



Duane Stark House District 4 State Representative



News Release: August 31st, 2016
Contact: Dawn Phillips: 503.750.1764

Rep Stark Gains Personal Experience at Grants Pass Sobering Center *Reminds Southern Oregon Residents to Drink Responsibly Over Labor Day Weekend*

(Salem) "It was clean, safe and a lot more comfortable than camping but a far cry from my bed at home," said, State Representative Duane Stark (R-Josephine County) after spending the night at the new Grants Pass Sobering Center in order to get a first-hand experience at the facility. "I was impressed with the friendly and attentive staff and appreciated how focused they were about connecting clients to additional community resources to help them succeed in life."

Representative Stark's "dry run" started with the intake process at 8 pm on Tuesday night (8.30.16) and ended with discharge procedures just before 8 am this morning (8.31.16). Those included mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment referral services. Representative Stark had not been drinking prior to admission and left the center sober as well.

"By lodging himself at the sobering center as a client, Representative Stark gained an inside perspective that will help him educate others and hopefully assist other communities seeking to establish similar centers," said Grants Pass Sobering Center Director Pat Murphey. "We really appreciate Representative Stark's continuing support of our efforts to be a solution for substance abuse in Josephine County."



As Representative Stark left the Sobering Center he took the opportunity to say a few words about the holiday weekend ahead. "For those who chose to celebrate Labor Day weekend with alcohol, I encourage you to do so responsibly so you keep yourself and others safe and avoid a night camping at the Sobering Center." Director Murphey echoed that sentiment adding, "Representative Stark's visit is a timely reminder as the Labor Day weekend approaches for all residents to be safe on the roadways and in their celebrations this weekend."

The Grants Pass Sobering Center has had nearly 140 admissions since it opened in April, at 1010 SW Foundry Street in Grants Pass. Representative Stark helped obtain \$500,000 in state funding and pass legislation to allow centers like this to expand in Oregon.

"The Grants Pass Sobering Center is a great community effort that I hope to see replicated throughout the state," noted Representative Stark. "Our community has come together to create this much needed service to aid those in times of crisis. I look forward to ongoing community support in keeping the sobering center operational."

"The people we provide services for are too often overlooked or administered to in less effective ways than the professional, caring environment that sobering centers can provide which focus on individuals and their barriers to living a healthier lifestyle," explained Murphey. "Representative Stark's leadership and passionate support for these services in the legislature, gives me encouragement and hope for the future, not just for Josephine County but also around the rest of the state. "

###