



OREGON STATE SENATE
900 COURT STREET ST NE
SALEM, OREGON 97301

February 13, 2023

RE: SB 799 – Senate Judiciary Committee Public Hearing 2/14/2023

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher and members of the committee,

I am submitting for the record some enlightening articles on the topic of requiring post-secondary education for law enforcement officers. I appreciate the discussion on this important issue as we look at effective law enforcement reform mechanisms.

5 reasons police officers should have college degrees | The Conversation (June 18, 2020):
<https://theconversation.com/amp/5-reasons-police-officers-should-have-college-degrees-140523>

What Are the Benefits of Higher Education for Police Officers? | Columbia Southern University (Nov. 10, 2022): <https://www.columbiasouthern.edu/blog/blog-articles/2022/november/why-should-police-officers-have-a-college-degree/>

The Importance of a College Degree for Police Officers | PoliceOfficer.org (Feb. 13, 2023):
<https://policeofficer.org/blog/importance-college-degree-police>

Should We Require Cops to Have College Degrees? | Dolan Consulting Group (July 19, 2022):
<https://www.dolanconsultinggroup.com/news/should-we-require-cops-to-have-college-degrees/>

Commentary: Mandate higher education for California police officers | The Desert Sun (March 29, 2021):
<https://www.desertsun.com/story/opinion/contributors/2021/03/29/commentary-mandate-higher-education-california-police-officers/7038771002/>

“Assemblymember Reggie Jones-Sawyer, a Democrat from South Los Angeles, introduced Assembly Bill 89 to require future police recruits to have a bachelor’s degree, or be 25 years old upon hire. State Sen. Anthony Portatino, a Democrat from La Cañada Flintridge, introduced Senate Bill 387 to require new officers to take college classes, but not earn a degree.

“AB 89, the only bill to require a bachelor’s degree, is based on academic research that shows a college degree can improve police legitimacy, professionalism and accountability — factors crucial for democratic policing. Specifically, officers with a four-year degree use force less often, use lower levels of force, receive fewer complaints and disciplinary actions, and write better investigatory reports than their non-college educated peers.

“The public supports raising education standards for California officers. A recent CALSPEAKS statewide poll found that 81% of Californians believe that police officers should have more than a high school diploma, 46% support a two-year degree and 35% support a four-year degree.

“With more college-educated officers than all but three states — less than 42% of officers have at least a bachelor’s degree — California is well-positioned to make this bold and important move. California could be the first state in the nation to require recruits to have a four-year degree. The move would not be unprecedented, as four countries — the United Kingdom, Denmark, Finland and Norway — and a handful of U.S. agencies already require a college degree to be hired and three states require some college.”