

MEASURE: HB 4125
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Oregon State House of Representatives
House Committee on Judiciary
900 Court St, NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: HB 4125

Chairman Baker and Members of the Committee:

In the last few months the role of Reserve Peace Officers has made headlines. Unfortunately, the news was the murder of Oregon City Police Reserve Officer Robert Libke.

As one who served 34 years in law enforcement, 25 years as a Reserve Officer, I commend the Oregon Legislature for their recent efforts in recognizing the service of Officer Libke and Multnomah County Sheriff's Reserve Sergeant Collins and Reserve Deputy Whitehead who died in 1993 when their patrol unit crashed, and for expanding the benefits to the families of Reserve Officers killed or disabled in the line of duty.

HB 4125 will also correct disparity in Oregon law. Currently the murder of a Peace Officer (or the attempted murder) is an aggravated offense. The language is such that this same enhanced charge does not apply if the victim is a Reserve Peace Officer.

While an assailant is not likely to make the distinction between a Reserve Officer and a Full-time Peace Officer, should he be rewarded and charged with a lesser crime because of a fluke in the law? His intent would be the same; one would reasonably conclude that the charge and punishment should also be the same.

HB 4125 would not have made a difference in this recent tragedy, but what if the assailant acted with the knowledge and intent to focus on a Reserve Peace Officer? The risks to a Reserve Peace Officer is little different from a Full-time Peace Officer. The consequences of taking the life of either should be the same.

Please endorse HB 4125 for consideration by the entire Oregon Legislature.

Respectfully,



Thomas D. Freedland, D.C.
(Reserve Lieutenant – Retired/Honorably Separated)