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Republicans Respond to Record-Breaking Crime Wave With Common-Sense Reforms

SALEM, Ore. – Safe neighborhoods are a top priority for Oregonians after years of Democrats’ failed leadership on public safety. Senate and House Republicans have responded this session by introducing several proposals to tackle crime and improve safety for individuals, families, and businesses.

These proposals did not receive meaningful bipartisan support from Democrats who instead are pushing an agenda that [includes](#) letting more criminals out of prison early.

To respond to the needs of Oregonians, today Republicans in both chambers pulled public safety reform bills from committee directly to the floor for a vote. The actions are supportive of Oregonians’ concerns. In a recent public opinion [poll](#), sixty-two percent believe the state’s political leadership is too soft on crime.

[SJR 202](#) – Gives Oregonians a chance to vote on Legislative oversight of the Governor’s power to let criminals out of prison early.

Oregon is currently one of only three states in the nation with no oversight on the Governor’s power for early release of criminals. SJR 202, if passed by voters, would require Oregonians’ elected representatives in the Senate to approve any commutation or pardon.

[HB 4135](#) – Closes a legal loophole exploited by drug traffickers allowing them to continue dealing substantial quantities of illicit drugs in neighborhoods and to children.

Current law requires officers to be able to show who the drugs were being sold to. This requires a witness to the act of drugs exchanging hands, making it easy for these drug traffickers to avoid arrest and prosecution, allowing them to continue operating.

“Oregonians deserve to feel safe in their homes, but right now, they don’t because of the Governor’s unlimited power to let criminals out of prison,” said Senate Republican Leader Tim Knopp (R-Bend). “Democrats are pursuing a soft on crime agenda that makes Oregon more dangerous and victims more vulnerable. Oregonians are tired of this kind of overreach. Republicans are standing up for accountability, oversight, and public safety.”

“Following a historic year of violence in Oregon and failed leadership from Democrat leaders, people want the simple assurance of safety,” said House Republican Leader Vikki Breese-Iverson (R-Prineville). “Republicans heard their message loud and clear and pushed for several proposals to protect communities. Legislation to keep Oregonians safe should have bipartisan support. Instead, Democrats voted down these proposals and pushed ideas to let convicted criminals vote from prison and make it harder for law enforcement to stop destructive riots.”

The motion to debate SJR 202 failed along party lines, with all Democrats voting against it. SJR 202 will remain dead in the Senate Judiciary Committee until Democrats decide to speak out against the Governor’s abuse of power.

HB 4135 failed on a near party line vote. Republicans plan to reintroduce the proposal for the 2023 legislative session.

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