

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Oregon Crime Rates Plunge to Historic 30-Year Low**

Preliminary crime data for Oregon shows a dramatic decrease in 2009 crime rates. According to Craig Prins, Executive Director of the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission, violent crime for 2009 fell in Oregon's four largest cities. Violent crime decreases were largest in Portland (10%) and Gresham (23%). Property crime declines were largest in Eugene (12%) and Salem (14%).

"Crime spiked in the early to mid 1980s, but has been going down in Oregon and across the country ever since. We haven't seen crime levels this low in more than 30 years," Prins told legislators today at a joint hearing of the House and Senate Judiciary Committees.

"It's time for our policies to match the reality of our times. Oregonians are safer than they were two years ago, without the millions it would have cost to fully implement Measure 57," said Ryan Deckert, president of the Oregon Business Association.

Measure 57 – passed by voters in 2008 – was delayed for implementation by state lawmakers in 2009 due to economic reasons. As part of that delay, the Safety and Savings Act (House Bill 3508) increased earned time for some prisoners and implemented other reforms that saved money in Oregon's massive corrections budget.

"It would be foolish to squander limited state resources on full implementation when crime rates are at an historic low," said Shannon Wight of Partnership for Safety and Justice. "The prudent financial move is to continue investing in education and drug and alcohol treatment programs, which are proven to strengthen the fabric of our communities."

#### **About Partnership for Safety and Justice**

[Partnership for Safety and Justice](http://www.safetyandjustice.org) is a non-profit statewide advocacy organization that works for smart public safety policy in Oregon.