



TO: Members of the Senate General Government Committee  
FROM: Cindy Robert, City of Medford  
RE: HB 2418 opposition  
DATE: May 15, 2013

HB 2418 requires that only an employee having the authority to impose *economic discipline* be considered a supervisor for collective bargaining purposes. Many senior members of Medford's police and fire department are relied on for day-to-day oversight of the force. Their level of expertise, their experience, their management skills and their ability to meet the leadership roles needed for effective public safety place them in a distinct and separate management role. To the detriment of that structure, HB 2418 would put these managers into the same collective bargaining unit as the employees they manage.

As example of the real effect of this legislation, police sergeants are first line supervisors, and are distinct from the employees they supervise on a day-to-day basis. If sergeants become bargaining unit members, it will be necessary to shift some of their duties and place greater management burdens on a smaller number of supervisors in the next line up, police lieutenants. The potential effect of moving the line between supervisors and bargaining unit members would be the need for more lieutenants, hence an increased cost to the force and to the local government.

An unintended, and unfortunate, result of this bill may well be the shift of economic discipline authority to more members of the police force in order to relieve higher-level managers from paperwork burden. This shift in rank in a very structured environment, like that of public safety, will not only be detrimental to the finances of local government, but also, and more importantly, to the public at large.

It is also important to acknowledge that the role of a Sergeant may be different for various forces around the state. This is how my Chief explained it:

Sergeants have "**effective recommendation**" to me on the hiring and the termination of employees. Sergeants make/change schedules, discipline, train, and assign work. They approve or deny time off, and they are to be contacted when employees call in sick. They handle complaints...and most importantly they **investigate complaints** on line personnel. Sergeants **conduct the applicant background investigations** that are the determining factor to the hiring process. I review this background and make the final decision...but the background is what counts.

After hours Sergeants are the "de facto" Chief of Police. They have the **full confidence and authority** to call in off duty personnel for assists/work, make statements to the media on current events, represent the Department at public functions, all the way up to activating the SWAT Team on a critical incident. Sergeants run the show after hours and on weekends.

There is a clear distinction at Medford PD between a represented sworn employee and a Sergeant. The **responsibility** alone sets them apart.

Using "economic discipline", as an arbitrary indicator of who is management and who is not, is impractical, imprudent and not without impact. We urge your opposition to HB 2418.