



HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE  
SENATE REPUBLICAN OFFICE

For Immediate Release

Friday, April 3, 2015

House Contact: Kara Walker, 503-986-1351

[kara.walker@state.or.us](mailto:kara.walker@state.or.us)

Senate Contact: Caitie Butler, 503-986-1955

[Caitie.osborne@state.or.us](mailto:Caitie.osborne@state.or.us)

**Dozens Of Oregonians Denied The Opportunity To Testify During Senate Bill 941  
Public Hearing**

*Just 19% Of Opposing Witnesses Allowed To Testify While 94% Of Supporting Witnesses  
Allowed To Testify*

**Salem, OR** – On Wednesday, April 1, dozens of Oregonians from across the state traveled to the Capitol to testify before the Senate Judiciary Committee regarding Senate Bill 941, legislation that expands background checks to the private sale of firearms. ***Of the more than 100 registered witnesses, 94% of those who signed up to speak in favor of the bill were allowed to testify, while only 19% of those who planned to speak in opposition were allowed to voice their concerns.***

In total, at least 68 Oregonians who planned to testify against SB 941 were denied the opportunity to do so, including several individuals who traveled more than 100 miles. One such individual, Irene Gilbert, a gun store owner from La Grande, traveled several hundred miles (610 miles roundtrip) before being denied the opportunity to voice her concerns about the legislation.

"I'm very disappointed that the Committee Chairman would limit public discussion on such an important bill," said Representative Greg Barreto (R-Cove), who serves as Ms. Gilbert's state representative. "I'm even more upset to learn that one of my constituents, who took a day off from work and traveled more than five hours in order to speak on this issue, was turned away by the committee. Oregonians deserve better from their Legislature."

"Many rural Oregonians traveled hours to express their concerns about SB 941, and we owe them the chance to engage in the political process and speak directly with their representatives in Salem," said Senator Bill Hansell (R-Athena). "Their commitment proves this issue is one that deeply affects all Oregonians and they deserve an equal opportunity to be heard."

Despite overflow rooms filled with Oregonians wishing to testify on SB 941, Senator Prozanski chose to hold just one two hour public hearing on the bill, limiting individual testimony to two minutes, and even denying his fellow committee member, Senator Kim Thatcher, the chance to ask questions of witnesses.

Yesterday, House Republican Leader Mike McLane and Senate Republican Leader Ted Ferrioli [called on legislative leadership](#) to hold fair and thorough discussions of SB 941 by extending the amount of public

hearings so that Oregonians wishing to testify could do so. They noted that multiple public hearings for paid sick leave were held, including one in the evening, so that Oregonians on both sides of the issue could attend and voice their concerns.

###