



**TO: Sen. Janeen Sollman, Co-Chair
Rep. Paul Evans, Co-Chair
Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety**

**FR: Amanda Dalton
Oregon District Attorneys Association**

RE: SB 5530 - SUPPORT

March 23, 2023

The Oregon District Attorneys Association (ODAA) urges your support of SB 5530. OSP is a crucial partner of Oregon's District Attorneys in ensuring community safety. The appropriation funds critical law enforcement services including OSP patrol, criminal investigations, medical examiner, forensics, toxicology, and criminal justice information services (CJIS).

Prosecutors across Oregon work with OSP to help keep our communities safe. This includes our prosecutors in both metro and rural Oregon and this highlights OSP's broad reach and importance across the state for public safety.

In some counties OSP's uniformed patrol and its criminal investigatory unit are a significant portion of the law enforcement resources available to keep communities safe and work closely with prosecutors on cases. OSP's intersection with prosecutors goes beyond uniformed patrol or investigatory services, its CJIS unit is a critical partner in maintaining accurate criminal records that prosecutors rely on in court. Additionally, OSP's forensic science and pathology bureau provides vital expert and scientific analysis to support criminal cases. This includes toxicology testing for driving under the influence of intoxicants (DUI) cases, DNA analysis, forensic evidence analysis and medical examiner autopsies. Without adequately funded forensic and pathology services, criminal cases from DUI to aggravated murder would be negatively impacted.

ODAA would like to highlight the necessity to adequately fund blood testing for both alcohol and other intoxicants. Currently, Oregon has to rely on out of state laboratories to provide capacity to fulfill the demand for testing and this can cause issues with securing out of state witnesses to appear in court for trial. While not part of this budget bill, HB 2306 addresses this need and requests an appropriation to increase the lab's capacity to perform this vital testing in state.

Finally, ODAA also urges that the medical examiners office be sufficiently funded. Our state medical examiners are handling increasing case loads due to rises in violent crime and drug overdose deaths and are doing so with fewer pathologists, which is creating unworkable stress on them. ODAA strongly supports the efforts OSP has taken to find a way to raise pathologist salaries so experienced and well trained doctors can be retained and recruited to do this vital work. The absence of sufficient funding has the potential to compromise serious criminal investigations or force unwelcome tradeoffs between compelling public safety priorities. In the absence of adequate funding, there are no good options.

ODAA urges the committee to support SB 5530 with the above noted targeted investments.