

Good morning, Co-Chair Broadman, and members of the subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today on House Bill 5014, and for including rural law enforcement in this important conversation.

My name is Rick Stokoe, and I proudly serve as Chief of Police for the Boardman Police Department in Eastern Oregon. Like many small departments, we're expected to do more with less. We're fortunate to have both a full-time detective and a narcotics detective— two hardworking professionals who are constantly balancing complex investigations. But the truth is, like many agencies across the state, our resources are stretched thin. We've seen organized drug trafficking, large-scale theft rings, and even human trafficking operations moving through our region. These aren't isolated cases. They're part of broader, coordinated criminal efforts that don't stop at city, county or state lines. And they demand something more than just local effort.

We often hit barriers— not because we don't have the will— but because we don't always have the personnel, legal tools, or specialized expertise to push these cases forward. That's why I appreciate the direction of the Attorney General's Organized Crime Proposal within this bill. The idea of regional DOJ teams—with special agents and embedded prosecutors— is a strong step in the right direction.

For small agencies like mine, having access to that kind of support can make all the difference— between a stalled investigation and a successful case. But here's what's critical: These teams need to be responsive. They need to be mobile. And they need to understand the realities of rural law enforcement. Our officers cover wide areas, with limited backup. We're juggling multiple roles every day. And organized crime is evolving—yes—even in small towns. We're ready to be part of the solution. We're ready to do the work. Just give us the tools—give us the support— and we'll continue protecting our communities with integrity, with resilience, and with the commitment we've always had.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

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