

**To:** Chair Jennifer Williamson and Members of the House Judiciary Committee

**From:** Sergeant Garon Boyce, Salem Police Department

**Date:** March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**Re:** Support for HB 2299:  
Relating to the crime of fleeing or attempt to elude a police officer

Chair Williamson and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Garon Boyce. I am a Sergeant with the Salem Police Department and today I am here representing law enforcement to speak in favor of HB 2299.

HB 2299 requires the court to impose mandatory minimum sentences of imprisonment if a person is convicted fleeing or attempting to elude a police officer in a vehicle under certain circumstances.

During my 21 years in law enforcement, pursuit policies have changed at many agencies due to the extreme danger to the public when a suspect flees from the police in a vehicle. Many agencies have adopted no-pursuit policies to try to mitigate the danger to the public. This has resulted in the unintended consequence of suspects fleeing more often because they will not be pursued and they feel they can successfully escape. To provide an example from my agency, in 2013 we were involved in 37 eludes. In 2016 and 2017 two neighboring agencies adopted no-pursuit policies. In 2017 the number of eludes for our agency spiked to 165, and then 140 in 2018. This causes a much larger risk to the public because the suspects are still driving in a reckless, dangerous manner.

Currently a conviction for a felony elude in a vehicle is a two on the Oregon Sentencing Guidelines. This means that a person can be repeatedly convicted of felony elude and they will only receive probation. Currently there is no enhancement of sentencing based upon multiple convictions.

I believe the dangerous and reckless act of fleeing from a police officer in a vehicle is a huge public safety concern and the frequency with which it is occurring is concerning. Offenders should be held accountable for this dangerous act which will hopefully lead to fewer choosing to run from a police officer in a vehicle. Because of these reasons I urge your support for HB 2299.