



CITY OF
PORTLAND, OREGON

Charlie Hales, Mayor
Amanda Fritz, Commissioner
Nick Fish, Commissioner
Dan Saltzman, Commissioner
Steve Novick, Commissioner

March 28, 2013

Senator Chip Shields
900 Court St. NE, S-421
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Shields:

We are writing to express strong concern over HB 2418, which would undermine our ability to effectively discipline our public safety officers, including firefighters, and to implement important reforms to the Police Bureau.

HB 2418 proposes to define "supervisory employees" for purposes of public employee collective bargaining law as those who can impose economic discipline. Under our form of government only the Mayor or the Commissioner in Charge has actual authority to authorize economic discipline. This means that all current supervisors, even including the Police and Fire Chief, may be subject to inclusion in the bargaining unit. This is problematic for a variety of reasons, but none more immediate than ensuring that the implementation of the recent United States Department of Justice (DOJ) settlement agreement is completed appropriately and effectively, and that we maintain our ability to discipline our officers when their actions part with City policy.

In order to have effective public safety organizations we need supervisors who accept, implement and enforce our policies. Inclusion of supervisors in a bargaining unit creates an inherent conflict of interest for the supervisor as they attempt to carry out and implement City policies that often contrast with the interests of the bargaining unit. For purposes of the DOJ settlement, this bill may result in members of a bargaining unit supervising implementation of the very policies their union is currently suing to enjoin. As our Police Bureau undergoes fundamental reforms it is critical that the integrity of the Bureau's management structure remain intact.

This bill could severely hinder our efforts to reform police practices and implement the changes required by the DOJ settlement, and would compromise the structure of our public safety bureaus. For these reasons we ask you to oppose HB 2418.

Respectfully,

Charlie Hales
Mayor

Amanda Fritz
Commissioner

Nick Fish
Commissioner

Dan Saltzman
Commissioner

Steve Novick
Commissioner