



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: House Committee on Judiciary

From: Sheriff Sam Elliot, Yamhill County Sheriff's Office
Oregon State Sheriffs' Association & Oregon Association Chiefs of Police

Date: February 5, 2025

Re: HB 2926 - Testimony in Support
Resolving professional standards cases for individuals who have separated from employment before becoming certified

Chair Kropf and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Sam Elliot, I am the Yamhill County Sheriff and I am here today on behalf of the Oregon State Sheriffs' Association and the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police to speak in favor of HB 2926.

This bill is a necessary and practical step toward improving transparency and efficiency in Oregon's law enforcement certification process. Currently, the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) lacks the authority to complete pending professional standards cases for individuals who have separated from employment before becoming certified. As a result, cases involving serious misconduct remain unresolved until another agency hires the individual, triggering the resumption of the investigation. This delay creates uncertainty for both the applicant and prospective employers, often resulting in unnecessary costs and complications.

Under the current system, law enforcement agencies frequently encounter applicants with unresolved professional standards cases, leaving agencies to make hiring decisions without knowing whether the applicant can ultimately be certified. If the individual is later deemed unfit for certification, the hiring agency is forced to separate the officer, costing taxpayers thousands of dollars and placing undue burden on both the agency and the applicant.

In March 2023, the Yamhill County Sheriff's Office (YCSO) hired an individual whose law enforcement certification was under review following their departure from a previous agency. At the time of their resignation from that agency, the review process was paused. Upon their hiring at YCSO, the review resumed, and an initial determination was made regarding their certification eligibility, which was unfavorable to the employee. In

response, the employee chose to resign in an effort to address the concerns raised, unaware that his resignation would halt any further review or action on his certification status.

In November 2024, I made the decision to rehire this individual with full awareness that the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) may ultimately determine him ineligible for certification. However, I believe he deserves the opportunity to receive a definitive ruling on his status. Furthermore, I see value in investing the necessary time to seek a resolution, as I believe in his potential and commitment to the profession.

HB 2926 ensures that DPSST can issue a final determination on professional standards cases, regardless of an individual's employment status. This change will provide law enforcement agencies with clear and reliable information during the hiring process, preventing wasted resources and ensuring that only those who meet the Board's moral fitness standards enter the profession. I urge your support for HB 2926 to enhance accountability, efficiency, and fairness in Oregon's law enforcement certification system.

Thank you for your time and consideration.