TO: HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

FR: JUDITH ARMATTA, Attorney at Law, Portland, Oregon

DA: APRIL 11, 2013

RE: SUPPORT FOR HB 3467

Honorable Chair Barker and Members of the Committee:

I write in support of HB 3467 to prohibit law enforcement from publishing photographs of arrestees on the internet. I thank the Committee for providing a public hearing on this important legislation.

Internet publication of arrest records, including photographs, is fast becoming a for-profit industry where anyone can easily buy access to information on arrested persons regardless of the fact that they have not been convicted of any crime. Such businesses then charge arrestees $100.00 to remove their names, photos, and other identification. An arrestee may need to pay other companies that also offer the information for sale to the public, costing hundreds of dollars.

I was recently solicited by one of these companies via email. They indicated I could discover whether friends, family, or potential employees had ever been arrested and, if so, they would provide photos and current place of residence, among other information, for approximately $22.00. Out of curiosity, I entered my own name. After searching their records, they informed me that Judith Armatta did indeed have an arrest record! I did not pay the $22.00 to learn what that might be.

Now, I was arrested 48 years ago when I was 18 years old for minor in possession of alcohol, but I was never convicted. That someone – my neighbor, a potential client or employer, or anyone of a number of people who object to my public positions – could so easily access this information or erroneous information is distressing and could cause me real harm. I worry even more about a young relative who was convicted of a sex offense (consensual sex with a minor), knowing that self-appointed vigilantes have sought out others in his situation and killed them.

I thank Representatives Greenlick and Williamson for introducing HB 3467 and I urge the Committee to act favorably on it. Thank you.