

March 17, 2015

Senate Judiciary Committee

Senator Floyd Prozanski, Chair

Senator Jeff Kruse, Vice Chair

Senator Ginny Burdick

Senator Sara Gelser

Senator Kim Thatcher

Senators, my name is Bob Sergi and I just recently retired after 35 years in law enforcement. I spent 25 years in Oregon as a public safety officer retiring from the Jackson County Sheriff's Office as a Lieutenant. I have been a member of the Fraternal Order of Police for approximately 10 years and the former President of the Southern Oregon Lodge 15. I am also one of the founding members of the Southern Oregon Lodge.

I want to thank you for considering this most important bill, SB 743. As a member the of law enforcement community I have firsthand knowledge of the need to strengthen the officer's bill of rights in this great state of Oregon. The last 15 years of my career I was in a management position without the protection of a bargaining unit contract or union.

In 2014 I ran for Sheriff in Jackson County running against my boss. I ran for Sheriff after witnessing an administration rife with cronyism, favoritism, and in my opinion corruption. Before I decided to run, the Sheriff tried to demote me from Lieutenant to Sergeant and transfer me to graveyard corrections, this was after I was transferred from Patrol Commander to Administrative Lieutenant as a form of discipline. There were no allegations of wrong doing and no internal investigation of any kind. To this day I was never told why. I can only surmise it was because I was not one of his cronies and had very different views on leadership and management. My demotion was overturned by the County Administrator but nothing could be done about my job transfer. I was 58 at that time doing a Sergeant's job at Lieutenants pay working graveyard, again there were no allegations of wrong doing and no internal investigation.

After losing in the primary the Sheriff fired me for not sharing his vision. And again there was no wrong doing only a different view of leadership and management style. That decision was also overturned by the County Administrator and I was reinstated. By that time I had enough and was eligible to retire.

If the proposed amendments to SB 743 would have been part of the officer's bill of rights this kind of unethical treatment would not have been possible. I urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to recommend passage of this bill.

Sincerely,

Bob Sergi