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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Honorable Rep. Kropf, Chair

FROM: Aaron Knott, MCDA Policy Director

SUBJECT: Testimony in support of HB 4156

DATE: 2/6/24

Keeping Oregon's criminal statutes abreast of new technologies is a perpetual challenge. At the time of the passage of the original anti-stalking protections in 1993, the internet was only beginning to become a regular feature of Oregon households, cellular phones largely lacked apps or cameras, and stalking from a distance was largely confined to binoculars and phone calls. 30 years later, stalking has entered the digital age. No longer confined to these simpler contacts, acts of stalking frequently involve intrusions into the personal identities of the person being stalked, including acts of doxing, identity theft, and surreptitious monitoring of financial accounts, e-mail correspondence and physical location through digital means.

HB 4156 is a needed modernization to these statutes. MCDA was honored to join an interim workgroup convened by Rep. Mannix, the architect of the original anti-stalking statute which serves as the backbone for the current law under ORS 163.732.

At its core, HB 4156 recognizes that technology has meaningfully shifted what constitutes a prohibited "contact" under our anti-stalking provisions, adding provisions to protect unwanted intrusions into a person's personal information and accounts, the use of "revenge porn" as a method of control and intimidation, attempts to steal the victim's identity, the use of GPS devices to monitor a victim's location and encouraging others to harm or harass the victim by posting their information on-line. This bill closes currently exploitable technological loopholes which empower stalking behavior. We urge the passage of HB 4156.

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