

## **Resolution in Support of Gun Violence Prevention Efforts in Clackamas County**

*(Proposed by the League of Women Voters of Clackamas County, February 19, 2015)*

**WHEREAS**, Clackamas County government, headed by the Board of County Commissioners, is on the front lines in providing vital public services within the county, including public health, mental health, community corrections, and juvenile services, and,

**WHEREAS**, the mission of the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office is to "preserve life, uphold the law, prevent crime, hold offenders accountable, and promote safety while finding innovative solutions and building partnerships with the community," and,

**WHEREAS**, on September 18, 2014, the Board of Commissioners adopted Performance Oregon, a strategic plan with 28 measurable goals in five categories, one of which is to "Ensure safe, healthy and secure communities." Goals under that category include:

- By 2020, there will be no domestic violence related homicides in Clackamas County.
- By 2019, the violent crime rate in Clackamas County will be less than 95 per 100,000 persons per year, and,

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Commissioners of Clackamas County acknowledges the following statistics provided by the Oregon Public Health Division, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Oregon Department of Transportation:

- From 2002 to 2011, 4,007 people were killed with guns in Oregon, more than the number of all U.S. combat deaths in the Iraq War.
- Since 2010, gun-related deaths in Oregon have outpaced motor vehicle fatalities.
- Gun-related suicides in Oregon account for four out of five firearm deaths, well above the national average.
- From 2003 to 2012 there were 138 domestic violence homicides in Oregon. More than half of the victims were killed with guns.
- There are 46 percent fewer gun suicides and 48 percent fewer intimate partner gun homicides of women in states that require background checks for private handgun sales than in states that do not, and,

**WHEREAS**, a January 2015 survey conducted by the Benenson Strategy Group on behalf of Americans for Responsible Solutions found that 87% of Oregon voters support background checks on all gun purchases.

**NOW THEREFORE**, the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners hereby resolves as follows:

1. Clackamas County affirms its commitment to safeguard the constitutional rights of all citizens of Clackamas County, including those rights guaranteed by the Second Amendment. However, we recognize that the right to bear arms is not unlimited and

concur with the majority opinion in the 2008 Supreme Court ruling *District of Columbia vs Heller*, which states the following about the Second Amendment:

“It is not a right to keep and carry any weapon whatsoever in any manner whatsoever and for whatever purpose. . . Nothing in our opinion should be taken to cast doubt on longstanding prohibitions on the possession of firearms by felons and the mentally ill, or laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in sensitive places such as schools and government buildings, or laws imposing conditions and qualifications on the commercial sale of arms.”

2. Clackamas County acknowledges that background checks on firearm sales have been used in Oregon for twenty years, and this has not led to the confiscation of guns from law abiding citizens.
3. Clackamas County acknowledges that loopholes currently exist in Oregon’s background check law that make it easier for dangerous people to obtain guns. Expanding background checks to include all gun sales is constitutional under state and federal law and would undoubtedly save lives.
4. Clackamas County supports the idea that with rights come responsibilities. We believe it is the responsibility of gun owners to be adequately trained in the use of firearms and to secure them safely to prevent access by children or those with a history of mental illness or criminal activity.