



OREGON ASSOCIATION CHIEFS OF POLICE
EXCELLENCE IN POLICING

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OREGON STATE SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION
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PO Box 7468 Salem OR 97303

To: Senate Committee on Labor and Business

From: Sheriff Matt English
Hood River County Sheriff's Office

Date: January 30th, 2025

Re: SB 588 - Testimony
Law Enforcement Officer PTSD

Chair Taylor and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is **Sheriff Matt English**, and I am testifying today on behalf of the **Oregon State Sheriffs' Association (OSSA) and the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police (OACP)** regarding **SB 588**. While both organizations are still in the process of reviewing this measure, we want to express our shared commitment to the wellness of Oregon's law enforcement officers.

Every day, our officers put their lives on the line to protect our communities, responding to violent crimes, fatal accidents, and dangerous situations that most people will never encounter. This work is heroic, but it takes a toll. Studies show that nearly **30% of first responders develop behavioral health conditions, including PTSD**, compared to 20% in the general population. Even more alarming, **law enforcement officers are at a higher risk of suicide than dying in the line of duty**. The cumulative exposure to trauma impacts their mental, emotional, and physical well-being, and we must ensure that those who serve and protect us receive the care and support they need.

OSSA and OACP have long advocated for services and programs that prioritize officer wellness, including better access to mental health resources and peer support programs. While we continue to review SB 588, we appreciate the focus on officer mental health and look forward to working with stakeholders to ensure that any proposed policy effectively supports those who serve our communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.