

Dear Senator King,

As members of the Toppenish City Council, we are writing to express our deep concern regarding the ongoing public safety issues in our community. In recent years, the City of Toppenish has faced a significant challenge in addressing drug-related activities, associated violence, and other inappropriate behaviors. These incidents, including public indecency and open sexual activity, have become a disturbing pattern, negatively impacting the quality of life for our residents.

Despite the City of Toppenish's efforts to increase patrols, we are limited by resource constraints and the challenges posed by our geographic location. With only 14 commissioned police officers, the Toppenish Police Department often struggles to respond promptly to emergency calls, especially during peak hours. This lack of personnel can lead to delays in response times and a feeling of insecurity among our residents. Likewise, The Toppenish Fire Department is severely understaffed, with only 6 commissioned firefighters. This limited personnel has resulted in a significant strain on the department's ability to respond to the escalating calls. Since the late 1970's, the call volume has dramatically increased, from an average of 140-200 calls per year to a projected 1,450 calls this year. The excessive administrative burden, primarily in the form of lengthy paperwork and reports, further hinders the effectiveness of both departments. This bureaucratic obstacle diverts valuable time and energy from critical duties such as patrolling, training, and fire safety inspections.

We believe that additional funding and resources are essential to address these pressing public safety concerns. By investing in increased police and firefighter personnel, improved street-lighting, and necessary equipment, we can enhance the safety and well-being of our community. We urge you to consider our recommendations and support measures to strengthen public safety in Toppenish. By working together, we can create a safer and more enjoyable environment for our residents.

Sincerely,  
Toppenish City Council

Cristian Sanchez  
Councilmember

Elipida Saavedra  
Mayor

Ezequiel Morfin  
Councilmember

Naila Prieto Duval  
Councilmember

Loren Belton  
Mayor Pro Tempore

George Garica  
Councilmember

Josh Garza  
Councilmember