



News Release

**Thurston County Sheriff
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“Creating a Safer Community
Together.”

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 07/31/2009

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Lack of federal funding to sheriff's offices called “Outrageous” by Sheriff Kimball.

Thurston County Sheriff Dan Kimball has called it “Outrageous” that none of the 22 sheriff's offices in Washington State that applied for federal funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 received any monetary awards. This was revealed on July 28th when the federal stimulus dollar awards to law enforcement agencies throughout the country were announced.

The Thurston County Sheriff's Office had requested funding for 15 either vacant or at-risk-of-becoming vacant deputy sheriff positions. “To be honest with you, I would have been delighted to have received funding for two or three positions. But to get nothing when we already have the lowest staffed sheriff's office per capita in the state is disappointing. **(The preferred ratio is 2 deputy sheriffs per 1,000 residents with approximately 1 deputy sheriff per 1,000 being the state average.) Thurston County's deputy ratio is .6 of one deputy for every 1,000 county residents.)** We thought we had a great argument for some financial help,” Sheriff Kimball said.

Initial analysis of awards granted to sheriff's offices in other western states appears to show a disproportionate allocation towards municipal agencies over county offices. Excluding California, for the remaining 13 western states, only 31 positions were awarded to 241 county sheriff's offices. In total for the 14 western states 121 positions were awarded to county sheriff's offices and 1,195 to municipal agencies. “I certainly do not blame our fellow law enforcement officials in the cities for this discrepancy in allocation; however, suffice it to say that the criteria utilized to make these determinations needs to be reviewed, especially if there may be a second round of awards in the future. If not, then I would expect the same outcome – virtually nothing for county sheriffs,” said the Sheriff.

County governments are struggling throughout the country to make ends meet. In attempting to balance budgets, significant cuts in services important to county citizens have already been made by many counties and the possibility of more cuts loom in the near future. As Sheriff Kimball has stated, “It is unfortunate that this opportunity to lend some important, tangible financial assistance to counties in need in the area of public safety has fallen far, far short of what could have been.”