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## **Legislature Creates Task Force on Community Safety and Firearm Suicide Prevention**

*Group to establish public health best practices for reducing firearm deaths from  
suicide and associated community safety threats*

**SALEM, Ore.** – Today, the Oregon House passed [Senate Bill 1503](#) after it [passed](#) the Senate earlier this week with bipartisan support. The 17-member Community Safety and Firearm Suicide Prevention Task Force made up of a diverse set of stakeholders and legislators will make recommendations on ways to reduce suicides by firearm and associated community safety risks.

Oregon has the 17th-highest suicide rate in the nation, according to the Centers for Disease Control. Firearm suicides account for more than half of Oregon's suicide annually, with veterans, men, and people over 75 at particular risk.

“Reducing firearm deaths through proven strategies is a critical part of making our communities safer,” said **House Speaker Dan Rayfield (D-Corvallis)**, co-chief sponsor of SB 1503. “Our task force will inform our work to meaningfully reduce firearm suicides, make our communities safer, and ensure Oregonians have access to treatment and resources that work for them when they need them.”

SB 1503 identifies several issues the task force will study, including:

- How to better support youth and rural Oregonians experiencing suicidal ideation
- Barriers to suicide prevention support
- Barriers to implementing best practices for community safety and suicide prevention
- How domestic violence is a risk factor for community safety threats and suicide
- Risks to first responders

A full measure summary can be found [here](#).

The task force will include a bipartisan group of four legislators and 13 community members, including: a representative of a state public health agency; a representative of a community-based firearm safety and protocols program; a behavioral health professional or provider; an adult behavioral health provider; a psychologist who works with youth; a tribal representative from a suicide prevention program; a representative of law enforcement; and a professional who works in veterans' mental health.

The first report from the task force will be due to the Legislature in September 2024. The bill now goes to Governor Tina Kotek's desk.

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