



**UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**

1735 NORTH LYNN STREET
SUITE 10000
ARLINGTON, VA 22209-2020

September 26, 2014

The Honorable Richard S. Segerblom
Chairman, Nevada Advisory Commission on the Administration of Justice
700 South Third Street
Las Vegas, NV 89101-6703

Dear Senator Segerblom:

On behalf of the United States Postal Service Office of Inspector General (USPS-OIG), I want to thank you for providing me the opportunity to speak before the Nevada Advisory Commission on the Administration of Justice on Friday, November 12, regarding the request to amend N.R.S. § 172.1257 to include OIG Special Agents within the definition of peace officers under Nevada law.

I take this opportunity to address some questions that arose during my presentation:

1. *A concern was raised that granting peace officer status to our agents might affect the benefits and retirement of law enforcement officers.*

In the states where USPS-OIG Special Agents have peace officer status, our agents do not receive state law enforcement benefits of any kind. Our agents receive federal law enforcement compensation and benefits and would not receive any compensation in the form of salary or benefits from the state of Nevada if N.R.S. 172.1257 was updated to include USPS-OIG Special Agents.

2. *A question was raised why USPS-OIG Special Agents were not included in the 2007 legislation granting USPS Postal Inspectors peace officer status.*

In 2007, a complete designation of investigative responsibilities was still being explored between the Inspection Service and the Office of Inspector General. After 2007, it became clear that the USPS-OIG would need peace officer status in Nevada for the investigations it now conducted that were previously conducted by the Inspection Service.

3. *A concern was raised about potential increases in the cost of bringing USPS-OIG cases through the Nevada state court system.*

Granting peace officer status to our agents will not increase the cost of bringing these cases through Nevada state courts because the cases will be brought through state court regardless of whether our special agents have peace officer status. However, granting our agents peace officer status will decrease costs for local law enforcement agencies because they will not be required to take the lead in these investigations as they currently do, serving as affiants to search, seizure, and arrest warrants and attending judicial proceedings on Postal Service cases. There would be no increase in costs to the state court system, but there would be a cost savings to state law enforcement agencies, resulting in an overall cost savings for the State of Nevada.

While local law enforcement agencies would still be included in these investigations, the lead agency bears the greatest cost of the investigation because those agents or officers are ordinarily the ones required to testify in court and take possession of and account for evidence seized during the course of the investigation. This shifting of the burden from Nevada law enforcement agencies to the USPS-OIG would free up resources, enabling state law enforcement to shift these resources to other areas where they are needed most.

Please contact me if I can provide any additional information. The USPS-OIG would appreciate any assistance your office can provide in amending N.R.S. 172.1257 during the 2015 legislative session.

Once again, I appreciated the opportunity to speak before the Advisory Commission. Thank you for your time and attention to the USPS-OIG's request.

Sincerely,



Joanne Yarbrough
Special Agent in Charge
Headquarters Operations
U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General