



February 4, 2026

To: House Committee On Judiciary
From: Zach Winston, Policy Director

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 4138

Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Zach Winston. I am the Policy Director for the Oregon Justice Resource Center (OJRC). The OJRC strongly supports HB 4138, the Law Enforcement Accountability & Visibility Act.

Actions by federal agents have created fear and confusion in many communities because residents cannot reliably tell who is—and is not—law enforcement. That ambiguity undermines public safety and trust. Clear, visible identification is a basic safeguard that protects both residents and officers by reducing panic, preventing impersonation, and ensuring accountability. Transparency in identification is not a barrier to enforcement—it is a prerequisite for legitimacy and community safety.

HB 4138 will strengthen public trust, protect civil liberties, and provide clarity to law enforcement agencies operating in Oregon. It does so through clear standards, transparent boundaries, and narrowly tailored exceptions.

First, HB 4138 establishes statewide standards for law enforcement identification and masking. The public should know who is exercising police authority in their communities. By requiring officers to visibly identify themselves and their agency—while allowing limited exceptions—HB 4138 promotes accountability and transparency. Requiring agencies to develop and publish policies within 180 days further ensures consistency and clarity across jurisdictions.

Second, HB 4138 builds a necessary firewall between state/local public employees and unconstitutional federal actions. The bill does not obstruct lawful information or assistance; instead, it protects against Oregon resources and personnel being used to facilitate discriminatory or unconstitutional investigations or cooperation that violate civil rights, free speech, or due process. Clear exceptions for court orders and publicly accessible information and a safe harbor provision will protect employees.

Third, HB 4138 increases transparency and regulation in state/local and federal joint operations. By requiring public disclosure of joint task force and cross-deputization agreements—subject to limited redactions—the bill ensures Oregonians can better understand how law enforcement authority is exercised in their name. It also draws clear limits to prevent participation in operations that would target constitutionally protected rights.

Importantly, HB 4138 includes enforcement mechanisms that give these protections real effect, including injunctive relief and clear implementation timelines. These provisions ensure compliance while giving agencies sufficient time to develop and modify their policies.

HB 4138 is not anti-law-enforcement; it is pro-accountability and pro-transparency. It provides all law enforcement with clear rules, protects public employees from unlawful entanglement, and supports policing in Oregon that is conducted openly, lawfully, and consistent with our shared values.

The OJRC urges your support on HB 4138.