



**To: Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee**

**From:** Chief Pete Kerns, Eugene Police Department  
Oregon Association Chiefs of Police and Oregon State Sheriffs' Association

**Date:** April 25, 2017

**Re: Support for HB 2611**

Chair Prozanski and members of the committee, for the record, my name is Pete Kerns. I am the Chief of Police for the City of Eugene and I am here today on behalf of the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police and the Oregon State Sheriffs' Association in support of HB 2611.

During the 2009 Legislative Session, SB 971 was passed to create a remedy for agencies that lose an officer to employment by another police agency shortly after they complete the mandated 16 weeks of basic academy training and their post basic "field training". Unfortunately, some provisions within the law are unclear and friction between agencies was resulting when an agency sought reimbursement. In order to create increased clarity, a workgroup was tasked with bringing legislation to create clarity and clear direction. The workgroup was comprised of leaders from a cross-section of different sized agencies including city, county, tribal, university and state police departments and agencies. HB 2611 is the consensus product of the workgroup.

As you know, during the training period, police agencies pay an officers salary from the time of hire through their 16 weeks of basic training and during the field training that takes place back at the agency following basic training. You can imagine the impact on an agency when they make this investment only to have another agency hire their officer away shortly after completing their training.

The effects of losing competent personnel in the early years of a career range from devastating to annoying for departments. The costs may be roughly the same for agencies of all sizes, but the impacts on small agencies can be particularly difficult. In a time when the employment market for law enforcement is enormously competitive, the need for clarity this legislation hopes to address is particularly important.

The key provisions of HB 2611 include:

- Bill seeks to create guidelines for the purpose of seeking reimbursement by an agency who has hired and paid an officer's salary and benefits during the statutorily required training for certification and that officer being subsequently hired. Since certifications, once earned, are portable, the subsequent hiring agency would avoid financial detriment by not having to pay salary and benefits while the officer is in training.
- SB 2611 defines what costs are qualifying expenses subject to reimbursement (salary and benefits during training required for basic certification – includes basic course and a specified amount of time spent in field training field training. Pre- & Post-Academies do not qualify.)
- Geared towards protecting smaller agencies with limited budgets and resources.
- Original law was established in 2009 to protect smaller agencies from “poaching”.
- Current and proposed language prohibiting considering potential for reimbursement costs as part of the hiring process.
- OACCD (Community Corrections Directors) asked parole & probation officers to be excluded from the bill.
- For clarification, SB 2611 clarifies that the date of reimbursement is from the date of hire, as opposed to the date training is completed.
- Reimbursement amount is prorated based on amount of time officer was employed with the original agency prior to being reemployed by a subsequent agency to recognize a return on investment.
- Specifies that the request must be made within 6 months from the date of employment with the subsequent agency.
- Requesting reimbursement is optional, not required. A subsequent employing agency may choose not to seek any reimbursement.

We thank the committee for your consideration and urge your support for HB 2611