



Crook County

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February 25, 2025

Subject: Testimony in Opposition to HB 2640

Dear Chair Kropf and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Crook County's residents, we must express our serious opposition to House Bill 2640, specifically the modifications suggested in Section 2 concerning the crime of Aggravated Harassment as defined in ORS 166.070.

This bill introduces a challenging new requirement for prosecutions: the state must not only prove that an individual intentionally spat at a law enforcement officer, but also that this act posed a risk of transmitting a communicable disease. This change severely undermines the protections currently afforded to our law enforcement community, complicating the legal process and potentially allowing offenders to escape proper penalties.

A recent troubling event in our community underscores the risks of this proposed legislative change. A sergeant in our law enforcement, who serves both as an active duty military member and a veteran, was spat upon by an individual known to carry HIV. The impact on his and his family's well-being has been profound, involving extensive medical tests and treatments that jeopardize both his health and his military career.


The requirement to demonstrate the risk of communicable disease transmission adds an impractical burden. It necessitates advanced medical testing, expert testimony, and significant expenses, straining our resources and diverting attention from other vital public safety initiatives.

We are concerned that passing this amendment will establish a dangerous precedent that may erode the legal protections vital for the safety of our law enforcement officers. Maintaining a legal framework that facilitates the swift and fair prosecution of those who threaten the safety of these community protectors is crucial.

We strongly urge you to reject this amendment and preserve the existing laws that ensure the safety and security of our law enforcement personnel. Please consider the adverse effects this bill could have and join us in safeguarding those who commit their lives to our protection.

Thank you for considering this critical issue. We count on your support to keep our community safe for all, especially those tasked with its protection.

Sincerely,

X 

Gary Barney
County Commissioner

X 

Seth Crawford
County Commissioner

X 

Susan Hermreck
County Commissioner