

To the Honorable Members of the Oregon State Legislature,

My name is Stephanie Romine, and I have worked for the Portland Police Bureau for 22 years, with the past 18 years as an Identification Technician. I am writing in strong support of Senate Bill 1569 and respectfully ask that you recognize the Portland Police Bureau's group of 18 Identification Technicians as eligible for the Police and Fire designation under PERS.

By definition and function, we are Essential Frontline Employees, performing duties alongside Police Officers, Corrections Deputies, Firefighters, and 9-1-1 Dispatchers. We have no ability to work remotely and must be physically present at our assigned work sites 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year—regardless of emergencies, civil unrest, or other conditions affecting the city.

Our primary responsibility is to fingerprint and positively identify, through biometric comparison, every inmate processed through the maximum-security Multnomah County Detention Center (MCDC), at work sites in jail intake and in our office in the Forensic Evidence Division, both located in the Justice Center. We gather high-quality fingerprints, which we use to accurately identify arrested individuals, exonerate the innocent, and maintain databases that directly support the investigation and resolution of criminal cases. We are highly trained specialists in fingerprint science and are Ten Print Certified through the International Association for Identification (IAI), the same professional body that certifies Portland Police Bureau Criminalists for crime scene processing and latent fingerprint examination.

The act of fingerprinting requires prolonged physical contact and close proximity with individuals who may be uncooperative, unstable, or violent. As a result, Identification Technicians face many of the same physical risks, threats, and potential confrontations as sworn officers and corrections personnel working in secure detention environments.

In addition to the physical risks, our work carries a significant emotional toll. Identification Technicians are routinely exposed to graphic and disturbing material involving homicide, child abuse, sexual assault, and animal cruelty. I have personally stood alongside victims while their injuries were documented. Because our office is a secure evidence-processing location, we are frequently exposed to sensitive and traumatic evidence, including weapons, blood-soaked clothing and other disturbing evidence.

In short, the duties performed by Identification Technicians demand sustained physical presence, direct contact with incarcerated individuals, and ongoing exposure to traumatic material—conditions that align closely with those experienced by other classifications already recognized under the Police and Fire PERS designation. Senate Bill 1569 offers an opportunity to acknowledge the work we do and ensure equitable retirement coverage for professionals whose work is essential to public safety and the justice system.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to the people of Oregon.

Respectfully,

Stephanie Romine