



Ted Wheeler, Multnomah County Chair

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To: The Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC)

Fr: Ted Wheeler, Multnomah County Chair

Re: Emergency Jail Population Releases & LPSCC's July 7th Meeting

Dt: July 10, 2009

Thank you for the constructive discussion at LPSCC's meeting this week regarding emergency population releases and the Board of County Commissioners' Capacity Management Action Plan that governs those releases. I appreciated the collective recognition of:

- the importance of rigorously managing the use of Multnomah County's jail space as a costly and limited resource,
- the current limits on the county's ability to fund jail space to the extent that all of us would prefer,
- the need to avoid emergency population releases unless absolutely necessary and
- the critical importance of minimizing the impact of any necessary releases on our communities.

Many of us were informed earlier this week that Sheriff Skipper has decided to reconvene his Capacity Management Plan Review Team to consider improvements in the plan. I understand that the Review Team will address the improvements we discussed on July 7, including:

- the supervision of inmates subject to emergency releases when releases are necessary,
- the expedited disposition of local charges against inmates facing deportation or more serious charges in other jurisdictions,
- the temporary postponement of the Sheriff's policy to move from double-bunk to single-bunk jail cells and
- an early warning process to permit our respective agencies to consider temporary changes in policies that affect the size of the county's jail population.

I look forward to the recommendations of the Review Team. However, because we are in the midst of the season when the demand for jail beds is historically the highest and the possibility of emergency releases is the greatest, the Board of County Commissioners must take action without further delay in order to avoid unnecessary releases.

As you no doubt recall, during our discussion at LPSCC's July 7th meeting, Scott Taylor, the Director of the Department of Community Justice, described several actions to reduce the current demand for jail space that are within the county's authority to implement immediately.

Therefore, as County Chair, I have directed Peter Ozanne in his capacity as Deputy Chief Operating Officer for Public Safety to meet with Scott Taylor and his staff to develop plans for consideration by the Board of County Commissioners as soon as possible that would help to prevent emergency jail population releases. I have also directed Peter and Scott, in the course of developing those plans, to confer with the Circuit Court, the Sheriff's office and the District Attorney's Office before presenting the plans to the Board.