



Oregon State Police Officers' Association

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OREGON STATE POLICE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

Date: May 12, 2015
To: Senate Judiciary Committee
Subject: House Bill 2357-A

The Oregon State Police Officers Association endorses HB 2357-A.

Current law prohibits carrying firearms in various locations, but includes exemptions for officers "while they are acting within the scope of employment." The language is vague and has been inconsistently enforced across the state. Furthermore, ambiguity exists with honorably retired law enforcement officers carrying concealed even with HR 218—the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act of 2004.

Police officers are charged with protecting the public and enforcing the law, and they take this responsibility seriously whether they are on or off-duty. Many of our members feel responsible for carrying a concealed weapon with them at all times. Officers also cite concerns for personal safety, as they may be more likely targeted by the criminals that they have interacted with in the line-of-duty.

Honorably retired officers have served their communities and have earned the privilege to carry a firearm—concealed—without obtaining an Oregon Concealed Weapons Permit. Retired officers have demonstrated firearm safety and diligence. In terms of firearms, they understand the responsibilities associated with carrying a concealed handgun.

Our organization and members support a clarification of the current law through HB 2357-A, which states that an off-duty officer can legally carry their weapon in public and honorably retired officers can carry concealed.

Police officers (past and present) are trained in using their weapons judiciously and with the highest regard for public safety. House Bill 2357-A fills the gap in current law and without question is a common sense approach for Oregon law enforcement officers and retirees.

Respectfully,

Michael S. Iwai, Vice President
Oregon State Police Officers' Association