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MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Measure 61 Defeated / Oregonians Reject Mandatory Minimum Measure

Partnership for Safety and Justice (PSJ) is a statewide, non-profit advocacy organization dedicated to making Oregon's criminal justice system more just and better equipped to strengthen public safety. PSJ was among the first organizations in the state to explicitly oppose Measure 61. Since that time, PSJ has worked tirelessly to defeat the regressive mandatory minimum measure, and subsequently support Measure 57, a more balanced approach to addressing drug and property crime.

"Mannix's mandatory minimum madness would have devastated Oregon if it passed," says David Rogers, Executive Director of Partnership for Safety and Justice. "Oregon already spends a greater percentage of its general fund budget on our prison system than any other state in the country. Sinking billions dollars into building more prisons and warehousing people in a system ill-equipped to reduce future crime was obviously not the answer."

"Rejecting Measure 61 is the first step in finding a more effective and fiscally responsible approach to public safety," says Rogers. "We still have a lot of work to do in Oregon. First and foremost, the legislature needs to deliver the treatment money it promised in Measure 57 and we need to ensure it really bolsters necessary rehabilitation programs. Secondly, the legislature needs to promote long-term policy change that gets a handle on our burgeoning prison system. The election results suggest Oregonians believe our future will not be found behind bars but in a prevention-minded approach to public safety that invests in treatment, restores judicial discretion, and emphasizes getting smart on crime rather than simply posturing as tough."

PSJ: Founding Member of A Better Way to Fight Crime Committee

Partnership for Safety and Justice was a founding member of the steering committee that developed The Better Way to Fight Crime Committee. This Political Action Committee was the primary vehicle in the work to pass Measure 57 and oppose Measure 61. Although the public face of the campaign was focused on law enforcement officials, PSJ quietly anchored the campaign efforts in both fundraising and field operations.

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Since May, PSJ volunteers have logged 1,770 hours and conducted personal outreach to over 15,000 Oregon voters, while the combined efforts of PSJ and its affiliated 501c4, the Safety and Justice Action Fund, leveraged over \$220,000 to support the passage of Measure 57 and the defeat of Measure 61.

What Was Kevin Mannix's Role in this Outcome?

Shortly after the legislature passed Senate Bill 1087, which became Measure 57, Kevin Mannix wanted to take credit for the legislative referral. Mannix likes to suggest that Measure 61 forced the legislature to deal with the issue of drug and property crime. Although part of Mannix's assertion may be true, David Rogers puts Kevin Mannix's role into perspective: *"Measure 61 was a seriously destructive proposal, and, in that respect, it did force the legislature to offer an alternative as the best approach to protecting the state from Mannix's madness. For Kevin Mannix to want to share the success of Measure 57 is like an arsonist wanting some appreciation for putting out the fire he started. It's absurd."*

What does the defeat of Measure 61 and the Passage of 57 mean for Oregon?

"First of all, Oregon just dodged a bullet. In these tough economic times, it will be hard enough next year to pass a budget that has adequate money for all the critical services that help build safe, healthy, and sound communities. Measure 61 would have taken a wrecking ball to Oregon's budget," says Rogers.

"Measure 57's success is an indication that Oregonians may be concerned about crime, but they want a smarter and different approach than the status quo," says Rogers. *"The public recognizes that a primary focus on prison building and incarceration is costly and ineffective, while investing in treatment and other prevention focused programs reduces future crime and saves tax dollars in the process."*

"It is important to note that one of the primary differences between 57 and 61 is the emphasis on mandatory minimums in 61 as opposed to maintaining judicial discretion in 57's proscribed sentences. This distinction was hammered home by Mannix's television advertisements for Measure 61. Measure 61's poor showing indicates a real shift in public support away from the one-size-fits-all approach of mandatory minimums toward allowing judges to do their job and weigh the individual circumstances of each case."

"Oregon's approach to public safety has a much brighter future after this election."