



4/8/25

Sen. Floyd Prozanski, Chair
Sen. Kim Thatcher, Vice Chair
Senate Judiciary Committee

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee,

My name is Michael Brazofsky. I am currently a Lieutenant with the Oregon Department of Corrections (ODOC). I am stationed at Power River Correctional Facility (PRCF) in Baker City, Oregon. I have chosen a career that continues to give back to communities by making them safer and providing opportunities for incarcerated people to learn different skills and approaches to life, ultimately hoping to help them become better neighbors when they are released.

I have spent most of my adult life involved in activities and work that give back to the communities I have lived in. I began this path when I joined the United States Navy and served as a Sonar Technician on submarines. This experience introduced me to firefighting, which I continued to pursue by becoming a volunteer firefighter for wildland and structure fires. I have also been a business owner. During that time, I worked with troubled youth in an alternative school in Haines, Oregon, and worked with church youth groups. I have participated in outreach opportunities outside my immediate community, including traveling to Alaska to work in a Native village only accessible by plane or boat.

I began working in ODOC in 2011 at Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution, transferring to Powder River Correctional Facility (PRCF) approximately a year later. I worked through the ranks at PRCF from Officer to Lieutenant, also spending a few years as AFSCME Local 1878 President. ODOC was my first union job. Prior to working for ODOC I never had a need or a desire to be involved in a union. During my time as President, I worked to eliminate cliques within the membership, pursue the interests and concerns of all members equally, and cultivate a good working relationship with management. This constructive working relationship was a significant reason for my promotion to Lieutenant.

I believed I would continue to have a voice, and to positively impact my immediate working environment and further the goals of ODOC. Unfortunately, this has not been the case. Despite losing our voice, the protections of a union, and supposedly becoming management, the Department of administrative services (DAS), and ODOC shows a Lieutenant to be non-

management. From disparate pay practices, to not having the same ability to ask questions and raise concerns through channels available to union represented staff, retaliatory or vindictive supervisors, Lieutenants are often left with little recourse to bring concerns forward. My experience has been to receive a reminder that a Lieutenant is an “at will employee”, be told I should have pursued other undefined channels, or receive other consequences.

I am asking the legislature to remove the barriers preventing Lieutenants from being able to form a union. I am asking for the ability to have a voice to bring concerns forward in a constructive and effective manner, and to be able to pursue collaborative solutions without fear of losing my job or retaliation. Ironically, even as AFSCME Local 1878 President, I had doubts as to the need for labor contracts and representation since my work experiences prior to ODOC had never exposed me to the experiences I have endured, since my promotion to Lieutenant. I strongly believe now that the only way to receive equal treatment in a safe work environment is through union representation and a collective bargaining agreement.

Please support the dash one amendments to SB 195.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.
Michael Brazofsky