



"The Northwest's Premier
Rural Living Experience"

Baker City Police Department

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March 25, 2013

Public Safety Ways & Means Subcommittee
Co-Chair Senator Jackie Winters
Co-Chair Representative Jennifer Williamson

Dear Chairs and Committee Members:

As you are aware, the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) provides an immeasurable resource to the citizens of the State of Oregon, along with the women and men sworn to protect them. From ensuring that professional standards are upheld and managing certifications, to providing comprehensive training at the academy and around our state, DPSST impacts virtually every aspect of public safety.

For my agency in Eastern Oregon, the biggest impact we have felt over the past several years with relation to cuts within DPSST has to do with the reduction in regional training. The vast majority of training now sponsored by DPSST, and other agencies for that matter, occurs along the I-5 corridor. The city of Portland is 5 hours from Baker City, while Salem is 6 hours away. When I look at training announcements I no longer look to see what course is being offered, but where it is being held. Since budget reductions have impacted my training line I have to take that approach, as an 8 hour training class in Salem turns into 2 -3 days of commitment for our rural agency. Unfortunately we have missed out on many valuable training classes that are not offered in Eastern Oregon and we have had to look at trainings in Idaho that may not be entirely applicable to Oregon standards.

These cuts have come during a time in history when quality training has never been more needed as the diversity of crimes are expanding rapidly; our agencies are under a microscope from a litigious society and our calls for service are increasing due to the loss of resources in other areas of the criminal justice system and social services. It is a domino effect, which is compounding the burden on public safety professionals and will eventually lead to more mistakes being made and the degradation of our services.

Through the years Oregon has prided itself with some of the most competent public safety personnel in our nation. Training is one of the most critical elements in maintaining that standard. I urge you to support the DPSST budget and maintain their vital funding, for the sake of the communities we serve.

Sincerely,

Wyn Lohner

Wyn Lohner, Chief of Police
