

FROM THE DESK OF REPRESENTATIVE JEFF HELFRICH



Support HB 4115A: Collective Bargaining Rights for Law Enforcement, Corrections, and Dispatcher Supervisors

Oregon's front line public safety professionals support amending ORS 243.650(23)(c)(B) to add supervisory police officers, corrections officers, and emergency dispatchers to existing law that allows for public safety professionals to choose to collectively bargain. The original collective bargaining law prior to 1995 allowed front line public safety supervisors (such as fire captains and police sergeants) the right to bargain wages, hours, and working conditions, but that right was taken away inadvertently by a bill in 1995. ORCOPS attempted to correct this mistake in the 2023 legislative session through House Bill 3165.

In 2014, Senate Bill 1518 passed overwhelmingly and was signed into law, allowing certain firefighters who did not have authority to hire, discharge, or impose economic discipline, the ability to have collective bargaining rights. In 2023, Senate Bill 194 passed with wide bipartisan support, allowing Oregon State Police sergeants to solidify collective bargaining rights that they previously had for four years under a special order. In addition to OSP, Some sergeants around the state already can collectively bargain through existing agreements in both large and small agencies, including police agencies/sheriff's offices in: Albany, Beaverton, Bend, Canby, Clackamas County, Coos Bay, Corvallis, Forest Grove, Gresham, Lebanon, Multnomah County, Portland, Redmond – this bill would solidify those rights and give other qualifying agencies the option to do so as well. Supervisors in nursing and education at public universities also have the right to collectively bargain under ORS 243.650(23).

WHY THE BILL IS NEEDED:

- Our law enforcement professionals today are forced to decide between on the one hand reasonable job benefits and due process protections and on the other hand career advancement. This false choice has significantly reduced the pool of qualified candidates applying for these important supervisory roles. Our communities need our most qualified public safety candidates in key supervisory positions, and extending reasonable job benefits and due process protections will help ensure that result.
- Public safety supervisors are still out in the community and in our institutions working alongside our frontline officers. They are responding to calls, navigating complex societal issues, and facing dangerous situations. We want to provide these line level leaders with the same basic protections given to the frontline officers they are supervising and supporting on the street and in our institutions.
- All existing statewide and local accountability measures for police and corrections officers would equally apply to supervisors, even if they have collective bargaining rights.
- Experience with sergeants with collective bargaining rights in agencies such as the Oregon State Police and the Portland Police Bureau has revealed that these professionals will continue to implement and enforce the core values of integrity and public service without divided loyalties.

WHAT THE BILL DOES NOT CHANGE:

- Supervisors who have the authority to hire, discharge or impose economic discipline on employees, including many sergeants in smaller agencies, would NOT be included in this change.
- Management teams would still retain "confidential" status employees or higher-ranking management officials who cannot be in a union.

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Who does the Oregon Coalition of Police & Sheriffs Represent?

- Albany Police Association
- Astoria Police Employees Association
- Beaverton Police Association
- Bend Police Association
- Canby Police Association
- Clackamas County Police Officers Association
- Clatsop County Law Enforcement Association
- Criminal Investigators Association
- Dallas Oregon Police Employees Association
- Eugene Police Employees Association
- Forest Grove Police Association
- Gladstone Police Association
- Grants Pass Police Association
- Gresham Police Officers Association
- Hillsboro Police Officers Association
- Lake Oswego Police Officers Association
- Lincoln County Deputy Association
- Malheur County Sheriffs Association
- Marion County Law Enforcement Association
- McMinnville Police Association
- Milwaukie Police Employees Association
- Monmouth Police Officers Association
- Multnomah County Deputy Sheriffs Association
- OHSU Police Association
- Oregon City Police Employees Association
- Pendleton City Police Association
- Polk County Deputy Sheriffs Association
- Port of Portland Police Employees Association
- Portland Police Commanding Officers Association
- Portland Police Association
- Redmond Police Officers Association
- Roseburg Police Employees Association
- Salem Police Employees Union
- Seaside Police Employees Association
- Silverton Police Officers Association
- Springfield Police Association
- Washington County Police Officers Association
- Woodburn Police Association
- Yamhill Employees Association

