

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 128

My name is Stephanie Nordhagen, I have been a Telecommunicator 2 for Oregon State Police for over 24 years. I have been part of our dispatch centers since shortly after the creation of the regional centers. Our centers morphed from 4 regional centers down to 2 regional centers. I have witnessed more responsibilities due to the elimination of designated call takers, more geographic areas, and more “multi stations” stacking being added to our dispatch staff. The pay has not kept up with the added responsibilities and work load.

The chronic manpower shortage is critical. The Oregon State Police has fallen well behind industry standard in regards to pay, an average of 26% behind. The lack of pay is a major point in experienced dispatchers willing to come to the OSP. This is also a factor in experienced dispatchers, ones we have trained, leaving our agency and going to 911 centers that pay more. Another major point is finding personnel who are able to multi task to the high levels required with Oregon State Police. We dispatch multiple counties at the same time via radio and also the dispatchers answer all the phone calls coming into the dispatch center. It takes a very skilled ear to be able to juggles multiple transmissions via several different radios at the same time while taking calls for service from the public via phone. If we do not get skilled dispatchers in our centers, it creates a safety issue for both our law enforcement officers and for the public for whom we are trying to help.

Oregon State Police’s workload is also unique from a 911 centers. We not only dispatch for law enforcement officers, but also for Crime Lab, Explosives Team, Swat Team, BLM units, Fish & Game officers, Prison Transport Units, State Parks Dept to name a few. We are taking 911 calls from Josephine County SO 7 days a week for 12.5 hours a day and we are doing this without caller id or the ability to trace a call. Oregon State Police is picking up more of the workload for other law enforcement agencies in the state as their budget fail.

Senate Bill 128 will bring the pay closer to a competitive level so we can hire and hold on to experienced and well trained dispatchers. Please support Senate Bill 128.

Thank you,

Stephanie Nordhagen,TCII

Oregon State Police Officers Association