

Gun retailers react to 'assault weapon' sales ban initiative

By Claire Withycombe
Capital Bureau

As students and their supporters marched in communities across the country against gun violence on Saturday, Oregon gun retailers claim a citizen initiative petition intending to restrict the sale of so-called "assault weapons" is too broad.

One of the petitioners, though, maintains that the petition was written in consultation with gun owners and is intended to boost public safety.

The group, which filed an updated petition Thursday, wants to get a ban on the sale of certain semiautomatic guns with specific features on the statewide ballot. They must collect about 88,000 signatures by July 6 to go before voters in November.

Should the petition make it to the ballot and get approved by voters, people who legally bought the types of guns the petition seeks to restrict would have to register those weapons and pass a background check, requirements that have also prompted criticism from gun retailers. Violating the law

would be a felony.

At issue for gun retailers is the definition of "assault weapons," which the petition describes in detail as semiautomatic rifles, pistols or shotguns with certain features.

As an example, the measure would ban the sale of semiautomatic rifles that have the capacity to accept a detachable magazine and include any of eight features, such as a pistol grip, a folding stock or a shroud around its barrel that allows the user to hold the rifle steady without burning their hand.

It would ban the sale of any semiautomatic pistol or rifle "with a fixed magazine, that has the capacity to accept more than 10 rounds of ammunition."

Karl Durkheimer, who owns Northwest Armory, a retailer with locations in Portland and Tigard, said that he was still trying to figure out how much of his inventory would fall under the petition's definition of an assault weapon. He expressed doubts that the measure was written by someone familiar with firearms.

"As someone who has sold



Pamplin Media Group/Christopher Oertell

A wall of shotguns and rifles at the Arm Yourself Gun Store in Hillsboro on Oct. 13. Oregon gun retailers claim a citizen initiative petition intending to restrict the sale of so-called "assault weapons" is too broad.

guns, been a gun dealer for over 25 years, and been collecting guns since I was 16 years old, it's not written by people who have very much gun knowledge," Durkheimer said in a phone interview Thursday.

Scott Bryce, co-founder of GunRunner Arms in Junction City, likewise objected to the use of the term "assault weapon" in the petition.

"Assault is an action, not a class of firearm," Bryce said.

This was a common criticism among Oregon gun

dealers contacted by the EO/Pamplin Capital Bureau, who distinguish between fully automatic and semiautomatic weapons.

The former have generally been illegal for civilians under federal law for decades. Many "modern" guns sold and collected are semiautomatic guns.

Durkheimer was also skeptical of the initiative petition's provision for creating a registry for people who own those certain types of guns and having them go through a background check.

The way it works now, a person who wants to purchase a gun from a licensed dealer is subject to a state and federal background check. However, the Oregon State Police do not maintain a registry, and Durkheimer sees the petition as trying to change that status quo.

"If you come in and you buy a .22 rifle, the only person that knows you have that .22 rifle is Northwest Armory and yourself," unless you choose to share that information with someone else, Durkheimer said.

When a gun has been used in a crime, the police have to request a "trace," or manufacture and sale history, from the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms using the serial number of the weapon in question.

The ATF can then find out the manufacturer of the gun, the wholesaler that distributed the gun, the licensed dealer that sold the gun and the purchaser. About 70 percent of the ATF's traces are successful, according to a July 2016 report by independent news organization The Trace.

Ron Redding, owner of Guncrafters, a Salem retailer, argued that the statute change sought by petitioners could hurt gun manufacturers, and claimed that banning the sale of weapons as specified in the petition would merely create a black market for them.

Petitioners say that their intent is to protect public safety.

The Rev. W.J. Mark Knutson, senior pastor of Augustana Lutheran Church in Portland and initiative petition campaign chair, said the campaign has members who are gun owners and were consulted in the crafting of the petition's language.

Rather than banning what he characterizes as assault weapons outright, Knutson said, the petitioners sought to grandfather in legally purchased guns in a way that respected the rights of gun owners.

Knutson pointed to seat belts as an example of American society adapting for safety.

"This is not a campaign against anybody," Knutson said. "It's a campaign to protect our children and public safety in Oregon."

COPS AND COURTS

Arrests and citations in the Blue Mountain Eagle are taken from the logs of law enforcement agencies. Every effort is made to report the court disposition of arrest cases.

Grant County Sheriff

The Grant County Sheriff's Office reported the following for the week of March 22:

Concealed handgun licenses: 15

Average inmates: 28

Bookings: 8

Releases: 8

Arrests: 1

Citations: 0

Fingerprints: 4

Civil papers: 14

Warrants processed: 6

Asst./welfare check: 6

Search and rescue: 0

Justice Court

The Grant County Justice Court reported the following fines and judgments:

- Driving uninsured: Robert J. Bryant, 20, Prairie City, March 7, fined \$265; Chenise C.A. Mutchler, 22, John Day, March 8, fined \$225.

- Driving while license suspended: Robert J. Bryant, 20, Prairie City, March 7, fined \$440.

- Exceeding speed limit: Cheryl Neault, 58, Prairie City, March 13, 73/65 zone, fined \$140; Hailey K. Goetz, 20, Mountain Home AFB, Idaho, Feb. 19, 80/65 zone, fined \$265; Jenny M. Rookstool, 34, Canyon City, March 14, 60/45 zone, fined \$140.

- Violation of basic rule: Cindy L. Bolman, 51, John Day, Feb. 24, 56/30 zone, fined \$225.

- No operator's license: Mark S. Crissman, 57, Fox, March 10, fined \$265.

- Failure to drive with-in lane: Nathan A. Klawit-

ter, 31, Redmond, March 1, fined \$225.

- Operating a vehicle without required light: Clayton D. Skidmore, 35, Prairie City, Feb. 26, fined \$165.

Oregon State Police

March 18: Unable to locate Justyn M. Kroeker, 27, a registered sex offender, at his mother's home in Mt. Vernon. A report was issued to support an arrest warrant for failing to register.

March 18: Debra L. Shawn, 62, Mt. Vernon, was arrested following a traffic stop on Highway 26 in Mt. Vernon and charged with DUII controlled substances.

March 22: Norman G. Reed, 74, John Day, a registered sex offender, was cited following a traffic stop on Highway 26 in east John Day for failing to report of change of address.

March 23: Responded to report of a car hitting a deer on Highway 26 near the Wheeler County line with no injuries.

March 24: Ken R. Kingston, 57, Granite, was arrested on Center Street in Granite and charged with failing to register as a sex offender.

Dispatch

John Day dispatch worked 143 calls during the week of March 19-25, including:

- John Day Police Department**

March 19: Responded to Northwest Bridge Street and Third Avenue in John Day for a road hazard.

March 19: Dispatched to a theft report at an apartment complex in Prairie City.

March 19: Responded with sheriff's office and state police for a report of a missing 4-year-old who was found.

March 19: Responded to

a harassment report in John Day.

March 19: Dispatched with sheriff's office and state police to a motel in John Day for a theft report.

March 20: Received a call about a trespassing issue in Prairie City.

March 21: Responded to a fraud report on West Main Street in John Day.

March 21: Received a forgery report in John Day.

March 21: Report of a theft on West Main Street in John Day.

March 22: Amanda Bogen, 32, Prairie City, was cited in John Day for driving without a license.

March 23: Tyler D. Dehiya, 24, Mt. Vernon, was cited in John Day for driving with suspended license and no insurance and failing to register vehicle.

March 23: Responded to a civil matter that became a dispute on McCallum Avenue in Prairie City.

March 23: Sandra M. Colbeth, 70, John Day, was cited for speeding on Northwest Third Avenue in John Day.

March 24: John E. Guthridge, 24, Burns, was cited for driving uninsured on Highway 26 at Southeast Gunther Street in John Day.

March 24: Edward Humbird, 49, Canyon City, was cited on Third Avenue in John Day for failing to change registration and expired plates.

March 24: Dispatched to an apartment on Main Street in John Day for a dispute.

March 24: Tiffany L. Huffaker was arrested on Main Street in John Day following a traffic stop.

March 25: Responded to a senior home in John Day for a combative and confused patient.

March 25: Advised of an unwanted person on East Main Street in John Day.

- Grant County Sheriff's Office**

March 19: Received a report of an arrest in Pendleton on a Grant County warrant.

March 19: Responded to a domestic dispute at apartments on Nugget Street in Canyon City.

March 19: Dispatched with John Day police for an assault report in Canyon City.

March 19: Responded to Patterson Drive in Canyon City for a suspicious person report.

March 20: Advised of suspicious circumstances at a property on Highway 402 near Monument.

March 20: Received a theft report in the Pine Creek area.

March 20: Report of a civil or theft issue in Mt. Vernon.

March 21: Report of a hit-and-run crash in Canyon City.

March 21: Responded to an unattended death at a property on Highway 402 near Monument.

March 21: Received a report of a butchered steer on the side of Harper Creek Road in Mt. Vernon.

March 22: Report of a restraining order violation on East Riverside Street in Mt. Vernon.

March 22: Received a livestock complaint in Prairie City.

March 23: Responded with John Day ambulance and state police to Franklin

Avenue in Dayville for an attempted suicide.

March 23: Advised of a suspicious person in Mt. Vernon.

March 24: Contacted subject about telephonic harassment of the Prairie City Ranger Station.

March 24: Dispatched to Ingle Street in Mt. Vernon for a domestic dispute report.

March 25: Responded with Search and Rescue and U.S. Forest Service law enforcement to Forest Road 10 southeast of Dale for an injured man.

March 25: Dispatched with John Day ambulance and state police to Keeney Fork Road near Long Creek for a 20-year-old woman who was injured in a fall.

March 25: Responded to South Ingle Street in Mt. Vernon for a report of a suicidal teenager.

March 25: Received a livestock complaint from West Bench Road in John Day.

• Oregon State Police

March 19: Advised of cows on Highway 26 near Moon Creek Road.

March 19: Assisted John Day police with a suspicious person report in Prairie City.

March 25: Received a report of a cow on Highway 26 near Dayville.

- John Day ambulance**

March 19: Dispatched to Northeast Elm Street in John Day for a woman with a possible broken arm.

March 20: Responded to Main Street in John Day for an elderly woman.

March 20: Dispatched to a senior home in John Day for a patient with high blood pressure.

March 21: Responded with sheriff's office and state police to Canyon Creek Lane in Canyon city for an unconscious man who was not breathing and died.

March 24: Dispatched with Prairie City ambulance to East Fifth Street for an elderly man who was choking.

March 24: Paged with Prairie City ambulance to a senior home in Prairie City.

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Jackpot Clay Pigeon Shoot Fundraiser

Saturday, April 14, 2018



Only
\$3 per
shoot!

There will be a Jackpot Clay Pigeon Shoot Fundraiser for the Grant County Sheriff Search and Rescue on Saturday, April 14, 2018 from 11am - 4pm at the pit at Kimberly Rock Products. Cost is \$3 per shoot. Baked good auction will be held and a raffle of various items. Concessions will be available by donation only. Call (541) 934-2143 for more information.

2018 Series shoots to be held Jan. 20, Feb. 17, March 17 and April 14.
The one who shoots the most clays at the end of the four part series wins!
This is the last date of the series so be sure not to miss it!

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Grant County Health Department

Make an appointment to see Mendy Sharpe, FNP
for all of your family's health care needs.

Open Mon. - Fri. 8am-5pm
528 E. Main, John Day
541-575-0429 or 888-443-9104

Celebrate your local Nurse Practitioners
this Doctors Day!

