



President's Message

results).

But a service like SafeOregon is only as successful as people are aware of it. This is why OSSA was happy to step up last month to sponsor the creation of custom public safety announcements, 30-second videos featuring six different Oregon sheriffs.

The Oregon State Sheriffs' Association partnered with students and TGF Productions to produce the public safety announcements, which

are now appearing on social media channels and airing in television markets throughout Oregon.

Oregon middle school and high school students participated in the filming, along with sheriffs from across the state including Lane County Sheriff Cliff Harrold, Lincoln County Sheriff Curtis Landers, Hood River County Sheriff Matt English, Jackson County Sheriff Nathan Sickler, and Deschutes County Sheriff Shane Nelson.

My thanks to all Oregon sheriffs for their incredible work and support to educate our youth on SafeOregon, which is truly saving lives. We know many kids in school may be struggling, and we want them to know help is available.

The Oregon State Sheriffs' Association also continues to work with the Oregon Legislature to address threats of harm and school safety. Since 2014, I've had the honor of representing OSSA while serving as chair of the Oregon Task Force on School Safety. For several years, task force members from education, public health, law enforcement, and many other disciplines have been working together to advance a comprehensive approach to addressing school violence and student wellness.

In this Oregon legislative session, we introduced bills (HB 2327 and SB 584) establishing a

Statewide School Safety and Prevention System within the Oregon Department of Education.

I'm excited to tell you that this legislation is now on its way to becoming state law.

This campaign to improve safety in our schools was an amazing team effort. I want to extend my thanks to all of our task force members and sheriffs across Oregon, along with a special thanks to Oregon State Police Superintendent Travis Hampton and his staff, as well as our lobbyist Kevin Campbell, for their many conversations with legislators to support this important legislation.

As mentioned in my previous message, the School Safety and Prevention System will provide 15 full-time technical support specialists who will work directly with schools to develop mental wellness and suicide prevention strategies.

It will also help schools establish local multi-disciplinary safety assessment teams to respond to threats of violence, with law enforcement playing an important role on these teams.

On June 25th from 4:30-6:00 p.m., OSSA will host a reception to thank the many legislators, task force members and others who worked to pass this critical school safety legislation. We hope you can join us.

The success of this safe schools effort is also a result of the wonderful support of our OSSA sponsors. We need your help to continue to do this important work, so please encourage your friends and family to join the Oregon State Sheriffs' Association. Together, we are making a difference. ★

**Sheriff Craig Roberts
President, OSSA**

As chair of the Oregon Task Force on School Safety, it has been amazing to follow the success of the SafeOregon tip line.

SafeOregon (www.SafeOregon.com) is a safety tip line for K-12 schools, managed by our partners at the Oregon State Police. It emerged out of recommendations made in 2015 by the task force.

Schools must sign up to participate in the service. Students can use SafeOregon to report concerns about bullying, safety threats, drugs/alcohol, weapons, talk of suicide and other self-harm, as well as physical and sexual abuse. Students can submit safety concerns via text, phone, web, and the SafeOregon app (available on iTunes or Google Play).

The problem is real. According to the Oregon Health Authority, in 2017 alone there were 107 suicides by Oregon youths ages 24 and younger. In the two years since SafeOregon was launched, more than 3,000 tips have been received, and there have been some incredible success stories. It's helped authorities intervene following school-shooting threats in St. Helens, Woodburn and elsewhere. In November 2017, two Hermiston police officers were able to avert a teen suicide attempt in progress thanks to a SafeOregon tip. (You can find many more success stories at www.safeoregon.com/about/