

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

February 9, 2026

Senator Floyd Prozanski, Chair
Senator Kim Thatcher, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary
Oregon State Legislature

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee,

As the Mayor of Springfield, I am writing in strong support of SB 1530 and Section 1 of SB 1516, which strengthens Oregon law by expanding the crime of aggravated harassment to include threats made against public officials and their families in specified circumstances. This is an important step toward ensuring that public servants can perform their duties without fear of intimidation, harassment, or violence.

Unfortunately, too many public officials—including local elected leaders—know firsthand the profound impact that threatening behavior can have, not only on the targeted individual but also on their families, their sense of safety, and their ability to serve their communities effectively. Whether threats are made through direct confrontation, anonymous messages, or electronic communication, this conduct goes beyond ordinary criticism and crosses into dangerous territory. It undermines public service and can discourage qualified, community-minded individuals from ever stepping forward to serve.

While Oregon has existing laws that address some threatening behavior, including menacing and stalking, those statutes do not fully address the reality of threats aimed at public officials because of their roles. SB 1530 and Section 1 of SB 1516 provide needed clarity by recognizing that threats directed at public officials, particularly those communicated electronically, in writing, or by phone, are a distinct and growing form of harassment that should be addressed before it escalates into violence. Both appropriately define the conduct as intentionally subjecting a public official (or their family member) to alarm by conveying a threat of serious physical injury, when the threat is made because of the public official's duties or status.

Threats against public officials do more than target an individual, they destabilize public trust in governance and weaken the system of service that our communities rely on. If we want public servants to continue working on behalf of the people, they need to know that Oregon takes these threats seriously and will respond with appropriate accountability.

The City of Springfield urges your support for SB 1530 and Section 1 in SB 1516.

Sincerely,



Sean VanGordon
Mayor, City of Springfield