



Association of
Oregon Counties

January 11, 2019

Diana Winther, Co-Chair
Kimberly Wood, Co-Chair
Management-Labor Advisory Committee
350 Winter St NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Opposition to HB 2418

Dear Co-Chairs Winther and Wood,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today on HB 2418.

AOC supports comprehensive mental health access and care for first responders, who have the tough job of responding to hazardous and traumatic events in the line of duty. Mental health issues in the first responder community is a serious issue that should be addressed. We believe that taking care of issues on the front end through comprehensive care is the alternative to HB 2418.

We believe that HB 2418 is too broad and vague. It opens the door to claims not related to specific incidents or traumatic events as a result of the work of a first responder. It also covers many employees beyond first responders. We believe this diverts important resources from the real need: prevention and early treatment of mental health issues in the first responder community.

Local government organizations support preventative services to meet the mental health needs of our public personnel, including enhanced public safety focused employee assistance plans. We are committed to working with both labor and management organizations to achieve this goal.

Please vote no on HB 2418.

Sincerely,
Jay Bozievich
Lane County Commissioner
Co-Chair, AOC Public Safety Committee