



**Oregon Chapter
American College of
Emergency Physicians**

February 7, 2022

**To: Rep. Rachel Prusak, Chair
House Health Care Committee**

**From: Commissioner Sharon Meieran, MD, JD
Oregon Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians**

Subject: HB 4045 Community Violence Reduction and Prevention

Chair Prusak and members of the Committee, my name is Dr. Sharon Meieran. I'm a Multnomah County Commissioner, and I fully support HB 4045 from the perspective of a front line policy maker seeking to improve the health and safety of our communities. But today I am here on behalf of the Oregon Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians. OR-ACEP is a medical society that has represented physicians specializing in emergency medicine since 1971 and its members share a commitment to improve emergency healthcare for all Oregonians.

OR-ACEP strongly supports HB 4045, which establishes an evidence-based grant program to expand on hospital-based programs to reduce violent injury and prevent violent retaliation.

As emergency physicians, we regularly care for victims of many types of violence - domestic assaults, stabbings, community gun violence - and the impact of violence not only on our patients, but on their families, is devastating. It is even more heartbreaking to see the cycle of suffering that results when the initial tragedy is compounded by acts of retribution. I recall working in a Level 1 Trauma Center, where we regularly cared for victims of community gun violence, and I informed a mother that her teenage son had been shot and we were unable to resuscitate him. As she expressed her anguish, I overheard other family members talking about their plans to take action against the person they believed to be the shooter. It's impossible to describe the suffering that was palpable in the tiny room where family had gathered, and the feeling of despair I felt as a physician striving to heal individuals, in a system that perpetuated horrific violence.

These scenes play out across Oregon and the nation. But there is hope, with violence prevention programs that actually change the trajectories of people's lives.. The White House is working on initiatives to fund community violence prevention and community policing, but it is up to us to implement the comprehensive programs that can make a profound difference here at home.

We strongly urge your support of this bill.

Chapter President- Chris Richards, MD, FACEP

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