

## Written Testimony in Support of House Bill 2701

Cody Mock – Telecommunicator II

Oregon State Police Officers Association

My name is Cody Mock and I have been a Police Telecommunicator for almost 2 years. I am writing this requesting your assistance in support of House Bill 2701.

While I am not as tenured as many of the Telecommunicators out there, I feel that Telecommunicators should be considered as “Eligible Employees” for the retirement benefits that are put forth in House Bill 2701. While we are not putting our lives on the line such as Police or Fire units are, we are taking another kind of toll on our physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing. When we as Telecommunicators take a phone call from a citizen or take radio traffic from an officer or fire unit the initial thought is “What possible scenarios can go wrong here” when we have to prepare ourselves before every phone call or radio transmission for the worst, over time that will take its physical, emotional and psychological toll on anyone. Our jobs and responsibilities are to the safety of the public and our officers, when you take a phone call of something that can be as severe as a car accident and you hear the screams and anguish of someone in pain or fear; you’re not just on the phone with the caller, you are there with them mentally, your envisioning what they are describing to you.

As a Telecommunicator the health risks that come with the position can be severe such as mental illnesses, high blood pressure, heart disease, sleep deprivation, etc. yet we come in shift after shift to ensure the safety of the public and our officers. Despite the risks, Telecommunicators answer every call that comes in and answers every radio transmission with compassion, integrity and empathy. We as Telecommunicators, just as our other first responders such as police, fire and EMS put our needs aside to serve our communities and to be the calm voice on the other end of the phone for someone within our community that is going something traumatic or horrific. We train and attempt to prepare ourselves for the worst-case scenario but, the impact the stress has on a person’s body or mind when a worst-case scenario occurs can be detrimental to their wellbeing. We continue to do this job because we are dedicated to helping others and making our community the best it can be.

We as Telecommunicators while we are on an emergent phone call are also relaying the sometimes horrific information to our officers while at the same time attempting to gather pertinent information from the caller and again, thinking “what possible scenarios can go wrong here?” We all have stress in our lives but, knowing that you are the difference between getting someone the help they need while also ensuring the safety of the responders and the public surrounding the situation can feel like the weight of the world is on your shoulders, and for some situations someone’s world IS on your shoulders and they are relying on you to get them help as quickly as possible.

I love being a Telecommunicator and would not trade it for the world but, the emotional, psychological and physical risks that come with this career are quite high. Therefore, I am requesting your assistance in support of House Bill 2701.

Thank you for your time and thank you for allowing my testimony in support of House Bill 2701.