

Consular Office of Japan in Portland

1300 S.W. Fifth Avenue
Suite 2700
Portland, Oregon 97201

April 30th, 2021

The Honorable Kate Brown
Governor of Oregon
900 Court Street NE, Room 254
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Governor Brown,

I hope you are doing well in these difficult times. Unfortunately, today I am contacting you because I would like to raise some grave concerns about the serious injury to two Japanese women who were assaulted by a prisoner who fled the South Fork Forest Camp (SFFC) on April 14th, 2021.

The two Japanese women were hiking at Gales Creek Campground, Tillamook County, Oregon. At the same time, a work crew from SFFC was cleaning the campground area. One of the prisoners who was cleaning the Campground escaped from the work party and suddenly attacked the two Japanese women from behind, severely beating them with a large stick. Both women were seriously injured. The escaped prisoner stole one of their cars parked at the campsite and escaped.

The two Japanese women were urgently rushed to a hospital where one is still hospitalized due to skull injuries and cerebral hemorrhaging, and the other has undergone four surgeries to repair complicated fractures of her arm. We are shocked by this violence and I am deeply concerned to learn that prisoners under the control of DOC, whose mission is to promote and protect public safety, can easily escape and harm the general public.

In response to this incident, we will have to reconsider how we, the Japanese community, should think about safety in Oregon. Currently, there are about 9,000 Japanese people residing in this state, including permanent residents and expatriate families of Japanese companies. Their safety is one of the most important duties of the Consular Office. One of the victims of this crime is a member of a Japanese company expatriate family. We are concerned that such incidents will scare these people and companies and that they will hesitate to expand their economic activities here. We also expect that many students and tourists from Japan will return to Oregon when the pandemic ends. Outdoor

activities in Oregon, with its rich and beautiful natural environment, are an aspect of life here that Japanese people love and one of the biggest attractions for Japanese tourists. Many people will be disappointed and reluctant to visit Oregon if it is seen as unsafe.

We would also like to take this opportunity to note that we are watching with concern the media reports on deteriorating security, such as increased violence and shootings in some areas, including in Portland. In order for us to provide timely information to our citizens in Oregon we would appreciate support from the state government, under your guidance, on the following points.

1. We ask the state government to provide as much support as possible to the victims of the incident mentioned above. Please let us know what kind of support is possible in such circumstances. We would also appreciate it if you could promptly report on any new information or developments related to this case and keep our office closely informed.

2. Please investigate how such an incident occurred and thoroughly implement measures to prevent similar failures from happening again. Please inform us of all of the locations where prisoners in DOC facilities are working in the field in Oregon so that we may advise our citizens and let us know what steps have been and will be taken in the wake of this incident.

3. In order to limit the upset within the Japanese community caused by this recent event, it would be desirable for the responsible authorities to make some statement showing their utmost commitment to ensuring the safety of public spaces in the state.

In addition to traditional trade relations between Oregon and Japan, active investment by Japanese companies in the high-tech industry in recent years has further strengthened the cooperative relationship between Japanese and US companies within the global supply chain, as well as providing many excellent jobs for Oregonians. We hope to continue to develop this kind of positive relationship that benefits both sides so much, and we look forward to the continued support and assistance of the Oregon State Government.

Sincerely yours,



Masaki Shiga
Consul General
Consular Office of Japan in Portland

CC: Department of Corrections
Director Colette Peters
Colette.s.peters@doc.state.or.us