



**TO: Rep. Jason Kropf, Chair
Rep. Willy Chotzen, Vice Chair
Rep. Kim Wallan, Vice Chair
Members of House Judiciary Committee**

FR: Oregon District Attorneys Association

RE: HB 2975 - Support

February 24, 2025

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony from the Oregon District Attorneys Association (ODAA) in support of House Bill 2975. This bill brings a much needed remedy to harm being done to survivors of domestic violence.

In 2003, the Oregon Legislature passed an important law that allowed certain crimes to be designated as crimes of domestic violence. This step was essential for protecting survivors of domestic violence as it recognizes the specific harm linked to a domestic relationship, to be recognized in the law. This designation also helps inform future release decisions and offers enhancements if violence in a domestic setting continues.

However, in 2024, the Oregon Court of Appeals issued *State v. Miles*¹, which has had a dramatic effect on the way crimes of domestic violence are treated, creating a situation where separate harms and acts against the victim are not all recognized. Essentially, the Court interpreted the domestic violence designation statute to require a merging of charges for multiple offenses for domestic violence crimes. This holding means that in a case where an offender strangled, menaced, and assaulted a victim, they could only be convicted of one charge, instead of the three separate acts of harm. Further concerning is that *Miles* only conferred this interpretation to crimes of domestic violence, meaning that if the same offenses were committed in a non-domestic setting, the defendant would be convicted of all three offenses.

We are continuing to work with stakeholders to get the exact language right and aim to do nothing more than restore the law to what it was prior to *Miles*, ensuring that all separate acts of harm to a victim of domestic violence are recognized and treated fairly in a court of law.

¹ 330 Or App 1 (2024)