



OREGON ASSOCIATION CHIEFS OF POLICE
EXCELLENCE IN POLICING

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OREGON STATE SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION
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PO Box 7468 Salem OR 97303

To: Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

From: Sheriff Tim Svenson
Oregon State Sheriffs' Association &
Oregon Association of Chiefs of Police

Date: February 2nd, 2022

Re: Testimony regarding SB 1510

Chair Prozanski and members of the committee,

On behalf of the Oregon State Sheriff's Association (OSSA) and the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police (OACP), thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding SB 1510.

I'd like to begin my testimony by thanking Senator Prozanski for leading a constructive workgroup process to discuss and evaluate the public safety reform provisions that were a part of HB 2002 from the 2021 Legislative Session. We appreciated the opportunity to participate in the process, engage in thoughtful discussion and hear feedback and concerns from a wide range of stakeholders. Throughout the process, our associations were given an opportunity to offer our perspective and identify areas of concern.

While we are taking a neutral position on SB 1510, we want to flag one part of the bill that we cannot support. We are opposed to prohibiting an officer from making a traffic stop for a defective headlight, taillight or license plate light. While we appreciate adjustments to this language to make these a secondary violation as opposed to an outright prohibition, we still believe that the inability to stop a vehicle for an inoperative tail light or headlight creates a safety hazard for the motoring public. The hazard is elevated during times of inclement weather, fog or other conditions that impact visibility and can lead to tragedy.

During the workgroup process, we offered that Sheriffs and Chiefs statewide could incorporate agency policies that would encourage law enforcement officers to focus traffic infraction enforcement on aggressive and very dangerous driving. Examples would be careless driving, texting and driving, excessive speeding, and failure to obey a traffic control device. While this wouldn't be a complete prohibition on making stops for lighting violations, it would place the emphasis on other violations.

In Oregon, the Oregon State Police, Oregon State Sheriffs' Association and the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police have partnered together to launch the "Oregon Car Care" program. As a result of the program, City Police Officers, County Sheriff Deputies, and all Oregon State Police Troopers have the ability to issue an "Oregon Car Care" voucher that provides motorists who are stopped for defective lighting equipment with a discount on automotive parts from a network of participating auto parts stores. Often, motorists are not aware that their lights aren't working properly. This program creates an opportunity for officers to address safety issues in a positive way.

All Oregon law enforcement agencies are currently submitting comprehensive data on officer-initiated traffic and pedestrian stops to the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission as the result of HB 2355, a measure that was passed 2017. We were fully supportive of the measure and believe the analysis done by CJC is providing the legislature, the public and law enforcement agencies with a clear picture of our performance. If patterns and practices of profiling are identified, agencies receive technical assistance from DPSST to address the issue. I mention this because it illustrates our commitment as law enforcement agencies to always pursue more equitable and safe police stops. Our support for the consent to search language in this measure reflects this commitment.

In closing, OSSA and OACP are taking a neutral position on this measure. We are hopeful the committee will consider removing the traffic stop prohibition language in the measure in favor of the alternative we have offered.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to provide testimony!