



KLAMATH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sheriff Chris Kaber

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Media Release

Date: June 14, 2022

Re: (SB48) ORS 135.233 and Chief Justice Order No. 22-010

Contact: Brandon Fowler – Public Information Officer
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The Klamath County Sheriff's Office would like the public to be aware of how Senate Bill 48 (SB48), passed during the last legislative session and signed by Governor Brown, will affect public safety in Klamath County. SB48 will have the effect of requiring the release of a significant number of criminal suspects from police custody, without bail, back into the community. Essentially, anyone arrested for committing a property crime such as theft, burglary, car theft, trespass, or a non-domestic violence assault, arson, unlawful purchase of a firearm and many other crimes, will not be able to be kept in jail any longer than it takes to process them.

SB48 becomes effective July 1, 2022. The law is codified in Oregon Revised Statute 135.233, and by order of the Chief Justice of the Oregon Supreme Court, requires release from custody those suspected of committing certain classifications of crimes without security (bail). As part of the nationwide movement for police / bail reform, Oregon has taken a dangerous step that requires law enforcement to arrest, book, and then immediately release suspects that have committed some misdemeanor and felony crimes. *(Refer to Oregon Chief Justice Order 22-010 for specific details.)*

Klamath County Sheriff's Office deputies and other law enforcement officers in our community will continue to uphold their oaths to keep the peace and enforce criminal law by taking into custody those suspected of committing crimes. Even though the option of citing criminal suspects to appear in court continues to exist, law enforcement will be encouraged to take into custody and process suspected offenders whenever appropriate. However, if the crimes they are charged with meet the broad criteria established by the Chief Justice, the suspects will be released from the jail, without bail, under conditions such as being required to appear in court or avoid contact with the victim of their offense.



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One of the negative effects of this decision is that many people battling mental illness, who are taken into custody for lower level offenses, will be released and miss an important opportunity for connecting with mental health services to aid them in their illness and maybe prevent future criminal activity. Locally, partnerships are in place between the Sheriff's Office, mental health service providers, and the court to evaluate appropriate responses to these situations. With these individuals being immediately released, this important work, which benefits the community and the individual, will suffer.

Sheriff Chris Kaber states, "When someone is suspected of victimizing others, it is appropriate for them to be brought before the judge for their initial plea. That is best accomplished by holding them in jail until they appear before the court or requiring some form of assurance (bail) that they will appear before the judge at a later date. With the implementation of this law, in many cases being arrested will merely become an inconvenience for them once they realize they will be released as soon as the initial booking process is complete. Many adults in custody will also not receive the mental health care they desperately need to help them avoid future conflicts with society. This decision by progressive government officials, who do not understand the complexity of the criminal justice system, does not help our rural community. It is becoming easier each day to be a criminal in our state"

The Sheriff's Office wishes to make sure the citizens of Klamath County are aware of this change in judicial procedure, decided by representatives of the Oregon Legislature and the Chief Justice, and not supported (by vote) by any locally elected representatives of Klamath County. Both Senator Linthicum and Representative Reschke opposed this legislation.

Remember to lock your doors, lock your cars, keep an eye on your neighborhood, and report suspicious activity.

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