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Oregonians Organize to Defeat Mannix's Mandatory Minimum Measure

(Salem) On Saturday, April 5th, over a hundred and fifty Oregonian's will convene for a day-long gathering jumping off a campaign to defeat Mannix's mandatory minimum ballot measure. The gathering is organized by Partnership for Safety and Justice, a statewide advocacy organization that works to make public safety policy more effective and just.

Kevin Mannix has already turned in more than enough signatures to qualify a ballot measure he claims will address drug and property-related crime by creating a new set of mandatory minimum criminal sentences. Yet a diverse set of organizations and experts, including the major statewide law enforcement associations, say Mannix's proposed measure would take Oregon in the wrong direction.

"This mandatory minimum measure would devastate Oregon," said David Rogers, executive director of the Partnership for Safety and Justice. "Kevin Mannix wants to spend hundreds of millions of our tax dollars to build more prisons, but his proposal won't make us any safer. If we really want to address drug and property crime, making drug treatment more accessible has to be a major part of the solution."

The Mannix mandatory minimum measure directs no money toward drug treatment either in the community or in prison despite trying to address addiction-driven crime. The Oregon Criminal Justice Commission estimates that if the measure passes it would cost between \$128 and \$200 million a year on incarceration costs, not including the cost of building the required new prisons.

The gathering on Saturday is designed to give people information and tools to help defeat the ballot measure. Senator Vicki Walker will help introduce the event and share her thoughts about how Oregon can get smart on crime and why the Mannix mandatory minimum measure would be dangerous for Oregon. The rest of the day will be filled with trainings on voter registration, voter education, and discussions about more effective ways to maintain public safety.

"The fact that over a hundred and fifty people decided to travel to Salem and give up their Saturday this early in the election season shows that Oregonians are truly alarmed about this Mannix measure. People have been sharing a wide range of concerns about the measure. This is not just about rejecting Mannix's approach to crime; this is also about protecting the state

budget. This measure unquestionably puts funding for critical services like the Oregon Health Plan and public schools in jeopardy,” said Rogers.

A recent report by the PEW Charitable Trust shows that Oregon spends a higher percentage of its general fund dollars on incarceration than any other state in the country. In 2007, Oregon became just one of five states that spends more money on prisons than on higher education.

Partnership for Safety and Justice’s event will be held at the Claggett Creek Middle School, 1810 Alder Drive NE, Keizer, OR. The event runs from 9:45 to 4:30 and requires registration.