands totaled 10 million acres in Idaho, Nevada, Montana, Oregon, Utah and Wyoming.

Millions of sage grouse once roamed the West. Development, livestock grazing and an invasive grass that encourages wildfires reduced the species population to fewer than 500,000.

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