



STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE OREGON SHERIFFS AND CHIEFS OF POLICE REGARDING A NEW APPROACH TO DRUG POSSESSION CRIMES

September 26, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“We warmly welcome today’s announcement by the Oregon Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police that they support a ‘more thoughtful approach to drug possession where it is the only crime committed.’ The Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police have made an important contribution to the ongoing conversation about whom we are incarcerating and why.

As OSSA and OACP’s members have recognized, felony convictions are not the most nuanced or effective response to the problem of drug abuse and addiction. They bring with them significant collateral consequences that put up barriers to housing and employment. The damage caused by trying to address abuse and addiction through the penal system rather than through treatment impacts Oregonians’ ability to parent their children and participate in their communities.

We are particularly pleased that OSSA and OACP have addressed the outsize impact that the current approach is having on Oregonians of color. Any conversation about how to address the problem of mass incarceration in our state must prominently feature the voices of communities of color and must take particular account of how these communities are affected by current or proposed policy.”

To be attributed to Bobbin Singh, Executive Director, Oregon Justice Resource Center.

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