



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

## Public Employees Retirement System

Headquarters:

11410 S.W. 68<sup>th</sup> Parkway, Tigard, OR

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 23700

Tigard, OR 97281-3700

(888) 320-7377

TTY (503) 603-7766

<http://oregon.gov/PERS/>

May, 8, 2023

**TO:** House Committee on Judiciary  
**FROM:** Kevin Olineck, Director, PERS  
**SUBJECT:** SB 951 Written Testimony, May 8, 2023

PERS has been working with the State Board of Parole and Post-Prison Supervision, as well as other staff within the Department of Corrections, regarding ways to ensure that Police & Fire employees who serve on the State Board of Parole and Post-Prison Supervision continue to earn Police & Fire service credit while they serve on the board.

SB 951 adds positions to the definition of “police officer” under PERS statutes to include certified parole and probation officers who serve at the State Board of Parole and Post-Prison Supervision. This bill is narrowly tailored, as it will only allow those folks who are already serving in Police & Fire positions when they serve on the Parole Board to continue to receive Police and Fire service credit. This bill does not make everyone who serves on the Parole Board “police officers” for purposes of PERS, but simply those who came to the Parole Board as police and fire PERS members.

In ORS 238.005, a “police officer” is tied to position, not to a specific person. When someone moves to a new job position, that position must be under the definition of “police officer” in ORS 238.005 for them to continue receiving Police & Fire PERS benefits.

While PERS did submit a policy paper to notify legislators of the risk of expanding the definition of “police officer” beyond the federal definition of “public safety officer”, the risk to plan qualification with adding these positions is very, very small. According to statements from the Board of Parole and Post-Prison Supervision, there are only a few high-level positions that would be filled by certified parole and probation officers. Therefore, at any one time, this classification would only keep a small number of parole officers on the PERS plan while they are employed by the Board. Regarding cost to the plan, it would be too small to calculate accurately. This employer has already agreed and reported to the legislature their cost regarding increased contributions on behalf of these members.

In closing, the bill limits the extension of the P&F classification to those who are leaving P&F positions to serve on the board and will likely return to their P&F position when their term on the board expires. This limitation and the low number of positions affected make the risk of adding these positions to the P&F definition very low.

Sincerely,

Kevin Olineck  
PERS Director