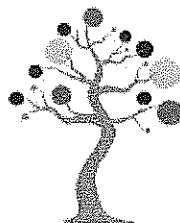


from the Desk of Sara Gelsen
SG



PRESAGE CONSULTING AND TRAINING

HB 2177 Retains Existing Statutes
Governing Privacy Protections for Survivors

Dear Members of the Oregon Senate:

February, 12, 2015

My name is Lynn Fairweather and I am a domestic violence consultant, speaker, and author who has worked in the abuse response and prevention field for the past 22 years. As a survivor of domestic violence and stalking, and as a nationally recognized expert in safety planning and survivor assistance, I can speak to the critical importance of protections for the confidentiality and privacy of identifying information. For survivors, these are more than principles - they are practical tools to provide safety.

I own an Oregon-based firm called Presage Consulting and Training, through which I advise public and private sector professionals on how to keep victims safe and prevent future attacks. Many abusers attempt to track their victim after the relationship ends, in order to continue their campaign of harassment and threats. Therefore, reducing a victim's accessibility and vulnerability to their perpetrator is a key goal of my work. One of the tools I frequently use to accomplish this is the Attorney General's Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) (ORS 192.820 et seq) or the general Non-Disclosure of records protections under ORS 192.445. These statutes prohibit the disclosure of residential address, telephone, and email address information of qualifying individuals. If a victim of domestic or sexual violence participates in the ACP program, ORS 192.844 prohibits the disclosure of locate information by a public body. Even if a victim does not participate, he or she can still access the non-disclosure protection offered by ORS 192.445.

While I do not take a position on voter registration policy matters in general and have no position on HB 2177 specifically, I was asked whether, in my view, the passage of this bill would impact the protections provided by the ACP program and Chapter 192. These laws currently protect against disclosure by the DMV, and other public bodies, and I see nothing in the proposed legislation that would repeal these protections. I am comfortable that these statutes would continue to prohibit the DMV from sharing information for qualifying individuals who have sought protection via the ACP or Chapter 192. As this bill (with your help), moves through the legislative process, it is critical that these protections remain intact.

It appears that passage of HB 2177 would provide an opportunity for domestic violence advocates to participate in rulemaking and policy discussions around increased notice for all individuals applying for licenses at DMV about the ACP program or how to apply for protection under chapter 192. Increased notice of these protections would be of benefit to all survivors. It is my sincere hope that you will support this important bill, so we can continue to recommend the ACP program as a vital safety tool for people who have already lost much of their privacy and freedom as a result of domestic or sexual abuse. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lynn Fairweather, MSW - President of Presage Consulting and Training, LLC
503-956-5444 or lynnfairweather@ymail.com

HB 2177 Retains Existing Statutes
Governing Privacy Protections for Survivors