



ROD UNDERHILL, District Attorney for Multnomah County

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March 9, 2015

Chair Sara Gelser
Oregon State Senate
Human Services and Early Childhood Committee

Re: **TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF SENATE BILL 501**
HUMAN SERVICES AND EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMITTEE TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 3:00 PM

Dear Chair Gelser and Members of the Committee:


I have worked as a Deputy District Attorney in Multnomah County for the past 15 years. The majority of my career has involved prosecution of crimes committed in the Gresham and East Multnomah County Region. EMGET has been an essential partner during that time. My work in this area has included the prosecution of gang homicides, gang shootings, gang assaults, kidnappings, major theft organization, human trafficking crimes, child abuse, child homicides, juvenile gang related crimes, misdemeanors and even traffic violations involving gangs. During my career I have observed firsthand the growth of gang violence in the region. Recently, I developed a community organization designed to bring together existing resources from various sources including non-profit groups, governmental agencies, faith based groups, and community associations to improve livability in this region. The Rockwood/Rosewood Enrichment and Neighborhood Enforcement Workgroup (R.E.N.E.W.) was founded upon the goal of improving community safety and livability in the region. EMGET is a key partner in this effort.

Throughout my career, EMGET has been a shining example of a collaborative police effort to combat crimes which have a real impact on the daily lives of the citizens and children of the region. I have witnessed firsthand how critical the officers of EMGET are to the region. Many of the major crimes I have prosecuted directly resulted from the diligent efforts of EMGET. This team of officers provides critical and highly effective gang crime policing which directly results in the successful prosecution of violent offenders.

This policing model allows officers to understand and learn about the constantly changing dynamics of gang culture and crime. EMGET's presence on the streets of East Multnomah County provides local residents with a greater, and needed, sense of safety. EMGET has never been more key to the community than now. Gang crime in the Portland Metro area has evolved and increased in frequency and violence in the East County region. The cross jurisdictional team is needed now more than ever.

Regards,

ROD UNDERHILL
District Attorney
Multnomah County, Oregon

By: 
Nathan Vasquez
Deputy District Attorney