

Oregon State Senate, re: Senate Bill 189

March 27, 2011

Throughout our State, every County is facing loss of revenues. Klamath County Government, however failed to make those difficult decisions years ago to prepare for the economic crisis that was surely coming. The economic plight we are in today has been magnified by short sided fiscal leadership at the County level. I am opposed to the Road Fund swap to Jail Funding in Klamath County. Our County Departments have to be fiscally responsible in these short budgetary times. In light of the disappearing timber funds, to take from our County Road fund, which will never be restored, is not the answer. Federal law states that dedicated road funds are for road use only. It is impossible to distinguish federal funds from other sources of road funds that are currently in the Klamath County road account. The timber receipts funds are co-mingled with interest and other road fund sources.

I believe there are local solutions still available within the Klamath County budget. Prime example is our Sheriff Tim Evinger laid off patrol officers because he had no money to pay them. He recently reopened a pod in the jail with the money he had "saved" by laying off the officers. How can you save money you do not have? This is nothing short of political maneuvering to get additional funds for the Sheriff's department despite the fact that the voters have said no. Allowing this swap of funds is counterproductive to the ingenuity present in our local communities.

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