

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

Submitting to the Voters in a  
Countywide Election a Three Year  
Rate Based Serial Levy to Fund Public  
Safety Operations

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RESOLUTION  
96-36

WHEREAS, the current three-year jail space and drug treatment levy expires June 30, 1996; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Multnomah County (the "Board" herein) considers adequate funding of the public safety system to be necessary and in the public interest; and

WHEREAS, the Board finds that existing and anticipated County revenues for the three fiscal years commencing July 1, 1996, will be insufficient to provide adequate public safety services through jail capacity and drug and alcohol treatment programs; and

WHEREAS, the Board determines that in order to provide adequate funding for such services, it is necessary to continue the County's tax levies for three fiscal years commencing July 1, 1996, 1997, and 1998, in excess of the amounts within the tax base.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED that

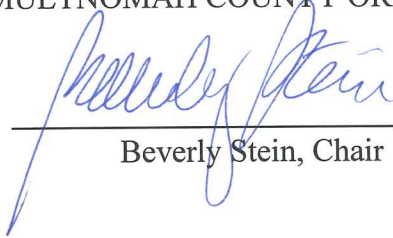
1. An election is hereby called to be held on May 21, 1996, at which the measure described in Exhibit "A" (Ballot Title) shall be submitted to the electors of Multnomah County.
2. Exhibit "A" (Ballot Title) is hereby adopted and made a part of this Resolution. The Ballot Title shall be printed substantially in the form set forth herein.
3. The Levy will be outside the 6% limitation of Article XI, Section 11, Oregon Constitution.
4. The foregoing election and election date are certified to the Director of the Multnomah County Division of Elections.

5. The measure is certified to comply with ORS 310.180 to 310.188; the Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission having held a tax coordination hearing on January 10, 1996.
6. The Clerk of the Board shall forthwith deliver certified copies of this resolution to the director of the Division of Elections and the Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission for their action as provided by law.

ADOPTED this 7th day of March, 1996.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY OREGON

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Beverly Stein, Chair

REVIEWED:

Laurence Kressel, County Counsel  
for Multnomah County, Oregon

By   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Laurence Kressel, County Counsel

# **PUBLIC SAFETY LEVY**

## **Caption**

Three year Levy to operate jails, book suspects, track criminals.

## **Question**

Shall Multnomah County operate jails, levy 77.96 cents per \$1,000 assessed valuation outside tax base for three years beginning 1996-97?

## **Summary**

Three-year serial levy keeps existing county jails open and operating; provides operating money for newly constructed jails, booking and transport facility, and computer criminal tracking equipment.

Levy cost estimate is about 78 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value per year. Typical home pays \$9.60 per month, to help pay for:

- Ending unsupervised release of offenders due to lack of jail space;
- Operating five existing county jails;
- Operating new jail spaces at existing facilities;
- Expanding restitution center which is a low cost corrections facility;
- Getting police back out on street by booking suspects faster.

If levy is not approved, jail operations would be cut back, and 560 beds at Inverness Jail would have to close. Hundreds of inmates per month would be released early without supervision.

This levy provides operating funds for jails, mandatory treatment and tighter criminal tracking and ends the early release of criminals

This serial levy will provide an estimated \$24.4 million in 1996-97, \$31.6 million in 1997-98, and \$33.8 million in 1998-99 dedicated to public safety services.

This levy is subject to the \$10 local government limit in Section 11b, Article XI, Oregon Constitution.

The estimate tax cost for this measure is an ESTIMATE ONLY based on the best information available from the county assessor at the time of the estimate.

## **Explanation**

Multnomah County operates the jails that hold the people our police arrest. Nine out of ten Multnomah County jailed inmates are being held for felony charges. The existing levy that expires June 30, 1996 pays for keeping all current jail facilities open and operating.

## **Our Public Safety Problem**

Public safety services are currently inadequate to meet demand. In 1995, 3,726 inmates were released early and unsupervised from county jails because there was not enough space. Population growth in the metropolitan area will make this problem worse. In spite

of county efforts to improve efficiency and utilize a full continuum of sanctions to maximize the effectiveness of the system, public safety is already compromised due to inadequate capacity.

### **The Public Safety Solution**

The most cost effective solution to increasing the number of people our system can hold is through a mix of new and expanded facilities and programs. The construction of new buildings or expansion of existing buildings are proposed to be funded through a general obligation bond. The cost to operate new or expanded jails and mandatory programs is funded through this serial levy.

### **The Current Levy Expires**

The current public safety levy expires June 30, 1996. It provides about one third of current operating costs of county jails. If we choose to operate new facilities, enforce mandatory treatment and end the early release of prisoners, we must pass a new levy.

### **Ending Early Release of Prisoners**

The new levy will fund the operations of proposed additional jail space to increase public safety. Last year the County was forced to release approximately 3,700 prisoners without any supervision simply because of a lack of space. The new levy will end unsupervised release of offenders due to lack of jail space.

### **Convicted Criminals Will Serve Time**

In addition to continuing operation of the 560 beds at Inverness, the increased levy will operate 120 additional beds at Inverness as well as 210 beds at a new jail that are proposed to be built in 1997 and begin operating in 1998. There will also be increased capacity at the Multnomah County Restitution Center which is a low cost corrections facility where inmates pay room and board.

### **Mandatory Treatment**

A majority of offenders in jail are drug or alcohol abusers. Incarcerating them protects the public safety for a period of time but does not solve the problem of treatment. This levy pays for mandatory treatment for drug and alcohol abusers who can not be rehabilitated without intensive intervention.

### **Tracking Criminals**

Offenders fall between the cracks of a complex public safety system because of antiquated computer systems that are not linked. Computer tracking technology that is currently being used by the police and Sheriff, district attorney, Courts, Juvenile Justice and Community Corrections will be upgraded and integrated in order to transfer information between the existing components of the public safety system.

### **How Much Will It Cost?**

78 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value or about \$9.60 per month on a typical home.