



CITY OF
PORTLAND, OREGON

Charlie Hales, Mayor
Amanda Fritz, Commissioner
Nick Fish, Commissioner
Dan Saltzman, Commissioner
Steve Novick, Commissioner

May 21, 2015

Senator Floyd Prozanski, Chair
Senate Judiciary Committee
900 Court St. NE, Hearing Room 343
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee:

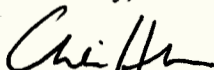
We write to urge your support for HB 2571-A. This legislation will enable law enforcement agencies to effectively implement body-worn cameras for police officers.

Body-worn cameras are a critical piece of the City of Portland's continued efforts on police reform and accountability pursuant to the recent settlement agreement between the City and the United States Department of Justice. Body-worn cameras provide an opportunity to strengthen officer accountability and build community trust. A recent study found a 40 percent reduction in total complaints for officers wearing cameras, and a 75 percent reduction in use of force complaints.

HB 2571-A removes barriers that currently impede the implementation of body-worn cameras. Specifically, it extends the statutory exemption in *ORS 165.540* given to police officers operating mobile dash cameras to police officers wearing body-worn cameras. It also creates a public records exemption for body-worn camera footage. As body-worn cameras become increasingly popular, agencies nationwide are receiving blanket requests for body camera footage. These requests can amount to hundreds of hours of footage and present significant privacy concerns, as police interactions often take place inside homes and involve traumatic and sensitive interactions with citizens. The public records exemption in HB 2571-A effectively balances individual privacy and transparency in police work and allows reasonable access to footage through public records requests if a district attorney, or ultimately a judge, determines that disclosure is in the public interest.


Body-worn cameras are an important tool for law enforcement to improve officer accountability and public trust. This bill provides necessary clarifications and safeguards to allow law enforcement agencies in Oregon to fully implement body-worn cameras. We respectfully request your support for HB 2571-A.

Sincerely,


Charlie Hales
Mayor


Dan Saltzman
Commissioner


Amanda Fritz
Commissioner


Steve Novick
Commissioner


Nick Fish
Commissioner