

County rescue bill fails to hit mark for many

Letters To The Editor

Grants Pass Daily Courier

JIM DITTMER

Friday, April 29, 2016

House Bill 3453 provides a line in the sand for Oregon county officials to make a choice between local, financial self-reliance, or to cross over and bargain with the state for 50 percent matching funds against 50 percent county funds.

However, Josephine County does not have necessary matching funds available to generate the total needed to operate our criminal justice system effectively.

HB3453 is a financial sanctuary-illusion that only meets requirements for the faint of heart. It has a limited financial benefit with no ending date as a new inter-governmental entity, with strings attached. In principle, this is big state government growth at its best. Our county needs to put on our big boy/girl pants and realize there is no free lunch. We are not destined to be a nonprofit funded by other government entities, except by exercise of poor judgment.

Our local legislators are standing tall against this ill-conceived piece of legislation. As Ken Smith wrote ("Legislators need to be leaders during crisis," April 3) "They have lots of reasons for not supporting the emergency request." Smith also states he is "fully aware of the risk" and credits Commissioner Cheryl Walker for knowing that HR3453 is known as the "County Commissioner Suicide Bill." Fortunately, our Josephine County legislators are of a high level of experience, insight and intellect to understand it is appropriate to reject HB3453 for benefit to Josephine County, now and in the future.

JIM DITTMER

Merlin