

Testimony in support, HB 3071
Senate Committee on Human Services, Mental Health and Recovery
Thursday May 6, 2021, 3:15 PM

Chair Gelser, Vice-Chair Anderson, Senators Lieber, Robinson, and Taylor,

Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak before you, as it is a very humbling experience for me. I am Natasha Haunsperger, a Commissioner with the Oregon Commission for Women (OCFW), and in my other role, I'm also a Police Officer with the Portland Police bureau. I applied for an appointment to the OCFW because of their active commitment to public policy and its intersection with justice-involved women and their continuous advocacy for social change and promoting human rights and gender rights.

I am firmly expressing my support and endorsement of HB 3071 that modifies the current language referencing the legal definition of professions and individuals identified as mandatory reporters for abuse victims as outlined in the ORS listed in the Bill.

HB 3071 proposes removal of the old and archaic framing of a “public or private official” as a mandated reporting category, and proposes a new definition: “Elected official of a branch of the government of this state or a state agency, board, commission or department of a branch of the government of this state or of a city, county or other political subdivision in this state.”

Such a proposal clearly illustrates a commitment to social justice and social progress. It highlights ethical duties and accountability for those entrusted by the public in government-based positions and functions.

I applaud Representative Lewis’ efforts to raise awareness on the issue of mandatory reporting of suspected abuse and broaden the scope of those who must share this collective responsibility to protect the vulnerable ones and partake in breaking a cycle of rescuing victims of abuse.

I believe that our society has evolved. Our civic engagement, advocacy, and social consciousness have increased and continuously improved as we come together to identify and recognize a need to protect the most vulnerable individuals in our communities.

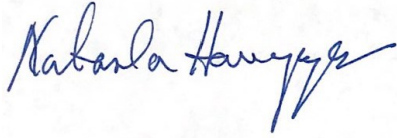
As an active police officer, I adhere to my code of ethics that binds me to report the abuse, speak up, and be the voice for those who are silent and endangered. I cannot ever be in the position to walk away, to ignore, and be blind to suspected harm of an innocent person. As I know, having worked directly with victims of elder, child, domestic violence, and sexual abuse, that no person should ever be subjected to emotional, physical, sexual, psychological abuse, even for a day.



This HB would strengthen the Oregon Mandatory reporting statute. Be more inclusive in specifying and addressing the vagueness of the archaic “public or private official” terminology, and in actuality address the aspects of accountability, trust, objectivity, and leadership attributed to and expected of those who hold those government-based positions and functions.

I believe that HB 3071 would create and foster a culture of awareness, ownership, and a sense of duty across a city, county, or state platform and engage each official to promote public health, gender rights, human rights, and criminal justice as all of these areas intersect the realm of abuse and exploitation of the innocent.

Thank you for your time today.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Natasha Haunsperger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Natasha Haunsperger, OCFW Commissioner

