



Multnomah County Sheriff's Office
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Exemplary service for a safe, livable community

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March 9, 2017

Oregon State Legislature
Members of the Joint Ways and Means Public Safety Subcommittee
C/O Senator Jackie Winters and Representative Duane Stark, Co-Chairs
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for OSP/HB 5031

Dear Senator Winters, Representative Stark, and Members of the Public Safety Subcommittee,

The Multnomah County Sheriff's Office (MCSO), expresses its support of the Department of State Police (OSP), in its funding requests. MCSO shares in OSP's mission to serve with a diverse workforce who are dedicated to protect people, property and natural resources. MCSO especially recognizes OSP contributions to public safety - because OSP is the primary provider of law enforcement services in many parts of rural Oregon, safety is in effect improved in Multnomah County. Criminal acts do not respect jurisdictional boundaries.

MCSO values and relies upon its working relationship with OSP in the areas of patrol, investigations, forensic services, information technologies and more. A particularly important function at OSP takes place through the Firearms Instant Check System (FICS) Program. FICS conducted over 300,000 background checks required by law in the year 2016. This level of activity reflects dramatic increases in total number of transactions since 2012, and mirrors requests at the national level.

As a public safety executive, I am humbled by the occurrence of gun violence in the great State of Oregon. Approximately 1,700 reported offenses involving a gun took place in Multnomah County alone between April 2015 and December 2016. Thus as Sheriff, I am working with OSP to comprehensively reduce gun violence in our community.

Data supports OSP's need for more FICS call takers to process ever increasing demands for background checks. Individual checks may be complex and detailed efforts, requiring review of identification options and a myriad of arrest charges, in order to promote responsible gun ownership. Local public safety entities cannot do this job.

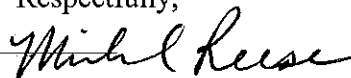
MCSO wants to work with OSP collaboratively. Local public safety entities must pick up on OSP's ability to conduct background checks. We must do more to understand how firearms involved in crimes enter our community. This may be through the coordinated dispatch of local patrol to the location of a denied background check or through trace investigations, which unveil the history of a gun from the crime scene to its point of origin. Together, we make Oregon safe and equitable, and ensure public safety services are cost efficient.

The partnership between MCSO and OSP does not stop with gun violence reduction, but carries over to the Forensic Services Division (FSD). As the sole provider of most forensic science services, criminal justice system stakeholders need OSP to provide timely and accurate scientific, technical and investigative support. The ability of the criminal justice system to deliver justice turns on FSD's ability to meet and maintain the highest of professional standards in processing our crime scenes and other evidence.

Great strides have been made with regard to SAFE Kits over the last few years – new law was enacted, grant funding was awarded, and protocols were established. MCSO supports OSP's proposed efficiencies for FSD labs and looks forward to further direction and training from OSP to standardize submissions from local public safety entities such as MCSO.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and in advance for your support of OSP.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Reese".

Michael Reese
SHERIFF