

Obama to police: U.S. safer because of your efforts

CHICAGO (AP) — Defending police officers who have come under scrutiny like never before, President Barack Obama on Tuesday said the men and women who risk their lives to provide security are wrongly “scapegoated” for failing to deal with broader problems that lead people to commit crimes. Unemployment, poor education, inadequate drug treatment and lax gun laws are not the responsibility of police officers, Obama said in remarks to the International

Association of Chief of Police, which held its annual meeting in the president’s Chicago hometown. He blamed the news media’s tendency “to focus on the sensational” for helping to drive a wedge between police officers and a public they take an oath to protect and serve. He called for rebuilding the trust that once existed between them. Obama delivered his speech amid a roiling national debate about officers’ treatment of potential criminal

suspects following the deaths of unarmed black men in New York, Missouri and elsewhere by police. “Too often, law enforcement gets scapegoated for the broader failures of our society and criminal justice system,” the president said. “I know that you do your jobs with distinction no matter the challenges you face. That’s part of wearing a badge.” “But we can’t expect you to contain and control problems that the rest of us aren’t willing to face or do anything

about,” he said. Obama also sought to avoid making the debate about police against communities. “I reject any narrative that seeks to divide police and the communities that they serve — I reject the story line that says, when it comes to public safety, there’s an ‘us’ and ‘them,’” Obama said. He said it’s a “narrative that too often gets served up to us by news stations seeking ratings, or tweets seeking retweets, or political candidates seeking some attention.”

MARIJUANA: Next meeting Nov. 9

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saying he felt the council had a responsibility to send a clear message one way or another. Manuel Gutierrez abstained from the discussion and vote, saying as a board member of the Good Shepherd Community Health Foundation he didn’t want people to confuse the nonprofit foundation with Good Shepherd Medical Center and think he had a conflict of interest. Before voting the council held a public hearing and got two comments, one from a citizen in favor of a ban and the other in favor of allowing commercial grows and dispensaries in the city. Anton Wanous said even though the west side of the state had embraced legalized marijuana, the voters in Hermiston made it clear last year they didn’t want it

in their community. “I realize it’s legal now but I think the city should still do what it can to keep it out of the city,” he said. Ken May said he disagreed with making people who had been legally prescribed medical marijuana by their doctor travel to La Grande or The Dalles to buy it. “What I see is the city’s lack of faith in medical professionals in the community and a hindrance to their providing prescriptive medical care,” he said. May also suggested that the tax money generated from commercial marijuana activity could be used to support the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center. After the 5-2 vote on a final reading of the ordinance, the final reading and adoption was postponed until the council’s next meeting on Nov. 9.

CTUIR: Candidates’ opinions differed on legalizing marijuana

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tional training program, just to name a few,” he wrote. Quaempts wrote that he would like to see the board steer the reservation toward becoming more self-reliant and less dependent on outside sources of funding like federal grants, as well as diversify the tribes’ economic development ventures outside gaming and agriculture. Ellen Taylor, one of the 10 challengers vying for one of the at-large seats, desires more economic diversity, too. Taylor is a 16-year veteran of the Wildhorse Casino and Resort and currently works in the marketing department for Club Wild. Taylor said she would like to see the retail area expand to include an outlet mall with shopping destinations and restaurants like Olive Garden and Red Lobster. She also wants the tribes to increase its educational focus on vocational



a questionnaire to all the candidates and asked them about the issues. One hot-button topic was marijuana, which was legalized in Oregon under Measure 91. While many candidates were quick to point out that the measure doesn’t apply to tribal land, views were split about whether legalizing marijuana was something that should be explored further or remain banned under federal prohibition. Opinions also differed on the subject of leasing space to a big-box store that sold alcohol and gasoline. While some candidates saw it as a potential economic boon to the reservation, others thought it could be an unnecessary competitor to the Arrowhead Travel Plaza. Voting will take place at the Nixyaawii Governance Center on the Umatilla Indian Reservation between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. on Nov. 7. Contact Antonio Sierra at asierra@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0836.

opportunities for tribal youth. While many of the candidates seeking office have previously been on the board or have campaigned before, Taylor said this is her first and only political campaign. The varying views and opinions of the other candidates ensures that whichever nine candidates voters choose will have much to debate. The *Confederated Umatilla Journal*, the tribes’ monthly newspaper, sent out

TESTS: The most tests were required in 8th and 10th grade

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devoted to preparation ahead of testing required by the federal government, states or local districts. It also did not include regular day-to-day classroom quizzes and tests in reading, math, science, foreign languages, and more. In connection with the study’s release Saturday, President Barack Obama called for capping standardized testing at 2 percent of classroom time. Even while acknowledging that the government shares some responsibility for an over-emphasis on testing, the president said federal officials would work with states, schools and teachers to “make sure that we’re not obsessing about testing.” The Obama administration still supports annual standardized tests as a necessary assessment tool, and both House and Senate versions of an update to No Child Left Behind law would continue annual testing. But, the rewrite legislation would let states decide how to use test results to determine what to do with struggling schools. Differences between the two bills

still need to be worked out. “Learning is about so much more than just filling in the right bubble,” Obama said in a video released on Facebook. “So we’re going to work with states, school districts, teachers, and parents to make sure that we’re not obsessing about testing.” To drive the point home, Obama and Education Secretary Arne Duncan scheduled an Oval Office meeting Monday with teachers and school officials working to reduce testing time. “How much constitutes too much time is really difficult to answer,” said Michael Casserly, the council’s executive director. He said the study found plenty of redundancy in required testing — supporting concerns from teachers and other critics about the tests consuming too much teaching and learning time. For example, Casserly said that researchers found some states and school districts were mandating not only end-of-year tests, but end-of-course tests in the same subjects, in the same grade. The council reviewed

testing for more than 7 million students in about three dozen states during the 2014-2015 school year. And a “testing action plan” released by the Education Department said too many schools have unnecessary testing. Aiming to close achievement gaps and assess learning, the No Child Left Behind Act signed by President George W. Bush in 2002 mandated annual testing in reading and math for students in grades three through eight and again in high school. States and local school districts decide which standardized assessments to use to gauge student learning and progress in those two subjects and others. This past spring saw the rollout of new tests based on the Common Core college-ready academic standards in reading and math. About 12 million students in 29 states and the District of Columbia took the tests developed by two groups — the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Other findings in the

council’s report:

- The most tests were required in 8th and 10th grade; the fewest were in pre-K, kindergarten and 1st grade.
- Four in 10 districts report having to wait between two months and four months before getting state test results. The lack of timely results means teachers begin a new school year not knowing where a student needs to improve.

CLASSROOMS: Hermiston district already uses 24 modulars

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with bathrooms would cost \$189,200, which would drain the fund the district set aside for modulars. The three rental units without bathrooms for the high school would cost about \$50,000 each the first year, Smith said, as well as \$20,000 each for all additional years they are needed. He said these modulars would have to be paid for from the general fund, and they could be placed in the current high school parking lot between the school and the baseball field. He said the possible rental unit at Sunset would be of similar cost. Smith said the district has exhausted its “one-time stop gaps,” such as converting a computer lab into a classroom at Sunset and moving certain personnel offices from the schools into a new district office. The district already uses 24 modulars, Smith said,

and few other options exist without capital funding — such as that from a bond effort being considered for May 2017. Based on current growth rates and a Portland State University population study, the district will need 56 to 80 modulars to accommodate an additional 800 to 1,200 students by 2023 unless permanent capacity is added. “It’s a desperate situation at the high school,” he said, adding enrollment has already exceeded the 1,600 students it was designed for with even larger classes in the middle and elementary schools that will eventually end up at the high school. Superintendent Fred Maiocco said renting modular classrooms from the general fund would negatively impact the district but that other options — such as having two shifts of students at one school — were not tenable. “You can’t turn the kids away,” he said.

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