

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 3, 2023

Media Contact:

Amy Patrick 503-949-9785, amy@oregonhunters.org

Keely Hopkins 916-633-3664, khopkins@congressionalsportsmen.org

**Youth Hunting and High School Shooting Sports at Risk from HB 2005;
Opposed by Coalition of Sportsmen and Conservation Groups**

SALEM, Oregon — Citing concerns for youth hunting, high school shooting sports and conservation funding, a coalition of 15 national and state organizations have united in opposition to House Bill 2005, which passed the Oregon House of Representatives in a 35-24 vote on Tuesday.

HB 2005 contains a myriad of new firearm regulations and specifically threatens youth hunting and high school trap shooting sports by preventing minors from accessing certain commonly owned firearms, even when fully trained in gun safety, supervised by trained adults, or participating in lawful and permitted hunting or sport shooting events. The legislation provides a short list of firearms that minors can possess for hunting or target shooting but fails to include key firearms that are relied upon by the hunting and sport shooting community.

“Our organizations represent the interests of hundreds of thousands of youths and families that enjoy the safe and legal traditions of hunting with firearms in Oregon,” said Keely Hopkins, Pacific States Manager at the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation. “The new restrictions under HB 2005 coupled with the duplicative training requirements and increased costs under Measure 114 create additional barriers to entry for youth and families hunting in Oregon. This will result in fewer new hunters enjoying this outdoor family activity and will diminish the positive impacts that hunting has on Oregon’s natural habitats and the fish and wildlife they support.”

Sportsmen and women have been the primary funders of state level conservation for more than 85 years. Through the American System of Conservation Funding, a ‘user pays – public benefits’ program, hunting license fees go directly back into conservation by the state to protect lands, waters, and habitats important to Oregon’s wildlife. Also, the Pittman-Robertson Act of 1937 dedicated an excise tax on firearms and ammunition that contributes millions of dollars each year directly into state conservation efforts.

“As currently drafted, House Bill 2005 will prevent youth like my 12-year-old daughter Sabrina from using a 3-shot semi-automatic shotgun, which is the most common type of shotgun used in waterfowling and the easiest for a youth to operate,” explained Matt Little, Director of Public Policy for Ducks Unlimited. “To obtain her hunting license and go on our family’s first duck hunt, Sabrina took an intensive 10-course firearm safety training course required by the state

wildlife agency and is required to hunt only under the supervision of my wife and me. House Bill 2005 will prevent families from creating outdoor memories like these.”

In addition to restricting access to certain firearms for hunting, HB 2005 will also end youth competitive shooting sports which rely on semi-automatic firearms for significant portions of the competitive shooting sports program.

“House Bill 2005 will eliminate traditional youth high-power competition program, using semi-auto rifles, in Oregon,” said Kerry Spurgin, the President of the Oregon State Shooting Association. “Students who participate in these shooting sports often go on to receive scholarships for college or opportunities to compete at the national level. In addition, high school trap and skeet programs, which are among the fastest growing high school sports in the nation, will now have their participation restricted from using these common shotguns.”

Organizations opposing the new youth hunting restrictions include the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation, Delta Waterfowl, Ducks Unlimited, Fur Takers of America, Oregon Association of Shooting Ranges, Oregon Bowhunters, Oregon Chapter of National Wild Turkey Federation, Oregon Hunters Association, Oregon State Shooting Association, Oregon Trappers Association, Oregon United Sporting Dog Association, Oregon Wild Sheep Foundation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Safari Club International, and Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership.