



May 11, 2021

Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee:

The Greater Oregon Society of Professional Journalists urges you to approve the dash-A4 amendment to HB2929A to ensure public trust. Consider:

- A 2015 survey by WNYC found that 27 states afforded members of the public greater transparency into police disciplinary records than did Oregon. See: tinyurl.com/2x7shp4n
- Since that survey, in 2017, unions succeeded in passing a new law intended to block information about crimes by some officers becoming public. See: tinyurl.com/zc38n7mh
- Other states have gone in the opposite direction. Following George Floyd's murder, the New York Legislature repealed its notorious "50a" law — which had mandated a level of secrecy essentially identical to that currently existing in Oregon. See: tinyurl.com/e7bnm9pj
- In 2016, the Oregon Supreme Court issued a powerful precedent calling for greater transparency for police records to ensure public trust. See: tinyurl.com/54ab32xw

In practice, however, our members have found that police agencies and prosecutors continue to devalue the Supreme Court's dictate, leaving the public without crucial information about its police force. Please fix the law.

Respectfully yours,

Rachel Alexander, co-chair, Greater Oregon Society of Professional Journalists
Freedom of Information Committee.