

Judge hears Oregon request to restrain federal agents

By Gillian Flaccus
Associated Press

PORTLAND — A federal judge heard arguments Wednesday on Oregon’s request for a restraining order against federal agents sent to the state’s biggest city to quell protests that have spiraled into nightly clashes between authorities and demonstrators.

The lawsuit, filed by Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum, alleges federal agents that President Donald Trump sent have arrested people with no probable cause, whisked protesters away in unmarked cars and used excessive force to quell the unrest. It’s part of growing pushback against the Trump administration’s use of federal agents in Portland and its plans to do the same in other cities.

In a twist, the judge hearing the case — U.S. District Court Judge Michael Mosman — works out of the Mark O. Hatfield Federal Courthouse, which has been a target for more than 50 nights of protests following the killing of George Floyd. Floyd, a Black man, died after being pinned at the neck by a white Minneapolis police officer, igniting protests against racial injustice nationwide.

The motion for a temporary restraining order asks the judge to immediately command agents from the Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, the Federal Protective Service and the U.S. Marshals Service to

immediately stop detaining protesters without probable cause, to identify themselves before arresting anyone and to explain why an arrest is taking place.

During the hearing — held by videoconference because of the coronavirus pandemic — Rosenblum said she was asking the court to “declare it not acceptable for federal officers to use unconstitutional police state-type acts to detain citizens of Oregon without cause.”

There are 114 federal agents in Portland, according to Steve Lippold, another attorney for the state.

David Morrell, an attorney for the U.S. government, called the motion “extraordinary” and told the court it was based solely on “a few threadbare declarations” from witnesses and a Twitter video.

“It’s important to underscore what’s at stake here. The Hatfield courthouse did not damage itself,” he said, calling the protests “dangerous and volatile.”

But in a back-and-forth with Oregon attorneys, Mosman focused on a Twitter video of another arrest that showed a person being placed in an unmarked van and seemed skeptical of the state’s argument that arrest in particular was made without probable cause.

It wasn’t clear when Mosman would rule.

The suit by Oregon’s attorney general is one of several filed over law enforcement’s response to the Portland protests. On

Thursday a judge will hear arguments in a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of journalists and legal observers who say they were targeted and attacked by police while documenting demonstrations. A freelance photographer covering the protests for The Associated Press submitted an affidavit that he was beaten with batons, chemical irritants and hit with rubber bullets.



Photo by Noah Berger/Associated Press

Federal officers use chemical irritants and crowd control munitions on Wednesday, July 22, to disperse Black Lives Matter protesters outside the Mark O. Hatfield United States Courthouse in Portland.

Oregon town destroys train used in sex abuse

By Teresa Jackson
Madras Pioneer via AP StoryShare

METOLIUS — Metolius Mayor Carl “Foncie” Elliott said last week a wooden train that was involved in a decade of sexual abuse has been destroyed.

The story of the train led to an outcry on social media, which apparently led the city to take down its Facebook page, as well as a petition on Change.org that garnered 2,761 signatures and a Facebook group called Stop the Train that had 889 members as of Saturday morning.

The victim of the abuse, Madras resident Cassandra Ruwaldt, said she’s grateful the train is gone, but the community wanted proof. She later received confirmation from Undersheriff Marc Heckathorn, who interviewed employees at the transfer station.

“I’m standing next to the community,” Ruwaldt said. “I’m hearing their voices, and they would like proof from City Council ... I am so grateful that it’s gone even though there is no proof. ... They can’t be like, ‘It’s gone. Problem solved. Let’s move on.’ They have an entire community to deal with now.”

“The train has been resolved, and it’s gone, destroyed, and that’s all,” Elliott said by phone. “It is no longer in our possession. Period.”

Ruwaldt on Friday received a picture from an anonymous source that showed a pile of wooden debris, including the train’s wheels, at the Box Canyon Transfer Station, Madras.

The train was built by Richard Pickett, who was convicted in 2008 of 35 counts in connection with the abuse and child pornography, including first-degree sodomy, first-degree sexual abuse and first-degree encouraging child sexual abuse. He is serving a 38-year sentence in prison.

City officials didn’t know its history until Cassandra Ruwaldt, her husband, Bryan Ruwaldt, and Jefferson County District Attorney Steve Leriche brought it to their attention in March.

FIELD TEST Candidates Wanted

URGENT NOTICE: You may be qualified to participate in a special Field Test of new hearing instrument technology being held at a local test site.

An industry leader in digital hearing devices is sponsoring a product field test in your area next week and they have asked us to select up to 15 qualified candidates to participate. They are interested in determining the benefits of GENIUS™ 3.0 Technology in eliminating the difficulty hearing aid users experience in difficult environments, such as those with background noise or multiple talkers. Candidates in other test areas have reported very positive feedback so far.

We are looking for additional candidates in **LA GRANDE and the surrounding areas.**
Expires: July 29th, 2020

LA GRANDE
111 Elm Street
La Grande, OR 97850
541-605-2109

BAKER CITY
2021 Washington Ave.
Baker City, OR 97814
541-239-3782

ENTERPRISE
113-1/2 Front E. Main St.
Enterprise, OR 97828
541-239-3877

In an effort to accurately demonstrate the incredible performance of these devices, specially trained representatives will be conducting testing and demonstrations during this special event.

In addition to an audiometric hearing evaluation, candidates will receive a fiber-optic otoscope exam, a painless procedure that could reveal common hearing problems such as excessive wax or damage to the eardrum, as well as other common causes of hearing deficiencies.

Qualified Field Test Candidates:

- Live in La Grande or the surrounding area
- Are at least 55 years of age or older
- Have experienced some level of hearing difficulty, or currently wear hearing aids
- Don’t currently work for a market research company



FIELD TEST PARTICIPANTS
Will be tested and selected same-day.

We have a limited supply of the GENIUS™ 3.0 test product currently on hand and ready for testing. We have also been authorized to offer significant discounts if you decide to take the hearing instruments home. If you choose not to keep them, there’s no risk or obligation of any kind.†

TO PARTICIPATE:

- 1) You must be one of the first 15 people to call our office
Mention Code: 20JulField
- 2) You will be required to have your hearing tested in our office, FREE OF CHARGE, to determine candidacy.
- 3) Report your results with the hearing instruments to the Hearing Care Specialist over a three week test period.

Qualified candidates will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis **so please call us TODAY to secure your spot in the Product Field Test.**

Participants who qualify and complete the product test will receive a **FREE \$100 Restaurant.com Gift Card*** as a token of our thanks.

AVOID WAITING – CALL AND MENTION CODE: 20JulField

*One per household. Must be 55 or older and bring loved one for familiar voice test. Must complete a hearing test. Not valid with prior test/purchase in last 6 months. While supplies last. Free gift card may be used toward the purchase of food at participating restaurants where a minimum purchase may also be required. See restaurant.com for details. Not redeemable for cash. Promotional offer available during special event dates only. †If you are not completely satisfied, the aids may be returned for a full refund within 30 days of the completion of fitting, in satisfactory condition. See store for details.