



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Public Safety Standards and Training

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DATE: April 16, 2015

TO: House Judiciary Committee
Jeff Barker, Chair
Andy Olson, Vice-Chair
Brent Barton
Mitch Greenlick
Wayne Krieger
Ann Lininger
Bill Post
Sherrie Sprenger
Jennifer Williamson

FROM: Linsay Hale, Professional Standards Division Director

SUBJECT: House Bill 3388

Background: HB 3388 would allow reserve police officers who are sponsored by a law enforcement unit an opportunity to attend the 16-week Basic Police Course delivered by the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST). The bill requires sponsored reserve officers pay for the course using cash or any other educational benefit afforded to a veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States (G.I. Bill). Upon completion of the training, the reserve officer becomes designated as a certified reserve officer by the sponsoring law enforcement unit and may be employed as a police officer in this state. Additionally, HB 3388 requires the DPSST to increase Basic Police class sizes by no more than a 25% to accommodate training reserve officers. Finally, HB 3388 requires the DPSST to conduct a study and report to the legislature by September 15, 2020 on the impact of this bill on the budgets of law enforcement units and the DPSST, recruitment of reserve officers, certified reserve officers and police officers and the maintenance of public safety.

Effect of HB 3388 on the DPSST:

Basic Police Courses: In order to maximize the learning environment and provide for an adequate student to instructor ratio, Basic Police classes are currently limited to 40 students. In recent history DPSST has had challenges offering timely training to full-time police officers being hired by law enforcement units. To date there is an approximate 90-day delay for the Basic Police Course due partly to staffing and budget reductions at the DPSST but also a recent increase in hiring of police officers around the state.

HB 3388 would require the DPSST to increase the class size of Basic Police Courses to accommodate the training of reserve officers by no more than 25%. To avoid a modification to the DPSST training facilities and the course curriculum that would be required with the addition of up to 10 additional students per class, the DPSST would be required to conduct a minimum of two to three additional Basic Police Courses per biennium and hire additional instructors to accommodate to increase in students.

DPSST Police Certification: ORS 181.665 grants the DPSST the authority to certify individuals who meet and maintain the minimum standards for employment and training required of police officers, to include certified reserve officers¹, in this state. These minimum standards have been established by the Board on Public Safety Standards and Training and include, but are not limited to, an age requirement, citizenship, demonstration of academic proficiency and moral fitness standards. [OAR 259-008-0010] Current practice dictates that all standards be met prior to an officer being allowed entrance into any Basic Course offered by the DPSST to maximize the chances of successful completion of the training and ultimate certification of the officer. HB 3388 does not require these same requirements be met, which could potentially result in reserve officers paying for the Basic Police Course who are ultimately unable to successfully complete the Course or be awarded police certification under the current laws and rules.

Additionally, HB 3388 grants the authority to designate reserve officers as a certified reserve officer to the officer's law enforcement unit upon completion of the Basic Police Course. The bill also allows these officers be employed as a police officer by any law enforcement unit. Again, DPSST would not recognize this certification unless all of the minimum standards and requirements established by law and rule have been met, which would include making application for certification with the DPSST.

DPSST Business Services: HB 3388 requires that the training of reserve officers be paid directly to the DPSST, making the DPSST responsible for tracking, invoicing and seeking collections for these accounts. Additionally, as a recipient of educational benefits for veterans, ORS 408.050 requires the DPSST supply on a monthly basis a certified statement to the Director of Veteran's Affairs a "... report of attendance and general attitude and aptitude of each beneficiary, and the number of hours of recitation, lectures or other training scheduled, and a statement of the beneficiary's diligence and progress." The DPSST's Business Services Division is not currently structured or staffed to perform these functions.

Fiscal Impact: While the ultimate fiscal impact is indeterminate, the DPSST estimates a fiscal impact of just under \$300,000 to account for the hiring of additional staff to administer the program. Additionally, the DPSST anticipates direct costs of \$15,000 per student for the training costs (instruction, meals, ammunition, fuel, laundry, etc) for a total of \$1,800,000. These costs would be offset by payments from the reserve officers, however, the DPSST would require this expenditure limitation and offsetting revenue authorization added to its budget to be able to make the expenditures and receive the revenue. Finally, as payments for reserve officer training would come directly from the student, it is unknown what percentage of these students will fail to pay their tuition in full and will be sent to collections, leaving the DPSST to cover these costs pending collections recovery.

¹ The certified reserve officer program has never been funded. DPSST does not currently certify reserve officers.
