



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Legislation will create considerable obstacles to drug-related crime *Bipartisan metal-theft legislation moves out of Senate this morning*

SALEM – The Senate took a major step towards cracking down on drug-related crime this morning with passage of Senate Bill 570 by a unanimous vote. The bill, sponsored by 89 legislators from both chambers, will create significant obstacles to persons who have long used the sale of stolen scrap metal to finance their drug habits.

“This is good legislation that will significantly curb metal theft in Oregon,” said Senator Floyd Prozanski (D-Eugene), chair of the Senate Judiciary committee. “This bill has the support of nearly every legislator in the building, of business and prosecutors, and is exemplary of what we can achieve by working together on a common problem to find a shared solution for Oregonians.”

Metal theft has become a serious safety problem across Oregon as thieves become more and more reckless in the materials they go after. In recent years metal has been stripped from school bleachers, utility electric substations, and guardrails.

“In addition to the huge public safety issue metal theft creates, it’s also huge problem for our agricultural industries,” said Senator Martha Schrader (D-Canby). “Farmers are finding their sprinklers stripped out and their greenhouses dismantled. This legislation will help put a stop to this sort of crime.”

Senate Bill 570 contains several main components that will end the ease with which metal thieves are able to trade stolen products for cash, including:

- Clarifying the duties of scrap metal businesses to notify law enforcement if they believe that the metal property they purchased or received is stolen.
- Requiring scrap metal businesses to collect and retain for one year a ‘metal property record’ from individuals and companies that engage in the selling of metal products.
- Creating misdemeanor crime for unlawfully altering metal property, for example obliterating a serial number.
- Requiring that payment for scrap metal is given no sooner than three business days after sale and delivered by a mailed check to the seller’s street address. This important provision will prevent metal thieves from using stolen identities to document their sale.

“Cracking down on meth-related crime is a priority for Senate Democrats,” said Senate Majority Leader Richard Devlin (D-Tualatin). “Our hope is that these changes will get to the root of the problem by creating considerable obstacles to those who steal metal in order to fund their drug habits.”

The bill will now go to the House for consideration.

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