

This testimony in support of SB 915 is from Sally Joughin and Anthony Fischer; we have worked on criminal justice issues for many years and are members of a group in Multnomah County that promotes smart criminal justice reform.

When a law enforcement deadly force incident occurs, it is not appropriate for it to be investigated only by the agency to which those responsible belong, nor is it appropriate for a prosecution to be conducted by the district attorneys who regularly work and coordinate with that agency. It is a proper course of action for all prosecutions that result from such incidents to be handled by a special Deadly Force Prosecutions Unit in the state's Department of Justice, under its Criminal Justice Division. The public and our communities want transparency, independence, objectivity, and justice when law enforcement deadly force incidents occur.

Although there are no details in the SB 915 text about the unit nor its cost, we strongly support authorizing its creation as the essential first step.