

Submitter: Tami Abernethy

On Behalf  
Of:

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

Measure: HB2701

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Re: Written Testimony in Support of House Bill 2701

Tami Abernethy

Clackamas County Communications

My name is Tami Abernethy and I am submitting a written testimony in favor of House Bill 2701. I have worked as a 911 Telecommunicator/First Responder for over seven years.

A Telecommunicator plays an essential role in emergency services. They are true First Responders to many emergencies. They are the first to experience the emotions, stress, adrenaline, and trauma that is involved in an emergency. They are the First Responders to give aid, instructions, and send help, yet, they are last in the First Responder chain allowed to retire.

The number of traumatic emergencies a Telecommunicator will experience in their career is far more than any Police, Fire, or Medical personnel will, simply due to the volume of emergencies a Telecommunicator handles on a daily basis.

Telecommunicators are involved in emergencies from multiple jurisdictions and disciplines. They are expected to be essential employees that show up when the worst is happening just like Police and Fire do. We prepare for the worst, and hope for the best day in and day out.

Expecting a Telecommunicator to endure a high stress career for 30 years isn't realistic or healthy. It isn't healthy for the citizens we serve, the users we work with, or the employee. Being a Telecommunicator takes a toll on each individual mentally, physically, and emotionally. Allowing Telecommunicators to retire in the same capacity as Police and Fire at 25 years gives them the opportunity to begin decompressing all the years of trauma and stress they experienced during their career.

Please, show your support for the calm voices in the dark that are rarely seen, and

hear our voices pleading for help. Thank you for your time and consideration on this pressing matter.