



from the office of the
OREGON SENATE REPUBLICANS
PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 24, 2021

Contact: Dru Draper

dru.draper@oregonlegislature.gov

Senate GOP Pushes to Fund More Police Amid Rising Crime

SALEM, Ore. – Today Senate Republicans provided a stark contrast to Senate Democrats in their approach to public safety. Amid skyrocketing murder and shootings, Senate Republicans attempted to force a vote on Senate Bill 211, a supplemental plan to make communities safer by putting more police on the road.

The budget for the Department of State Police, HB 5028, which passed the Senate yesterday, only provides resources for an additional 28 troopers. The Republican plan, SB 211, would have put 300 additional troopers on the road over the next 10 years. The bill was already passed out of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary and Ballot 110 Implementation.

“Our law enforcement officers need more from us right now,” Senator Girod (R-Lyons) said. “The budget we passed yesterday did not reflect the urgency of our crime and public safety problem. Half measures and minimal resources aren’t going to cut it to keep our communities safe. When police are demonized, life becomes more dangerous. We need the bold investments included in Senate Bill 211 to keep Oregonians safe.”

The move comes in the wake of extreme left-wing groups calling to “defund the police,” and after Portland completely cut its Gun Violence Reduction Unit. Since homicides have increased by 800% as shootings have seen a sharp increase. Oregon has become known [nationally](#) for riots, vandalism, and violence. A recent [study](#) distributed by the National Bureau of Economic Research, hiring somewhere between 10 to 17 new police officers, saves one life per year from homicide.

Last week, Portland officers responsible for responding to riots all resigned due to a lack of support from elected leaders and the district attorney over the past year. Early this month, Senate Republicans [proposed](#) legislation to give these officers double pay for responding to riots. According to reporting, Oregon State Police will have its mobile response team on standby to respond to riots. State Troopers were one of the few law enforcement agencies that helped Portland Police respond to endless riots and violence.

“We must stop this violence,” Senator Lynn Findley (R-Vale) said. “It's costing lives and hurting our economy. This experiment in defunding the police has been a disaster we have watched in real-time. Our police are tired, worn out, and overworked. They need our support now.”

Oregon State Patrol troopers provide critical support to local police departments in responding to crime and patrolling highways. According to 2019 analysis, Oregon has the second-lowest police presence per capita in the United States. Despite Oregon's population nearly doubling since the late 1970s, 300 fewer patrol troopers are on the road, straining services and public safety.

Senate Democrats united to defeat the stepped-up police funding on a vote nearly party-line vote of 11-18. Senate Bill 211 will remain in Ways & Means where Democrats have shown no interest in the policy.

###