



March 1, 2023

To: Senate Committee On Judiciary

From: Amanda Lamb, Law Enforcement Resource Counsel

Re: **Testimony in Support of SB 808**

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Amanda Lamb, and I am a civil rights attorney for the Oregon Justice Resource Center (OJRC), specializing in law enforcement-related policies and cases. The OJRC supports the changes presented in SB 808.

The Oregon Justice Resource Center promotes civil rights and improves legal representation for communities that have often been underserved in the past, including people living in poverty and people of color. We serve underrepresented populations, train future public interest lawyers, and educate our community on issues related to civil rights and civil liberties.

I spent 12 years working in government service before joining OJRC, including working in and leading a civilian police accountability agency. I have first-hand knowledge of the difficulties involved in holding law enforcement officers accountable for actions that violate policy or law. In particular, I served as a civilian in a discipline body dominated by law enforcement. Accountability was nearly always an uphill battle, and one I knew I would lose.

Community representation in bodies that inform or decide on law enforcement standards or discipline is critical to the legitimacy and effectiveness of those standards. The Law Enforcement Standards of Conduct and Discipline Commission was created as part of an historic reckoning with how the police treats the public, particularly people of color. The fact that the Law Enforcement Standards of Conduct and Discipline Commission is currently dominated by law enforcement agencies or interests and not members of the public calls into question whether the work of the Commission serves the public good, or the interests of law enforcement. As we have repeatedly seen through Oregon and in other states, law enforcement repeatedly fails to hold their own accountable, either by failing to investigate misconduct entirely or developing policies and standards that help officers avoid accountability.

Adding “two members who represent community-based organizations to represent the interests of the public” and reducing the number of law enforcement officers and law enforcement union representatives rebalances the Commission in keeping with the original goals of the work – to improve police accountability to the public. Furthermore, the proposed

amendments should be modified to explicitly require at least one of those community members be someone who has been a victim of police violence or their family member. This rebalancing is necessary to ensure the voices of those most impacted are included in the policy discussion and considered in the final outcome.

Thank you for considering these changes and for the opportunity to comment.

Amanda Lamb
Law Enforcement Resource Counsel
Oregon Justice Resource Center