

Testimony in support of HB 4114

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

My name is Joshua Baker, and I live in Portland, Oregon. I am the Director of the Nuclear Free Program at Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility. Our organization works to prevent harm before it occurs by addressing policies that affect community health and safety across Oregon. I respectfully urge your support for HB 4114.

This bill addresses a basic public safety and legal clarity issue: what rules apply when someone acting under authority of law enters private property.

Both the United States and Oregon Constitutions recognize that certain places carry a heightened expectation of privacy, especially the home. In practice, however, residents cannot easily determine whether an individual seeking entry has lawful authority. Most people are not able, in a moment of stress, to distinguish between a judicial warrant and other documents presented as official authorization.

When that legal standard is unclear to the person at the door, risk increases. Individuals may feel compelled to allow entry even when legal requirements have not been satisfied. Alternatively, confusion about authority can lead to refusal and confrontation when an officer believes entry is permitted. Neither outcome promotes safety.

HB 4114 provides a clear and narrow rule: when a person acting under color of law enters property without a court-issued warrant and no recognized exception applies, the affected individual may seek civil remedy. The bill also applies to other locations where Oregonians reasonably expect privacy, including vehicles on private property, schools, medical facilities, and places of worship. This does not prohibit lawful enforcement activity. It clarifies the boundary between lawful and unlawful entry.

Clarity is important for both residents and officers. Predictable standards reduce misunderstandings and reduce the likelihood of escalation. When people trust that legal procedures are being followed consistently, they are more likely to cooperate with lawful enforcement and to call for assistance when needed. When that trust is uncertain, people hesitate to seek help, which can affect reporting of crimes, medical emergencies, and dangerous situations.

HB 4114 therefore serves a preventative function. By defining expectations and accountability, it reinforces constitutional protections while also reducing the chance of conflict during enforcement encounters.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a **yes vote on HB 4114**.

Sincerely,
Joshua Baker, PhD
Nuclear Free Program Director
Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility