

# Second Chance for Juvenile Offenders Urged

## Lawmakers consider changes to Measure 11

(AP)—Oregon lawmakers may try to revise a 1994 get-tough-on-crime law in a way that would allow the early release of juvenile offenders charged with serious crimes.

Some legislators and advocacy groups say they think the public is ready for a second look at whether the law is cost-effective and the best way to rehabilitate young offenders.

Measure 11 requires judges to sentence people convicted of se-

rious crimes, including young offenders, to fixed prison terms with no possibility of parole or probation.

The House and Senate judiciary committees recently conducted public hearings on measures to revise sentencing procedures for 15, 16 and 17-year-olds who commit the most serious crimes such as murder, assault, robbery or kidnapping.

The House measure would give those youths a chance to go be-

fore a judge for a "second look" after they have served half of their sentences. Judges could grant youths release to serve the remainder of their sentences under post-prison supervision if it can be proved that they have made significant progress while incarcerated.

"I think the public, if you asked them, would be OK with giving juveniles a 'second look,'" said Rep. Chip Shields, D-Portland. "Most people realize that 15- to



Rep. Chip Shields

17-year-olds should be dealt with differently than 25-year-old hardened criminals."

Under the Senate measure, youths would receive pretrial hearings in adult court in which judges would determine whether trying the case in juvenile court or adult court would be best suited to protect public safety while promoting rehabilitation.

A key lawmaker, Sen. Ginny Burdick, said it's "no coincidence"

that the Measure 11 issue is being given a higher profile now that Democrats are in charge of both the House and the Senate for the first time in 16 years.

Burdick, who is chairwoman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, said it's doubtful that legislation will pass this session, since it would require a supermajority of lawmakers in both chambers to revise Measure 11.

Still, she said Democrats - as well as some Republicans - believe the time has come to begin a serious, long-term look at the effectiveness of the state's laws aimed at deterring crime, including Measure 11's provisions dealing with juvenile offenders.

"Some of these juveniles are very, very dangerous, and some do need to go away for a very long time," the Portland Democrat said. "But the question is, do all of them need to? In my opinion, we are sacrificing some young lives that we don't have to."

About 50 youths are sentenced each year under Measure 11, according to state figures.

Kevin Neely, spokesman for the Oregon District Attorneys Association, said the group will "vigorously oppose" the rewrite of a measure that was overwhelmingly approved by voters and which has been credited with helping to bring down Oregon's violent crime rate.

## Police Tactics Uneven

### Minorities more likely to be searched and arrested

(AP) -- Black, Hispanic and white drivers are equally likely to be pulled over by police, but blacks and Hispanics are much more likely to be searched and arrested, a federal study found.

Police were much more likely to threaten or use force against blacks and Hispanics than against whites in any encounter, whether at a traffic stop or elsewhere, according to the Justice Department.

The study, released Sunday by the department's Bureau of Justice Statistics, covered police contacts with the public during 2005 and was based on interviews by the Census Bureau with nearly 64,000 people age 16 or over.

"The numbers are very consistent" with those found in a similar study of police-public contacts in 2002, bureau statistician Matthew R. Durose, the

report's co-author, said in an interview. "There's some stability in the findings over these three years."

Traffic stops have become a politically volatile issue. Minority groups have complained that many stops and searches are based on race rather than on legitimate suspicions. Blacks in particular have complained of being pulled over for simply "driving while black."

"The available data is sketchy but deeply concerning," said Hillary Shelton, director of the NAACP's Washington bureau. The civil rights organization has done its own surveys of traffic stops, and he said the racial disparities grow larger, the deeper the studies delve.

Traffic stops are the most frequent way police interact with the public, accounting for 41 percent of all contacts.



A series of provocative reader boards at the Florida Room, 435 N. Killingsworth St., brought Max Julian to a protest Saturday outside the bar and restaurant.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

## North Portland Reader Board Incites Protest

About a dozen local residents gathered in front of the Florida Room in north Portland on Saturday to raise debate and discussion about what makes a good

business neighbor and what is negative gentrification.

A changeable marquee to advertise the establishment has carried language that some people find offensive, especially in a neigh-

borhood rooted in family and religious values and just a few feet from Jefferson High School.

The protesting group, Citizens Overcoming Racism and Sexism, read a proclamation calling

on efforts to inform, educate and support change that will improve the quality of life in north and northeast Portland, and in particular the African American community.

# FIND OPPORTUNITY

**Are you mechanically inclined?**  
Start at TriMet as a Service Worker, cleaning and fueling vehicles, and advance into our apprenticeship programs.

- Service Workers may apply for one of seven paid apprenticeship programs
- Great wages and benefits
- Free transit pass for your spouse or partner and kids

Apply online at [trimet.org/jobs](http://trimet.org/jobs), stop by TriMet at 4012 SE 17th Ave., or call 503-962-7640.

TRI MET

See where it takes you.

## Cocaine Sentencing Disparities Tackled

The United States Sentencing Commission recommended Sunday that Congress narrow the current federal sentencing disparity between crack and powder cocaine offenses.

Distributing just five grams of crack for example, carries a minimum 5-year federal prison sentence, while distributing 500 grams of powder cocaine carries the same sentence. This is the second time since 2002 the commission recommended that Con-

gress narrow this 100-1 ratio disparity to 20-1.

"Members of Congress must not allow politics and myths about crack and its users to prevent them from doing what's right," said Caroline Fredrickson, director of the American Civil Liberties Union's Washington, D.C. legislative office.

The ACLU said it was disappointed the Sentencing Commission did not recommend a complete elimination of the sen-

tencing disparity between crack and powder cocaine, "despite the wealth of research and data it has collected over the years indicating no medical or legal reason for the disparity."

"This unjust policy is based on little more than politics and urban myths, yet it's been allowed to stand for over 20 years, devastating African-American communities in the process," Frederickson said.

Subscribe! 503-288-0033

The Portland Observer  
Attn: Subscriptions, PO Box 3137,  
Portland OR 97208

Fill Out & Send To: \_\_\_\_\_  
subscriptions are just \$60 per year (please include check with this subscription form)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
*or email [subscriptions@portlandobserver.com](mailto:subscriptions@portlandobserver.com)*

**Advance. Grow. Succeed.**

For every Portland police officer, there is a story...

**Jose Gonzalez**  
Sergeant

*"I chose the Portland Police Bureau because I saw more opportunities for growth. I knew this was my career. So, in 20 years, I wanted to be in a place where there would be room to grow and learn new skills. It paid off."*

**Five reasons to join us.**

- Earn \$48,714 after first six months.
- Lots of assignments, promotional opportunities.
- Annual clothing or equipment allowance.
- Rewarding career.
- City pays 100% retirement.

Join us and write the next chapter.

Registration and application deadline for the next entry-level and lateral officer test is June 25, 2007. Visit:  
[www.joinportlandpolice.com](http://www.joinportlandpolice.com)