

# Portland withdraws from FBI's terrorism task force

A 3-2 vote by the City Council

By AMELIA TEMPLETON

Oregon Public Broadcasting

Portland is out of the FBI-led Joint Terrorism Task Force again.

The Portland City Council voted 3-2 Wednesday to withdraw the city's police officers from the federal task force, a partnership between federal agencies and local law enforcement.

Commissioners Jo Ann Hardesty, Amanda Fritz and Chloe Eudaly supported the change. They worry there is not enough civilian oversight to ensure Portland officers abide by civil rights laws and say there isn't enough evidence to show the task force has made Portland safer.

"The current president has made clear his animosity toward Muslims, immigrants and people of color," Fritz said, noting that the FBI has not followed through on promises to provide more, regular information on the group's work since Portland re-entered the partnership several years ago. "I found it hard to trust the JTTF under President Obama. It's impossible now."

The vote is a significant win for Hardesty, the newest city commissioner, who ran last year on a promise to get Portland out of the federal task force.

"For a whole year, I talked about this on the campaign trail, and everywhere I went, people were concerned about whether or not their data was collected and used in a way that was against Oregon state law," she said. "We are here today because I am about keeping promises."

Hardesty and Fritz had made their positions clear before Wednesday's meeting. Eudaly ended up being the deciding vote and said she does not have confi-



Bradley W. Parks/Oregon Public Broadcasting

Millie Hobaish urged Portland to leave the FBI-led Joint Terrorism Task Force.

dence city leaders have enough oversight to prevent Portland officers from engaging in police work that targets immigrants and other groups.

"Even good people can make bad decisions, especially in a flawed system," she said. "I don't trust the system the JTTF functions within. I do not trust the administration who oversees it. ... Do you feel safer today than you did five years ago? I don't either."

Mayor Ted Wheeler and Commissioner Nick Fish voted against leaving the task force.

Wheeler said he respected his colleagues' decision and reasoning — but disagreed.

"I absolutely believe that the JTTF is highly imperfect. It could do much better," he said. "As the police commissioner, I cannot support a policy that appears to favor politics or ideology over the safety and well-being of Portlanders. While values are extremely important, values alone cannot protect the safety of the community."

Fish asked his colleagues to slow down and consider tweaks to, rather than

a wholesale rejection of, Portland's relationship with the FBI-led group. They declined.

"The FBI will continue doing this work without our involvement," Fish said. "I'd rather have our values at the table. Why would we walk away and forfeit our opportunity for oversight of their work?"

Portland is the second West Coast city to withdraw from the task force since President Donald Trump took office. San Francisco withdrew its officers from the group in 2017. The city withdrew once before, under Mayor Tom Potter, entered into a convoluted "as needed" relationship under Mayor Sam Adams and then rejoined in full under Mayor Charlie Hales in 2015.

The city's resolution does not end the task force's work or its partnerships with six other local law enforcement agencies.

During the debate, federal officials stressed that they will continue to work with Portland officers when needed. But city officers will cease their participation within 90 days.

"The FBI's mission is to

protect the American people and uphold the Constitution. With the withdrawal of the city of Portland from the Joint Terrorism Task Force, that mission doesn't change," Renn Cannon, the FBI's special agent in charge for Oregon, said in a written statement. "... To this end, the FBI will continue to partner formally with other members of the JTTF as well as informally with cities and counties across the state to share information and address threats as appropriate."

U.S. Attorney Billy J. Williams, in a statement, called the decision "a mistake that defies logic. It's disappointing that in spite of the overwhelming evidence presented of JTTF successes in Oregon and across the nation, a majority of the City Council chose a politically-expedient broadside against the federal government over the safety and well-being of their constituents."

"The law enforcement community's duty and commitment to ensuring public safety and protecting civil rights will not be deterred by the politics of the moment."

# Court grants EPA new hearing on pesticide ban

Farm groups support the move

By DON JENKINS

Capital Press

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals will reconsider outlawing chlorpyrifos, a pesticide banned by a three-judge panel in August, but that farm groups say is vital to food production.

A new hearing is a victory for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, as well as farm groups. A majority of the court's judges has voted to set aside the August ruling and rehear the case in late March in San Francisco.

A time and date has not been set. The case will be heard by 11 judges drawn by lot from the court's roster of judges.

The EPA asked for rehearing after it was ordered in a 2-1 decision to cancel all uses of chlorpyrifos.

The American Farm Bureau Federation and more than two dozen other farm groups filed a court brief supporting the EPA's motion.

The farm groups argue banning chlorpyrifos would wreak havoc on U.S. agriculture. In use on farms since 1965, chlorpyrifos is approved for more than 50 crops and is also used to protect livestock from disease-carrying insects.

The case stems from a petition to ban chlorpyrifos filed in 2007 by the Natural Resources Defense Council and the Pesticide Action Network North America. Environmental groups claim total exposure to the pesticide on food, in drinking water and the environment harms the brains of young children.

Under a court order to make a decision, the EPA under President Barack Obama proposed ban-

ning the pesticide in 2015, but delayed making a final decision until the change in administrations. Faced with a new deadline from the court, the Trump administration's EPA denied the petition in March 2017 and said it would continue assessing chlorpyrifos.

The August ruling was written by visiting Judge Jed Rakoff of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. The majority ruled that the EPA could not justify its decision in the face of evidence that residue on food causes neurodevelopmental damage to children.

The EPA argues the ruling was premature because the science is unsettled and was too broad because the ban also applied to non-food uses. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, under the Obama and Trump administrations, has defended chlorpyrifos as safe and in some cases the only effective chemical against dangerous pests.

The lawsuit to ban chlorpyrifos was filed by the League of United Latin American Citizens, Pesticide Action Network North America, Natural Resources Defense Council, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation, Farmworkers Association of Florida, Farmworkers Justice Green Latinos, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, Learning Disabilities Association of America, National Hispanic Medical Association, Pinos Y Campesinos Unidos Del Noroeste and United Farm Workers. The nonprofit law firm Earthjustice represents them.

Washington State Attorney General Bob Ferguson has intervened in the case, urging a ban. He is joined by attorneys general in Maryland, Massachusetts, New York and the District of Columbia.

# States weigh bills addressing Native deaths, disappearances

By MARY HUDETZ

Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — Lawmakers in at least seven states have introduced legislation to address the unsolved deaths and disappearances of numerous Native American women and girls.

The legislation calls for state-funded task forces and other actions amid deepening concerns that law enforcement agencies lack the data and resources to understand the scope of the crisis.

On some reservations, federal studies have shown Native American women are killed at more than 10 times the national average.

"This is not about a trend that is popular this year," said state Rep. Derrick Lente, a Democrat who is co-sponsoring a measure in New Mexico. "It's really to bring to light the number of indigenous people who are going missing."

An Associated Press review of the bills found that mostly Native American lawmakers in Minnesota, the Dakotas, Montana, Washington, New Mexico and Arizona have sponsored measures on the issue.

In AP interviews last year, families described feeling dismissed after initially reporting cases of missing female relatives to police. An examination of records found there was no single government database tracking all known cases of missing Native American women.

In Montana, a bill named for Hanna Harris — a 21-year-old found slain on the Northern Cheyenne

Reservation in July 2013 — proposes that state authorities hire a specialist responsible for entering cases into databases.

Under Hanna's Act, the state Department of Justice employee would also serve as a liaison for tribal, federal and state authorities and families after a Native American is reported missing.

"To us we've seen study bill after study bill," said Rep. Rae Peppers, a Democrat. "Why waste money on a study bill when the issue was right in front of us?"

Peppers, whose district spans the Northern Cheyenne and Crow reservations, lives in Lame Deer, a small community where Harris' body was found days after she was first reported missing.

Peppers said she and other lawmakers decided to name the measure for Harris in part because her mother had led an early push for more awareness of the cases.

Other cases in Peppers'

rural district include the death of 14-year-old Henny Scott. Her body was found by a search party two weeks after she went missing in December.

Harris and Scott's families complained authorities were slow to search for the victims after they were reported missing.

"It's always been this way. We've always had missing women and children," Peppers said. "The

voices are just louder now."

In New Mexico, Lente said his measure would call for the New Mexico Indian Affairs Department to lead a task force joined by authorities across jurisdictions.

The legislation was welcomed by Meskee Yatsayte, an advocate in New Mexico for families with missing loved ones on the Navajo Nation. She said she hoped lawmakers and officials would include victims' fam-

ilies and advocates in their discussions.

"It's a good step forward," Yatsayte said. "But it can't be something where they meet and then nothing is done about it."

Bills in South Dakota and North Dakota include mandates for law enforcement training programs on conducting investigations.

Rep. Tamara St. John, a South Dakota Republican and member of the Sisseton

Wahpeton Oyate, said she's co-sponsoring the measure to put a spotlight on the cases.

Rep. Gina Mosbrucker, a Washington state Republican, introduced a bill signed into law last year that requires the Washington State Patrol to provide an estimate by June of how many Native women are missing in the state. That measure paved the way for similar legislation in other states.

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