

Chair Bynum and Chair Manning and members of the committee: thank you for the opportunity to provide input on LC-748. For the record, my name is Yale Kaul and I live in West Linn. As you may have heard, West Linn's police department was recently found to have singled out a black Portland man (Michael Fesser) at the behest of some cronies of the police chief, harassed him repeatedly and got him fired from his job.

This single outrageous event, while nowhere near as severe as some of the other cases around the nation, perfectly exemplifies the need for increased police transparency in Oregon. For far too long we have turned a blind eye to police abuse, and there is no good reason to allow it to continue. Left unchecked, police power tends toward authoritarian and militaristic. We must demand that our police departments act as servants of the community, and to submit to complete transparency and accountability regarding their daily activities. And, as indicated in your draft, we must demand to have the disciplinary actions of abusive officers made public and easily available. Without transparency, we cannot begin to reform the culture of police departments. And without meaningful disciplinary action, this unacceptable behavior will only continue to fester.

Thank you for drafting this legislation, and count me among its supporters.

-Yale Kaul