



## OREGON STATE POLICE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

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Dear Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner Hayward, and Rayfield, Vice-Chairs Girod, Gomberg, and Smith, and members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means,

My name is Joshua Wetzel and I'm writing on behalf of the Oregon State Police Officers Association, to testify on the important role State Troopers play in public safety and why we need to increase our state's funding in the Oregon State Police.

I am a Senior Trooper first and currently serve as the Vice President of the Oregon State Police Officers Association. I have been with the for the Oregon State Police since 2008. I have served Lane, Josephine, Jackson Counties and now statewide in my role as VP.

In each tragedy we face as Oregonians, you'll find State Troopers there to help: we've been at the protests in Portland, we've been at the riots at the Capitol, we're there for floods in our communities and for fires in our small towns — and we've been here throughout the pandemic.

Law enforcement officers are essential during natural disasters and public health emergencies.

The truth is, there are not enough of us. Under the best of circumstances, Oregon is below the national average when it comes to Patrol Trooper coverage — but when faced with extreme hardships like we experienced in 2020, the consequences of this shortage are even more devastating.

This is especially important considering it is not popular right now to be in Law Enforcement. Your Oregon State Troopers are a professional group of individuals who serve Oregonians with Pride.

I have been with Troopers on their worst days and their best. Your State Troopers will sacrifice themselves to serve their fellow Oregonians. Whether it is working a long shift, because there is no next patrol shift or traveling the state to backfill other offices which are short due to natural disasters or ensuring citizens right to peacefully protest. Your Oregon State Troopers will be there. Our Vision statement says it all "Provide Premier Public Safety Services." This is what we do every single day for Oregonians.

I request that you increase our state's investment in Oregon State Police for next biennium. Investing more state resources in State Troopers will save public and private money – and it will save lives.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and for your commitment to improving our state's investment in State Troopers.

Sincerely,

Joshua W. Wetzel  
Vice President

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