



February 5, 2024,

Chair Grayber, Vice-chairs Lewis and Tran, and members of the Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans,

For the record, my name is Teresa Raihala-Sethe, and I'm a member of AFSCME, working at Clackamas County 911. I want to share my full support for HB 4045 which creates a new "Hazardous" category within PERS for employees of the Oregon State Hospital who have direct contact with patients and 911 operators who directly work with or manage emergency or traumatic events in the regular course of work.

My daily trauma is the extreme multi-tasking of several calls at the same time, working several radios at once, making split-second decisions, immediately having to move on to the next call, and monitoring 7 or more computer screens. Some of the calls I have dealt with include hearing a man injure himself over the phone; trying to talk a hysterical mother and father through CPR to revive their 7-year-old daughter. However, the simple fact that we rarely get to hear the outcome takes a great toll too. We leave our 12-hour shift never hearing the last chapter. Did they survive? Are they ok? Did all my stress and thousands of hours of training help save a fellow human being?

HB 4045 could help address this trauma. By creating this new category for OSH and 911 telecommunicators, we could attract folks into the workforce who engage 24/7 in work that is high-risk and causes high stress. I am mentally and physically exhausted by the end of my shift. This exhaustion continues into the weekend. I have missed a multitude of holidays, family get-togethers, or fun activities due to the schedule and being too exhausted. I don't have time or energy to exercise due to exhaustion and being chained down to a console for 12 hours a day has deteriorated my health condition.

I strongly urge your support and appreciate your consideration of this bill. HB 4045 would not only help recruit new people into this field, but it would also retain workers who feel burnt out.

Thank you for your time,

Teresa Raihala-Sethe