



STATEMENT RE: LC 743

(UNIFORM STANDARDS)

To: Joint Committee On Transparent Policing and Use of Force Reform
From: Michael Selvaggio, Oregon Coalition of Police and Sheriffs
Date: July 28, 2020

Co-Chairs and Members of the Joint Committee:

For the record, my name is Michael Selvaggio, representing the Oregon Coalition of Police and Sheriffs (ORCOPS). For your consideration on LC 743, which sets various standards for law enforcement officer uniforms, we ask to incorporate the following adjustments:

- Exceptions for plainclothes officers
Aside from the existing exceptions for SERT, consider adding uniform and vehicle exemptions for plainclothes officers who often serve a de-escalating function. For example, a detective interviewing a minor victim may be able to better reduce situational tension if she is able to appear in plain clothing as opposed to her full uniform.
- Allowing vests
Let's continue the good work we did on officer wellness last year by allowing officers to carry their 30-40 pounds of gear on a vest made for distributing that weight, instead of on their hips. In terms of protection, the alternative is an "internal vest," which are typically designed for a 5'10", 175-lb white male. (Female alternatives are not fitted with regard for body type, and I'm told can be extra uncomfortable.) External vests provide a better fit, better distribution of weight, and allow for carrying additional gear -- typically first aid supplies such as tourniquets, bandages, or Narcan -- to assist civilians in need.
- Provide for circumstances where an Officer's ID number may be used
In most circumstances, display of an officer's name on their uniform is a matter of course. The public's ability to identify an individual officer and their unit is vital to maintaining a well-regulated and accountable force. However, at recent crowd control actions, a number of officers have been confronted with very specific threats against

them personally... and against their households. Hand-held devices and publicly-accessible databases make it easy to discern an officer's home address and household information from even their last name in some circumstances. As a result, several officers have been taunted with knowledge of their home address -- some have been threatened with rape or other violent acts and have had to physically separate from their families for the time being. We would ask that the legislation allow for exigent circumstances in which an identifying number may be used in place of an officer's name -- this would still allow for identification of an individual officer for purposes of holding an officer to account for their actions, but provide some measure of protection for their families.

To the degree that law enforcement uniforms have evolved out of the need for personal safety, good health, and the ability to de-escalate, we hope that our concerns can be incorporated.