



To: Members of the House Judiciary Committee

From: Kevin Campbell
Oregon Association Chiefs of Police and the Oregon State Sheriffs' Association

Date: February 26, 2018

Re: Support for SB 1562-A – Strangulation Elements and Penalties

Chair Barker, Vice-Chair Williamson, Vice-Chair Olson and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Kevin Campbell and I am here today on behalf of the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police and the Oregon State Sheriffs' Association to offer testimony in support of SB 1562-A. We support the addition of "applying pressure to the chest of a person for the purpose of impeding their breathing or circulation" as an element that constitutes strangulation and we support increasing the penalty for strangulation to a felony.

While every incident of domestic violence is awful in its own way, strangulation is particularly serious because the crime includes an element of power and control and an increased level of lethality. According to a special issue of the *Domestic Violence Report*, "Many domestic violence offenders...do not strangle their partners to kill them; they strangle them to let them know they can kill them—any time they wish. Once victims know this truth, they live under the power and control of their abusers day in and day out." The sad reality is that, without intervention, there is an increased likelihood that these abusers will kill their victims because of the progressive nature of the crime.

Over the past year, the Oregon State Sheriffs' Association in coordination with the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training and the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police worked to develop a series of domestic violence training videos designed for police officers, deputy sheriffs and state troopers designed to prepare them to handle these incidents with best practice and the needs of victims in mind. Because of the unique nature, seriousness and life threatening nature of strangulation, we dedicated an entire training video specifically to these crimes..

We urge the committee to pass SB 1562-A and appreciate your consideration of the unique elements of crimes of strangulation that argue for higher penalties.