

Juvenile Justice Reform Made Good

Governor signs law sponsored by late Sen. Winters

BY DANNY PETERSON
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

New sentencing requirements for young offenders meant to mitigate long held systemic racial and ethnic disparities in Oregon's corrections system was signed into

law by Gov. Kate Brown Monday in what advocates are calling the most significant juvenile justice reform bill in the past quarter century.

It means that a series of mandatory minimum sentences originally adopted as part of Measure 11 in 1994 will be reversed. The former law has been a sore spot for minority communities most impacted by an overrepresentation of persons of color in the criminal



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Gov. Kate Brown signed juvenile justice reform legislation Monday mitigating the long held systemic racial and ethnic disparities from Measure 11, the tough on-crime sentencing requirements adopted in Oregon almost 25 years ago.

justice system.

In the case of serious crimes like murder and assault, youth offenders aged 15, 16, and 17-years-old will no longer be automatically prosecuted as adults. Moreover, a process will be established where all youth who are convicted in adult court will eventually be afforded a "second look," halfway through their sentence, by a judge, and life without parole sentences have been eliminated for those under 18.

After a decade of pushing simi-

lar legislation—including a failed push of juvenile sentencing reforms in 2013—lawmakers finally succeeded this year. That's in large part due to the added number of Democrats in the Legislature and the late state Sen. Jackie Winters, a black Republican, championing the measure. Winters was able to rally support from colleagues within her party while battling lung cancer for the past two years.

During Monday's bill signing, remembrances from colleagues and friends touted Winters as a

criminal justice reform champion.

Pam McClain, Winters' daughter-in-law and chief-of staff, said in a tearful speech the bill was a long sought item to check off on the 82-year-old's list of accomplishments before her passing in May, which occurred just days after Senate Bill 1008 was passed by the Oregon Legislature.

"She wanted that second look for juveniles, she wanted to make sure we gave them hope," she

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Massive Food Stamps Cut

The Trump administration is moving to end food stamp benefits for 3 million people siding with Republicans who wanted to curtail the leeway of states to automatically enroll residents who receive welfare benefits. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue said state governments "have misused this flexibility."



'Poppa Funk' Neville Dies at 81
Art Neville, a member of a storied New Orleans musical family who performed with his siblings in The Neville Brothers band and founded the groundbreaking funk group The Meters, died Monday. The artist nicknamed "Poppa Funk" was 81. He shared in Grammy awards with The Neville Brothers for "Healing Chant;" with a group of musicians on the Stevie Ray Vaughn tribute SRV Shuffle; and with The Meters when they got a lifetime achievement.

String of Gym Thefts

A string of thefts have hit gyms all around the Portland area. Police agencies investigating the thefts

The Week in Review

are not confirming any of them are connected, but they say the methods sure seem similar. A suspect or suspects used guest passes to infiltrate an LA Fitness on Northwest Northrup Street. Once inside, locks on lockers were cut and wallets were stolen.

A Welcome Homecoming

Congresswoman Ilhan Omar, a target of Donald Trump's racism, was warmly and enthusiastically greeted by crowds shouting "welcome home Ilhan" when she returned home to Minnesota last week. Faith leaders in her home district stood firmly behind her. One rabbi called chants of "send her home" at a rally the president held a night earlier in North Carolina, "terrifying."



Kaepernick Ad Nominated

A 2018 Nike ad featuring Colin Kaepernick received an Emmy



nomination last week in the Outstanding Commercial category. Created by the Portland-based firm Wieden+Kennedy, the ad features the former San Francisco 49ers quarterback delivering the tagline "Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything." Kaepernick has been the target of President Trump for protesting issues of racial injustice.

Most Admired Woman

The results of an online poll have found former first lady Michelle Obama to be the world's most admired woman. The 2019 YouGov survey found that the lawyer, writer and wife of the 44th president has recently taken the place of actress, filmmaker and humanitarian Angelina Jolie for most admired woman. Talk show host and philanthropist Oprah Winfrey took second place in the poll, while Jolie fell to third place.

