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LC 644 will help protect students and parents from the unthinkable

'Kaylee's Law' would require stricter vetting of campus security guards

SALEM - The Sawyer family lost Kaylee when she was killed by a Central Oregon Community College security guard - a man whose job it was to protect her - in the summer of 2016.

Today, the Sawyer family began a journey to make sure this doesn't happen to anyone else's daughter. Legislative Concept 644 - known as "Kaylee's Law" - was previewed today before the Oregon Senate and House of Representatives Judiciary Committees. The concept is being introduced at the request of the Sawyer family.

"The Sawyer family lived through a parent's worst nightmare when their daughter Kaylee was killed in the summer of 2016," Sen. Tim Knopp, R-Bend, said. "If we can do something to make sure that this doesn't happen again, then we should do it."

The legislation would clarify the policing limits of college security officers, require uniforms and vehicles look less like those of traditional law enforcement officers and that all campus security vehicles be equipped with GPS and video recording devices. The bill calls for nationwide background checks on all private security or special campus safety officers and removes stop and frisk authority.

"Part of keeping the public safe is that people know when they are dealing with an actual law enforcement officer," Sen. Floyd Prozanski, D-Eugene, said. "If somebody didn't go through vigorous training and vetting, they should never be allowed to wear the uniform of a law

enforcement officer. That goes for other professionals who also are charged with protecting people's safety, like campus security personnel."

Multiple groups - including Deschutes County District Attorney John Hummel, the Oregon Department of Justice and the Sawyer family - have worked to draft LC 644.

"Our campus security officers are entrusted with the safety of our precious children as they go off to college - most of them living away from home for the first time," Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum said. "Their job is crucially important, and requires the highest levels of trust, integrity and skill. Campus security officers are not, however, police officers, and should not wear or use the indicia of that office - uniforms, vehicles or other equipment associated with being a police officer. It is my sincere regret that it took the tragic death of Kaylee Sawyer to compel us to address this issue, and while nothing we do can restore the life of this smart, promising young woman, we can still do right in her name."