



December 14, 2022

Statement from Mayor Lonergan

This week marks the somber 14th anniversary of the Woodburn bank bombing that resulted in the murders of Woodburn Police Captain Tom Tennant and Senior Trooper Bill Hakim and seriously wounding Police Chief Scott Russell and employees of West Coast Bank. Since that terrible day, the Woodburn community has stood together in support of those first responders who were not only impacted by the bombing, but have continued to serve and protect our culturally rich and vibrant City with honor, integrity and professionalism.

For those impacted, the road has not been easy.

As Mayor, I was shocked and angered to learn that Governor Brown unilaterally commuted the death sentences of the two murderers who committed these terrible crime against our police officers and our community without consultations or apparent consideration of victims, the City, the Woodburn Police Department or any evaluation of the specific facts related to the convictions of the bombers, who were found guilty by an Oregon jury and sentenced by a Marion County Judge.

Despite the senseless and tragic loss of life that day, families, friends, co-workers and the many members of our community affected by the bombing have worked to move forward with the assurance that the criminal justice system would deliver justice commensurate with the heinous crime perpetrated on the victims of the bombing and the Woodburn community. The massive resources expended to apprehend these murderers, fairly adjudicate them and sentence them to a similar fate they imposed on their victims has been of solace.

After a trial lasting more than two months, a jury convicted Bruce and Joshua Turnidge of murder and placed them both on death row. In 2016, the Oregon Supreme Court carefully considered the case and issued an 143 page opinion upholding the convictions.

Governor Brown's unilateral decision to supersede the legal process, commuting the sentences of the Woodburn bombers, is a betrayal of those who relied on and believed that the criminal justice system would fairly deliver justice to those who killed and maimed our first responders and attacked our community members.

Governor Brown's decision is an injustice to those who were affected by the bombing and a repudiation of Oregon voters who established the death penalty for those convicted of murdering innocent victims and police officers.

We expected better.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Frank J. Lonergan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Mayor Frank Lonergan
City of Woodburn, Oregon