

January 31, 2026

Good morning Chair Taylor, Vice-chair Hayden and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Amy Quist, and I am Police Identification Technician at the Portland Police Bureau.

I have worked in the Forensic Evidence Division for 26 years. As an ID Tech working in the jail, I fingerprint people who are in custody. In the booking process people are typically photographed and then fingerprinted before they see medical personnel and others. Often, we find out after they've been fingerprinted that they have Covid, Tuberculosis, Hepatitis and other communicable diseases. We often fingerprint people who have sores on their hands and later find out they have Staph or MRSA.

When fingerprinting someone, you are within inches of them while holding their hand to properly roll the finger. These people are often on drugs, drunk, or experiencing a mental health crisis. It can be very difficult to fingerprint them under these circumstances, not to mention prolonging the process.

When fingerprinting someone you are always on high alert. While I am fingerprinting someone, I often think to myself, what will I do if they hit me? What will I say? How will I react? What is my escape?

Jail work isn't just a job; it's a physically and emotionally taxing environment where safety is never guaranteed. I'm testifying in support of SB 1569 because fingerprinting inside these facilities carries the same physical and psychological toll as any other frontline public safety roles. Currently, there is a significant gap in how we are treated compared to our peers across the state who do the same work but receive enhanced retirement benefits. It is time to close that gap and provide the coverage these high-risk positions deserve.

I urge this committee to vote yes on SB 1569.

Respectfully,

Amy Quist