



July 30, 2020

Subject: Police personnel records (LC748)

Dear Co-Chairs Manning and Bynum, and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Territory Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists thanks you for your efforts regarding the transparency of police disciplinary records. We think this concept is a good start, and would like to offer ideas to help the Legislature further improve public transparency and accountability.

Our members find that conscientious officers will sometimes confide in us about their coworkers whose temperament or integrity discredits this important profession and puts the public at risk. But without access to public records, there can be no meaningful scrutiny of the sort that fosters positive change.

Oregon Territory SPJ and its advisory committee of records-law experts have worked with lawmakers and stakeholders to craft significant reforms of the Oregon Public Records Law over the last decade, including serving on the 2015 Attorney General's Public Records Law Reform Task Force and in work groups. In this subtle area of law, we've seen how seemingly small matters of wording can have major unintended effects. We would appreciate the opportunity to offer potential amendments in the near future and participate in any work group.

Sincerely,

Rachel Alexander

President

Society of Professional Journalists, Oregon Territory Chapter

SPJ Lobbyist: Tom Holt