

Date:	February 6, 2024
To:	Chair Grayber, Vice Chairs Lewis and Tran, Members of the House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans
From:	Association of Oregon Counties, Jen Lewis-Goff Legislative Affairs Manager
Subject:	HB 4045

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 4045.

The Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) is a non-partisan membership organization that advocates on issues that unite all county governing bodies and have an impact on county functions, governance, budgets, and services.

As you know, counties are the state's partner in government and the boots on the ground that implement and deliver many of the services and programs created by the legislature.

Our membership spent significant time debating the provisions in HB 4045. Our commissioners deeply value all staff who serve on the front lines of our communities every day. AOC members ultimately debated and voted separately on the three different policy provisions found in the bill and have adopted different organizational positions on each.

AOC is generally opposed to proposals that: increase county costs, expand the definition of those eligible for Police and Fire benefits, and expand opportunities for early retirement. HB 4045 is in direct conflict with our established principles and will have a significant financial impact on counties. AOC is specifically opposed to the provisions creating a new PERS category for hazardous positions. Counties are already operating on thin budget margins and each incremental cost increase creates unsustainable budgetary requirements.

AOC is neutral on the addition of adding elected District Attorneys into the Police and Fire PERS program.