

Submitter: Robyn Garris

On Behalf
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General
Government, and Veterans

Measure: HB2701

Written Testimony in Support of House Bill 2701

Robyn Garris

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Hello, my name is Robyn Garris, and I am testifying today in favor of House Bill 2701.

I have worked as a police telecommunicator for over 7.5 years.

We know the level of responsibility and stress put upon our officers every day of their career. They are responsible for the lives and wellbeing of countless citizens.

However, nobody ever considers who is responsible for the lives and wellbeing of not only those same citizens, but also those very officers.

Telecommunicators dread the day they will hear one of their officers yell out "shots fired" on the radio. Imagine hearing those words yelled out, while you are simultaneously on the phone with someone who is screaming because they have just been involved in a serious injury crash, have someone calling out requests to you from across the room, and have a different officer on another radio channel also talking to you all at the same time.

The likelihood of a telecommunicator handling multiple critical incidences in a single shift is astronomically higher than the individuals that work in the field. We are the lifeline between citizen and officer, and between officer and any resources they need to do their jobs effectively and safely.

In any pursuit, shooting, or critical incident, we are emotionally at that scene with our officers. We hear what's happening, we experience it with them. Then we never get closure, which adds to the stress on a telecommunicator. The effects on us will be life-long and have effects on us both physically and mentally.

I want to thank you for your time today. I would ask that you support House Bill 2701.

I further invite you to join me at my job for a first-hand experience of what I have spoken of here today.

Again, thank you for allowing my written testimony today.

Robyn Garris