



March 27, 2025

House Committee on Judiciary
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE,
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 3929

Chair Kropf and members of the House Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing to express support for House Bill 3929 on behalf of the City of Beaverton, which aims to establish a testimonial privilege for communications by certain public safety employees to a peer supporter. This bill is crucial for the well-being of our employees involved in critical incidents.

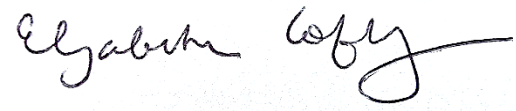
House Bill 3929 recognizes the importance of confidential counseling sessions for public safety officers, ensuring that peer counselors cannot be compelled to disclose what they were told during these sessions. This confidentiality is an essential part of the healing process for our employees who face traumatic events in their line of duty and need to speak with someone who can relate to the unique requirements of the job.

Employees involved in critical incidents often find themselves legally unable to discuss the details of the incident with anyone else to protect the integrity of the criminal investigation. Without this peer support privilege, anyone the involved employee speaks to would become a potential witness in the criminal investigation. This leaves the involved employee dealing with a myriad of emotions and issues alone. The peer support sessions provided under this bill offer a healthy outlet for these conversations to happen, allowing employees to get things off their chest and receive advice from professionals on how to cope with their experiences.

Beaverton's peer support program is a prime example of the benefits of such initiatives. It includes working with licensed therapists who can provide guidance to the employees trained through the program. Additionally, the program includes safeguard requirements that the peer support person reports any unlawful activities, ensuring that while confidentiality is maintained, the safety and legality of actions are upheld.

In conclusion, House Bill 3929 is a vital step towards supporting the mental health and well-being of our public safety employees. I urge you to pass this bill and provide our employees with the necessary support to navigate the challenges they face in their line of duty.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Coffey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Elizabeth Coffey

Assistant City Manager