Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to urge you to support the passage of HB 2929-A4. I am a retired public defender and have seen first-hand the perniciousness caused by the culture of secrecy that characterizes many police departments and allows them to ignore, rather than weed out, those officers who do not understand their duty to protect **all** residents of the communities in which they work.

The -A4 amendment is necessary to ensure that the public has access to police disciplinary records and will protect Oregonians from unchecked police misconduct.

- **Access to police disciplinary records is necessary to address and prevent police violence and other misconduct and is a key component of police reform**. Lack of transparency perpetuates a culture of secrecy within police departments that systematically and pervasively shields police misconduct. It prevents the public from knowing whether police departments are handling complaints against officers effectively or merely sweeping them under the rug.
- **Oregon is one of only 9 states that keeps police misconduct records strictly confidential.** This is true whether officers are disciplined or cleared. Judges and juries have no way of knowing if the arresting and investigating officers have a history of lying, coercing witnesses, or other transgressions, even in those cases having life-altering consequences.
- **This lack of transparency creates the potential for wrongful convictions**. Because officer disciplinary records are largely inaccessible to prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, and juries, who are charged with assessing innocence and guilt, accused people risk being wrongly convicted by officers with histories of lying, coercion and other misconduct.
- **Transparency is key to establishing trust between police and the people they serve**. Without it, effective community policing is impossible.

For all of these reasons, I strongly urge you to shine a light on police misconduct by supporting HB 2929-A4.

Sincerely,

Barbara Isaacman