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Testimony of Arthur Towers & Jake Hessel
In Support of HB 2750
Before the
House Committee on Judiciary
February 28, 2019

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2750. As you know, OTLA members fight for underdogs. Today, the underdogs we are discussing are individuals that have experienced trauma through abuse, neglect and the wrongdoings of others. We are very supportive of these important provisions in HB2750 to develop and equip local law enforcement agencies with standards on how to help and support these individuals.

Like many other victim advocates, our members see firsthand the impact that traumatic experiences can have on one's life. Our members work with survivors who are seeking justice for the most challenging experiences of their lives and know that each one of them requires compassion and thoughtful understanding.

OTLA members fight to make sure the rights of injured and abused Oregonians are protected as they seek justice. Recovering from traumatic experiences can often include fighting back against depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, guilt and other mental health issues. Bringing local governments and law enforcement agencies up to speed by providing grants for training on dealing with these survivors is a great way to address this issue and help these individuals feel supported and understood.

Talking about a traumatic experience can often force one who has experienced trauma to relive their situation, which can make the process for finding the facts and seeking justice a challenge. HB 2750 is a great approach to not only gather information on the science of trauma, but using that knowledge to develop and teach local law enforcement agencies best practices when someone has been the victim of a violent crime or abuse.

We thank the sponsors for their work on this important and issue and urge your support for HB 2750.