



from the office of

SENATOR TIM KNOPP

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Feb. 26, 2018

Tayloranne Gillespie
Communications Director
541-554-6631

Senator Knopp Introduces Amendment - Says Threatening a School Should Be a Felony

SALEM, Ore. - Today, Senator Tim Knopp (R-Bend) introduced the [-27](#) amendment to [Senate Bill 1543](#), adding the crime of Threatening to Commit a Terroristic Act to Oregon's criminal statute. Currently there is a gap in Oregon law as it relates to people who make threats to cause mass casualties. If an individual makes a threat but does not take observable steps to carry out the threat, prosecutors struggle to find a statute that fits. In these cases, DA's must look to menacing, disorderly conduct, and harassment charges in order to prosecute threatening individuals, and this only allows misdemeanor charges.

"In the days after the horrific events at Parkland High School in Florida, Oregon experienced an up swell of violent, terroristic threats targeting schools and communities across the state," said Senator Knopp. "Oregon's district attorneys are constrained by current law that fails to take into account the unique nature of threats against schools and other public gathering places. Creating a new statute to address these circumstances will go a long way in deterring future threats and punishing individuals threaten the well being of our kids, families, and communities."

Similar to existing laws in other states, the law would criminalize making a terroristic threat, which is the threat to commit a crime that will result in great bodily harm, regardless of whether the person intended to carry out the threat. This would help prosecutors charge individuals who don't fall under disorderly conduct, menacing, or harassment statutes and creates a criminal penalty commensurate with the harm caused by such a threat.

The amendment is supported by Deschutes County DA John Hummel, Bend Police Chief Jim Porter, and the Bend-La Pine School District.

###