

Dear Senator Courtney, Representative Kotek, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Julia Gies. I am a retired nurse residing in Washington County. I am writing to urge you to include the draft language of LC 79 in the final bill that goes to the floor.

As we all know, allowing local county prosecutors to investigate and prosecute officers of the law for excessive use of force isn't working, and never has. There is a reason why. It is not that local prosecutors are uncaring or incompetent. In fact, most of them are dedicated and hard-working public servants. However in their day-to-day jobs, they work hand-in-hand with local police and sheriffs. In fact they depend on each other for the successful execution of their duties. So it really isn't fair to ask local prosecutors to investigate and prosecute their closest allies, the law enforcement officers they work so closely with.

The language of LC 79 requires that the state attorney general appoint a special investigator and to prosecute violations of law related to excessive force and resulting in serious injury. This change from current practice will go a long way to obtaining justice for victims of excessive force and to hold law officers accountable.

A significant problem with LC 79 is that it requires *a law enforcement agency* to notify the attorney general when an employee engages in excessive physical force. There must be an avenue for the aggrieved party, the family, or community members to make the notification of excessive force to the attorney general. The complaint needs to come only when force results in death or serious physical injury results. So it is important for the term *serious physical injury* be defined, either in the statute, or in administrative rule-making.

Thank you to everyone serving on this committee for your work and attention to this important issue.

Respectfully yours,
Julia Gies
Washington County, OR

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