

**Kate Brown**  
Governor



**Oregon Commission for Women**  
"Advocating Equality and Diversity"  
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House Committee on Judiciary  
Public hearing  
March 21, 2019 1:00pm

Chair House Democratic Leader Williamson, Vice Chair  
Gorsek, Vice Chair Sprenger, and Members of the Committee,

I am Dr. Maura Kelly, an associate professor of sociology at Portland State University (PSU). Thank you for the opportunity to comment on behalf of the Oregon Commission for Women (OCFW) on HB 3338, which would disarm campus police at Portland State and University of Oregon.

Prior to the initial arming of PSU campus police, surveys indicated that a majority of both students and faculty opposed having armed police on campus for reasons well documented in their remarks to the PSU Board. However, in late 2014, the PSU Board of Trustees went ahead with the plan, disregarding the concerns of the PSU community.

PSU students, faculty, and staff have consistently maintained our opposition to having armed police on campus. Similar opposition to armed police can be found on the University of Oregon campus. The Oregon Commission for Women shares concerns about the negative impact on the most vulnerable students, faculty, and staff as well as community members who visit the campuses of our universities. In particular, we are concerned about police violence and intimidation towards people of color, individuals with mental health issues, and gender and sexual minorities.

The fears of our campus communities have only been confirmed by the actions of armed campus police. In June 2018, PSU campus police shot and killed Jason Washington while he was attempting to break up a fight. Jason Washington was a 45-year-old African American Navy veteran and postal worker. He was a husband, father, and friend. He was needlessly killed on a university campus by armed campus police. But we can prevent future deaths by disarming campus police.

We argue that campus officers should rely on other means to maintain safety, including training in communication and de-escalation as well as non-lethal weapons like tasers and pepper spray. These are the tools needed for the vast majority of interventions on campus. Should armed police

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be truly necessary, PSU and U of O have access to armed police nearby. The Portland Police Central Precinct is about a half a mile from my campus office. The presence of unarmed campus police with proper training, along with agreements with local police, is preferred by the PSU community for our safety.

The Oregon Commission for Women (OCFW) urges this committee to listen to faculty, staff, and students: we have repeatedly said we are less safe with the armed police force on our campus who have already shot and killed one innocent person. Please support HB 3338.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maura Kelly".

Maura Kelly, Commissioner, OCFW