



DOUGLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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JOHN HANLIN
SHERIFF

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I would like to take this opportunity to express my concerns on the concept of a 32-hour work week. This is an act introduced by U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders (Vermont) that would amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to reduce the standard workweek from 40 hours per week to 32 hours per week. A version of that act was recently adopted (June 10, 2024) by the City of Roseburg in conjunction with the 3-year union contract for the Roseburg Police Department.

The Roseburg City contract would standardize a 32-hour workweek with no loss in pay. For example, an officer working 32 hours in a week but getting paid for 40 hours would equate to a 20% increase in pay for that week, and it falls on the backs of the taxpayer. This would also make Roseburg Police Officers among the highest paid officers in the state. This contract/policy by the City of Roseburg will have substantial effects on city taxpayers and all law enforcement in Douglas County. We are experiencing out of control drug abuse, mental health crisis, and homelessness at an all-time high in our communities. This is the time to work more, not less.

As stated earlier, a Roseburg city police officer can work 32 hours during their workweek but still get paid for 40 hours. Any work hours beyond the 40 hours would be paid at their overtime rate. Roseburg hopes to improve work conditions and morale through this policy change, thereby drawing more interest in position openings and increasing their recruitment numbers.

The concept of a 32-hour work week will require Roseburg to either hire more officers to cover the reduced hours, or it will result in less police on the streets patrolling our neighborhoods. The concept is not right for ALL industries and is more geared toward remote work versus customer service. 32-hour work weeks are challenging to implement in industries like healthcare or customer service that requires urgency, and specific service hours. Both of which are commonplace within law enforcement.

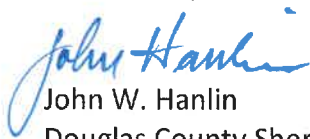
Furthermore, research has shown officers working 8 hour shifts average 3 times more overtime as those on 10-hour shifts, and 5 times more than those on 12-hour shifts.

This 32-hour work week concept might be appropriate in certain industries and businesses where there is a profit margin to absorb the costs, but not in public service where the costs are on the taxpayer.

It has been suggested that I and other public safety administrators are agreeable to, or supportive of this concept here in Douglas County. Let me clarify. I am NOT supportive of a 32-hour work week. Law enforcement is not just a job, but rather it's a calling. You are either deeply inspired and dedicated to serve as a peace officer or you aren't. Improving interest in this work and improving recruitment is accomplished through well respected solid leadership, empowering employees through self-leadership principles, caring for and respecting your employees, and providing reasonable pay and benefits. Attempting to create this culture by rewarding employees with higher than reasonable pay for less service is irresponsible.

I believe this is a reckless policy change on behalf of the City of Roseburg. Paying employees for 40 hours but only requiring 32 hours of work simply feels unethical and wrong. I encourage the city taxpayers to investigate the amount of money this trial period is going to cost you. It is an irresponsible use of taxpayer dollars and if I were a city taxpayer, I would be furious.

Respectfully,



John W. Hanlin
Douglas County Sheriff