



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 Odalis Aguilar Aguilar and I am here today on behalf of Oregon AFSCME Council 75. Oregon AFSCME represents over 37,000 workers across the State of Oregon in both the public and private sector. Our membership ranges from the professionals and techs at OHSU to the folks working in local governments that carry out essential services. We also represent the Nurses and Doctors and Psychiatrists at the Oregon State Hospital as well as 911 telecommunicators.

Over the last few years, our members working at the 24/7 facilities have expressed deep concern for their safety. Due to the working conditions at these facilities, our members are expected to do more with less. The concerns we hear are similar to those of the coalition before you. A diverse group of advocates brings to you the Public Safety Workforce Stabilization Act or HB 4045 and urges your committee to support this crucial piece of legislation.

The policy before you creates a separate category for Hazardous work that only includes these State Hospital workers and 911 dispatchers. This was created after the recommendation from PERS a few years back. The category gives workers the enhanced benefits of the 1.8 multiplier and the early retirement age of 60 from 65 for workers that meet eligibility. The implementation date for this wouldn't be until 2030 which comes from the request from the agency so they can complete their ongoing modernization efforts.

911 Dispatchers experienced the trauma, fear, helplessness, and horror in reaction to calls about children, suicide, or domestic violence. All of these lead to health complications that range from increased rates of cancer, obesity, cardiovascular disease. These are the people who provide support to the most aggressive callers and manage trauma within a matter of seconds. A few years ago, there was a dispatcher in Hood River who was multitasking calls while watching on the cameras as an active shooter was trying to get into their building.

This bill is a reflection of years of work in collaboration with stakeholders and I want to thank everyone who has taken the time to consider this policy.

We strongly urge you to pass HB 4045.