



OREGON INNOCENCE PROJECT COMMENDS DISTRICT ATTORNEY JOHN HUMMEL FOR CRIME LAB TRANSPARENCY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PORTLAND, Ore. – Oregon Innocence Project (OIP) wholeheartedly supports Deschutes County District Attorney John Hummel’s commitment to transparency as shown by the launch of a web portal allowing all Oregonians to access information about cases worked on by former Oregon State Police crime lab analyst, Nika Larsen.

Ms. Larsen is under investigation for her alleged involvement in drug evidence tampering at the Bend crime lab. Hundreds of cases have been called into question by the revelations about her alleged activities, requiring many hours of review by prosecutors and defense attorneys at significant cost to Oregon taxpayers.

“DA Hummel and Deschutes County have set an excellent example for other district attorneys with cases affected by this situation,” said Bobbin Singh, the Executive Director of Oregon Justice Resource Center, the organization behind the Oregon Innocence Project. “We call on all Oregon counties affected to follow John Hummel’s lead by opening up their own files to the public. Doing so will give the public confidence that they can rely on the integrity of convictions and that innocent people have not been unfairly punished.”

The Nika Larsen scandal is one of several misconduct issues that have come to the attention of Oregon Innocence Project. OIP continues to remain optimistic that the Governor’s Workgroup on the state crime labs will engage with it and other stakeholders as part of a meaningful and comprehensive review of the policies and protocols of the OSP crime lab. In the meantime, OIP looks forward to continuing to work with DA John Hummel on our shared goal of instituting significant reforms to Oregon’s state crime labs.

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Note to editors: Oregon Innocence Project is a program of Oregon Justice Resource Center, a Portland-based 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.