

Josephine (JO) County (CO) Justice System (JS) & Public Safety Services (PSS)

JO CO Justice System & Public Safety Services

The 2012 expiration of federal funding for services resulted in two JO CO proposed levies as a solution. Both levies failed. “*Is JO CO providing a minimally adequate level of public safety services?*”¹⁻⁵

What do you do when you have what you want and it is the law, but you can not afford it?

State of the State Address: Jan. 14, 2013⁶ Governor John A. Kitzhaber’s State of the State addressed reforms requiring difficult choices: for reducing the cost of health care and corrections, reducing the cost drivers that are diverting resources from the classroom, and undertaking serious review of Oregon’s tax expenditures.

Cost Reductions⁶ Governor Kitzhaber believed that cost reductions are needed and possible in several areas.

1. Cost of Health Care
2. **Relentless Growth in the Department of Corrections (Prison Population)**
3. PERS Retirement System
4. Tax Expenditures

The Law: House Bill 3194 The governor signed HB 3194 on July 25, 2013.

1. Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society (HNA&HS). July 9, 2013. *Justice System Exploratory Committee*. Hugo, OR.

2. HNA&HS. July 24, 2013. *Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society’s Mission*. Hugo, OR.

3. HNA&HS. July 9, 2013. *All Voters & Votes Are Legitimate*. Hugo, OR.

4. HNA&HS. July 24, 2013. *Government Needs Support*. Hugo, OR.

5. Hugo Justice System Exploratory Committee, HNA&HS. Draft August 20, 2013. *Justice System & Public Safety Services Issue Scope of Work*. Hugo, OR.

6. Gov. John A. Kitzhaber, M.D. January 14, 2013. *State of the State 2013*. Salem, OR.

7. Roller, Dennis, Editor. July 31, 2013. *Legislators Cut Skyrocketing Bill for Prisons*. Editor’s Opinion for “The Grants Pass Daily Courier.” Grants Pass, OR.

State of Oregon Cost Reductions Approach

Legislators Cut Skyrocketing Bill for Prisons: July 31, 2013⁷ Gov. John Kitzhaber took a bite out of crime’s big bite out of the state budget last week by signing House Bill 3194. **The bill reduces sentences for certain property and drug crimes and establishes re-entry programs intended to reduce recidivism. It also frees up an estimated \$362 million during the next decade for more positive uses, such as health care and education.**

Oregonians’ price tag for locking up criminals has skyrocketed since 1994, when voters passed Measure 11, an initiative calling for stiffer and mandatory sentences for violent crimes. It grew even more after 2008, when Oregonians approved Measure 57, which set minimum sentences for property and drug crimes.

State voters might have felt better about locking up more criminals for longer, but the growing bill for it has been at the cost of other services. The state’s prison population doubled from 1994 to 2012, to 14,000, resulting in costly prison construction as well as increased daily expenses.

Kitzhaber went into the 2013 legislative session hoping to reduce the costs of prisons by \$600 million over the next decade, but found little support for reducing sentences for Measure 11 crimes. The reductions made by HB3194 are to sentences in Measure 57. This is understandable in that Measure 11 crimes are more serious, such as assault and rape. Among the crimes with reduced sentences are felony driving while suspended, third-degree robbery and identity theft and marijuana and hashish dealing.

8. Northwest News Network. Dec. 13, 2012. *Oregon Governor Pushes Corrections Cost-Cutting*.

9. OR State Sheriff’s Ass. & OR Ass. Chiefs Of Police. April 5, 2013. *Testimony in Opposition to HB 3194*.

10. ACLU of Oregon. May 7, 2013. *Reinvesting in Justice and Public Safety: ACLU Supports HB 3194*.

11. OR State Sheriff’s Ass. & OR Ass. Chiefs Of Police. June 24, 2013. *Testimony in Opposition to HB 3194*.

12. Gaston, Christian. July 01, 2013. *Oregon Legislature Approves Public Safety Package to Flatline Prison Growth for Five Years*. Oregon Live, The Oregonian. Portland, OR.

Relentless Growth In OR Dept. Of Corrections (Prisons)

To handle the criminals not going to prison or not serving as much time there under HB3194, the state will spend \$17 million during the next two years to beef up local community corrections departments.

One requirement of the new law is the state Department of Corrections do a better job of assessing the risks and needs of inmates before releasing them into a community. It’s also required to track inmates it releases to see if they succeed or fail on the outside. This should give the state a better idea of what programs work for parolees and probationers.

The law also instructs the Department of Corrections to provide more structure for those released, including drawing up transitional plans for any eligible inmates.

The added emphasis on trying to rehabilitate criminals in their communities and helping them make the transition back to those communities will, hopefully, result in a drop in recidivism.

HB3194’s benefits aside, it must be noted legislators modified the voters’ will as expressed in Measure 57. That should never be taken lightly. However, in this case, the good that can be done with \$362 million outweighs putting yet more people behind bars.

Relentless Growth In OR Dept. Of Corrections (Prisons)⁸⁻¹⁰ 6 More views.

Want more information? Contact a member of the Exploratory Committee.

13. Olson, Andy, Oregon State Representative. July 1, 2013. *July 2013 News from State Representative Andy Olson On Legislative Update*.

14. KTVM.COM. July 10, 2013. *Oregon Sheriffs ‘Make Lemonade’ from Salem Lemons, Pleased with More Jail Funds, Not Sentencing Changes*.

15. ACLU of Oregon. August 2013. *2013 Legislation Report*.

16. Hugo Justice System Exploratory Committee, HNA&HS. Sept. 18, 2013. *Relentless Growth In OR Dept. Of Corrections (Prisons)*. Hugo, OR.

Exploratory Committee's Mission

Mission An independent Justice System and Public Safety Services Exploratory Committee (*Exploratory Committee*) to investigate the JO CO Justice System & Public Safety Services (JS&PSS) issue was formed under the leadership of the Hugo Neighborhood Association and Historical Society (HNA&HS).

Big picture ideas for the exploratory effort include the following.

1. Identifying the JS&PSS issue.
2. Identifying the JS&PSS sub-issues for research and analysis.
3. Identifying a range in level of services
4. Identifying a range of costs for services.
5. Identifying revenues for services.

The ultimate goal is an adequate justice system and public safety services. Is it possible to have a higher level of service for a lower cost? The purpose of the *Exploratory Committee* is to gather information adequate enough to understand the JS&PSS issues. This includes educational outreach efforts.

The *Exploratory Committee's* purpose is limited to investigating and researching the JS&PSS issues. It will not make evaluations of right or wrong, nor make recommendations on how to vote.

The contents of this brochure are expressions of the opinions and beliefs of those that contribute based on their thoughts and experiences. Hopefully, their efforts will assist the public toward informed decision-making.

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Justice System Exploratory Committee

<http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/justicesystemexploratorycommittee.htm>

Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society

<http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/>

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RELENTLESS GROWTH IN OR DEPT. OF CORRECTIONS (PRISONS)

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Justice System & Public Safety Services Series



My Home In Order

Very Very Draft September 18, 2013

Hugo Justice System Exploratory Committee