



City of Eugene

February 6, 2012

City of Eugene
777 Pearl Street, Room 105
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Co-Chairs Chris Garrett and Bill Kennemer
House Committee on Business and Labor

RE: House Bill 4108 – Secondhand Dealer “Cash for Gold” Bill

MEASURE: HB 4108
EXHIBIT: 6
2012 SESSION H BUSINESS & LABOR
DATE: 2/6/12 PAGES: 1
SUBMITTED BY: Brenda Wilson

Co-Chairs Garrett, Kennemer and Members of the Committee:

My name is Randy Berger and I am a Property Crimes detective for the Eugene Police Department. In that capacity, for the past 10 years I have been assigned to regulate the activity of Pawn and Secondhand stores to assure that they comply with State and local laws. I also investigate Theft I (sales) cases where individuals exploit Pawn and Secondhand stores by selling them stolen property.

The City of Eugene has had a Secondhand Dealer ordinance in effect for many years which requires Pawn and Secondhand stores to report their transactions to law enforcement and hold their purchased items. This allows law enforcement the ability to identify the seller and time to inspect the items before they are resold or disposed of. As a result of that ordinance, hundreds of theft and burglary cases have been successfully investigated, and tens of thousands of dollars in stolen property have been returned to the victims of these crimes.

I firmly believe that HB 4108 addresses a weakness in State law that has been overlooked for far too long. Every year hundreds of thousands of dollars in precious metal, in the form of jewelry, is stolen from the citizens of Oregon. Based on my experience, the individuals who steal these items frequently utilize precious metal dealers as a way to dispose of the stolen property and obtain quick cash. This bill creates a statewide law that requires precious metal dealers to describe the items that they purchase and identify the individuals who sell them precious metals.

As it stands now many local and county jurisdictions currently don't have Secondhand Dealer ordinances. These ordinances give law enforcement the ability to identify individuals who sell stolen precious metals and require recording that allows law enforcement the opportunity to locate and recover stolen property. By passing HB 4108, it will give law enforcement some of the additional tools it needs to identify and recover stolen property, as well as identify and prosecute individuals involved in selling precious metal dealers stolen property.

In addition to aiding law enforcement agencies who don't have a local ordinance regulating precious metal dealers, this bill will also aid officers with their investigations when suspects cross jurisdictional boundaries in an effort to avoid local jurisdictional reporting requirements.

In closing, I firmly believe that the passage of this bill will assist law enforcement in the recovery of stolen precious metals, as well as the identification and prosecution of individuals selling stolen precious metals.

I strongly urge your **SUPPORT** of **HB 4108**.

Det. Randy Berger - Property Crimes
Eugene Police Department

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