



P O R T L A N D  
CITY AUDITOR

Mary Hull Caballero

May 4, 2021

Representative Janelle Bynum, Chair  
House Judiciary Committee  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Bynum and Members of the Committee:

I write in support of Senate Bill 204A, which will narrowly expand the definition of “criminal justice agency” in Oregon Revised Statute 181A.010.

Adding local police oversight agencies to the definition of “criminal justice agency” will allow access to the state’s Law Enforcement Data System for the purposes of investigating allegations of officer misconduct and reviewing police policies and practices.

My office is an example of an oversight agency that would meet the expanded definition. The Independent Police Review division in the Auditor’s Office is authorized in City Code to take and investigate misconduct complaints against Portland Police Bureau members.

Because local police oversight agencies are not included in the list of entities authorized in the statute to access the system, investigators in my office must ask the Police Bureau to pull reports we need for our cases and redact Law Enforcement Data System information from them.

Most investigations involve one or more police reports that include the sensitive data. Multiply the request and redaction process over hundreds of investigations annually, and the unnecessary delay and wasted resources show why this bill would improve efficiency.

It will also improve the quality of investigations. Direct access to information at the time my investigators need it will ensure that all evidence has been collected and considered. As anyone who’s done a keyword search knows, the investigator is best positioned to recognize documents that are most relevant to her investigation.

The bill would also improve public confidence in independent oversight bodies by detangling the entity that employs the police officers under investigation from the officials conducting the



investigations. To be credible, the public must have faith that the oversight entities are independent in both appearance and fact.

We are committed to ensuring that both officers and complainants receive timely investigations conducted through a fair, independent process. Direct, secure access to the Law Enforcement Data System would improve our ability to do that.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Hull Caballero". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary Hull Caballero