

Testimony for Senate Bill 128

Good Morning Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committee:

My name is Michele Roediger. My address is 545 Primrose Drive in Central Point.

I support the proposed Senate Bill 128, especially Section 4E, Subsection E and ask that you do too.

I have been a Telecommunicator for 30 years for 2 different state agencies.

The State Police are unique from other agencies as the workload has a larger parameter of multitasking responsibilities than a city or county center does. An OSP Telecommunicator is responsible for dispatching State Police patrol offices for multiple counties at one time. They may be responsible for anywhere from 8-9 counties, each which has multiple OSP officers in each county. This breaks down as more Telecommunicators come on duty. Then we average 3 or more counties each, depending on the dispatch staffing. The officers cannot hear each other between counties. We also dispatch for Game officers, drug teams, detectives, prison transport units and BLM units.

In contrast, City- and County-only call centers dispatch within their respective city or county. They have a dedicated dispatcher who only handles the Fire department, as well as one for the Medical EMS, one for the law enforcement department and one for the 911 calls.

In addition to OSP having to dispatch for several counties at the same time, we are also responsible for answering the calls that come into our center. Some are transferred from a 911 center.

The Southern Command Center (SCC) is also unique in OSP itself as we take 911 calls from Josephine County every day when they do not have a deputy staffed. We handle high priority in-progress calls while multitasking using the radio for requests by the troopers. This also includes updating the officers who are enroute to these calls with current information.

This bill would help OSP Telecommunicators be compensated for their additional duties and give us a fighting chance to retain current employees and keep new employees, who are often trained and then go work for another agency which pays more and has less multitasking responsibilities. Other agencies actively try to recruit those trained at OSP. It would also allow for an increased staffing level, which would greatly reduce Overtime and Sick calls as well as burnout stress rate. Northern Illinois University has published a study showing the correlation of the stress from the high priority first responder calls to that of PTSD symptoms published in 2012. <http://www.niu.edu/mediarelations/news/2012/03/911-ptsd.shtml>

I thank you for your consideration of Senate Bill 128.

Sincerely,

Michele Roediger
Oregon State Police Officers Association