

## **Testimony to Joint Committee on Transparent Policing and Use of Force Reform**

**By Kathleen Selvaggio, resident of West Linn, OR**

**July 31, 2020**

Chair Bynum and Chair Manning and members of the committee, my name is Kathy Selvaggio and I live in **West Linn**, where we have a history of lack of transparency, abuse of power, corruption, and racism within our local police department. A group of us who call ourselves Concerned Citizens of West Linn have come together following the media exposure of egregious police misconduct to advocate for deep reform of our police department.

I come before you today to express my support for LC 746, which would standardize police discipline statewide in a number of areas, and for LC 748, which would require law enforcement agencies to report disciplinary actions to a statewide database in a timely manner.

In our experience, local citizens have seen one West Linn police officer who engaged in illegal video and audio surveillance of a black man in Portland as well as exchanged a series of racist text messages with that man's employer being given a mere slap on the wrist – a written reprimand with no economic consequences -- after an internal investigation in 2018. That officer was only recently fired following an investigation by the Clackamas County DA's office, but we fully expect him to challenge his termination through arbitration process. We have seen another police officer who was terminated in 2017 after making a series of racist and xenophobic Facebook posts being given large amount of back pay after a lengthy arbitration process. There is a real need for consistent and enforceable standards of discipline for misconduct, rather than leaving the level of discipline and compensation up to the whims of an arbitrator.

We also support the establishment of a statewide database that publicly lists disciplinary and certification actions relating to police officers within 10 days of the decision or the resignation. Such a database would help prevent police officers charged with serious misconduct from seeking employment elsewhere. This is also a concern for those of us in West Linn who do not want to see officers with serious records of misconduct go on to serve in other law enforcement positions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. We will follow your proceedings in the legislature.