

Prison

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crime. Psychopathic killers belong under lock and key. And so do the ugly collection of rapists, child molesters and thugs who are included in this 2010 statistic. But the 67 percent figure also includes people who likely pose little, if any, continuing threat. All Measure 11 crimes are “person to person” and included in that violent crime statistic. Take Robbery 2, for example. It’s a violent crime, but it includes the teenagers who grab candy from a convenience store and

Myth 3. We don’t need the reforms because incarceration rates are not growing as fast as predicted. The state Office of Economic Analysis projects the prison population of 14,300 will jump to 16,239 within a decade. That’s a drop of 106 from the last long-term forecast, but not a divergence from the current trend. Oregon’s incarceration rate grew three times faster than the national average in the last 10 years. And a growing proportion of prisoners are there for nonviolent crimes.

Will HB 3194 fix this? That’s what it’s designed to do.

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push a customer over on their way out of the door. It includes people who have pretended to have a weapon, or have brandished a fake weapon. And it includes people involved in a crime, during which an accomplice acts violently—the getaway driver in a robbery where a weapon is used as a threat, for example. Holding people accountable for their actions is important, but if public safety is the issue, they clearly are not all equally violent. What would HB 3194 change? It won’t change the statistic. But it would allow judges some leeway in sentencing for three Measure 11 crimes: Robbery 2, Assault 2, and Sex Abuse 1, which can all vary widely in severity. Judges could take into consideration a person’s criminal history and the circumstances of the crime when dishing out sentences.

Myth 4. Oregon’s juvenile justice system is a model that others follow. Oregon law violates national and international recommendations on how to treat young offenders. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child says: “the detention of children should always be a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time.” Acres of research findings show youth offenders are not equivalent to adults and should not be treated as adults. But Oregon automatically charges teens aged 15 and up as adults when they are accused of a Measure 11 crime. And even younger children can be charged and sentenced as adults. Two-thirds of teens who offend don’t commit further crimes. But when those youth are incarcerated in large institutions alongside other offenders, they are less likely to mature out of criminal behavior. Half of Oregon’s counties still send teens to adult jails. And when they are in adult jail they are locked in cells for up to 23 hours a day. Technically that is not called solitary confinement, but it causes similar damage

STEM

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released the school-raised fish into Drano Lake near the Bonneville Dam. The students also studied food and nutrition. And they investigated how far you’d have to go to get nutritious food in different neighborhoods, and how much it cost. One girl said her mother had changed her shopping habits after the class studied which foods are better for health. But the family soon found that healthier foods can be more expensive, and hard to find in their neighborhood. The class went on to take action, sending a letter to President Obama about unequal access to healthy foods. “It’s not fair that people with higher incomes can get healthy food, and people with lower incomes are stuck,” a student said.

Merkley also visited a third-grade classroom where students were studying pill bugs, which they also know as isopods. Sen. Merkley’s bill, “The STEM Educa-

into more classrooms -- to make sure teachers are trained to teach STEM subjects -- to close achievement gaps, and

One girl said her mother had changed her shopping habits after the class studied which foods are better for health, then sent letters to the President about the cost of healthier food

tion for the Global Economy Act,” was introduced last week in the U.S. Senate. The bill would focus on middle and high schools, sending grants to states: -- to bring high quality STEM education

-- to make sure students from all backgrounds have opportunities for careers in science, engineering and technology. “America is spending too little on education and shortchanging our economic

future,” Merkley said. “We need to make sure that our children are the most educated and well prepared for the global economy. “That starts with more STEM education in our schools to train the next generation of engineers, while also exposing our middle and high school students to career technical education relevant for manufacturing, welding, and woodworking.” Merkley also plans to introduce another bill that would create grants for practical career and technical education. “It’s for what we used to call shop classes”, Merkley said. “Because oftentimes when people build things with their hands in metal shop or wood shop, it takes the science world and it makes it very real. There’s a lot of joy that comes with actually making things.”

Vigil

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from the traffic stop. McCollister told investigators that most of his body was inside the car when he tried to remove her. He tried to pull her out by her hair, pepper spray her and use a Taser but all attempts were unsuccessful. When she put the car into drive, he fired his gun because he thought his life was in danger, he claimed. Police Chief Mark Kroeker and former Mayor Vera Katz, then police commissioner, disciplined McCollister for unsatisfactory performance.

McCollister was suspended for 5.5 months before an arbitrator lifted the suspension. The arbitrator, John C Truesdale, ordered the city to pay McCollister’s lost wages and expunge the suspension from his record because the Portland Police Bureau didn’t conduct a full internal affairs investigation. Such investigations are required by bureau policy in cases where officers use deadly force. Kroeker was forced to resign that same

year. On Dec. 17 of 2012, the U.S. Department of Justice filed a complaint against the city, based on an 18-month investigation of the police bureau. The City and justice officials filed a settlement agreement at the same time. As of Feb. 20, the alliance, justice department, City and the Portland Police Association have been in mediation talks to try and resolve their differences on police reforms.

The justice department concluded Portland police engaged in a ‘pattern or practice’ of violating the civil rights of people with mental illness, or those thought to have mental illness. Sunday’s vigil begins at 5 p.m. and members of James’ family will be in attendance. For more information on the alliance, go to www.albinaministerialcoalition.org.

Crisis Team



Portland Police Bureau introduced the staff of its new Behavioral Health Unit April 30. The unit pairs police officers with mental health specialists. Pictured here from left: Officer Amy Bruner-Denhert, Crisis Intervention Team coordinator; Dinah Brooks, MSW; Averyl Growdon, LPC; and Officer Josh Silverman, who all work on the mobile crisis unit; and Cindy Hackett of LCSW.