



## KLAMATH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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### ***Media Release***

**Date:** 11/02/18

**RE:** Illegal Marijuana Market Enforcement Grant Program

**Contact:** Sheriff Chris Kaber

In March 2018, the Oregon State Senate passed SB1544 providing a grant opportunity for law enforcement agencies who were engaged in fighting illegal marijuana grow operations in rural counties. The grant funding was to be administered by the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission (CJC).

Klamath County applied for this grant in August of 2018 and was initially not selected for funding by the CJC, however, a direct appeal was made to the Commission who agreed to provide \$36,500 to the Klamath County Sheriff's Office and the Klamath County District Attorney's Office for their efforts in enforcing existing laws against illegal production of marijuana. The CJC also agreed to consider providing additional funding if other selected counties were not immediately able to use funding allocated to them. The Commission agreed that Klamath County has an illegal marijuana growing problem.

On 11/01/18, the Klamath County Sheriff's Office was notified by the CJC that the original grant request of \$204,553 was now available, providing up to that amount to be used between July 2018 and June 2019 for the investigation and prosecution of person(s) or criminal organizations producing illegal marijuana within Klamath County.

The Sheriff's Office is intent on ensuring Klamath County is not a "soft target" for illegal marijuana growers. The Sheriff's Office increased enforcement efforts during this year's growing season and now have secure funding to further intensify efforts in the spring and summer of 2019.

Despite the recent outcry from proponents that legalization will make the black market disappear, the Sheriff does not believe this to be the case. What is known is that legal grows in "opt in" counties only make it more difficult to identify illegal grows. Illegal marijuana grows, spurred on by potential profits, will be with us for a long time. With this grant the Klamath County Sheriff's Office has secured funding to continue to locate and eradicate illegal grows and bring before the court those who insist on growing illegally. Klamath County is not a soft target for illegal growers. "Grow Legal or Get Out."