

# Investors anxious as Oregonians again vote on marijuana

By Andrew Selsky  
Associated Press

AURORA (AP) — Eighteen years after Oregon legalized marijuana for medical use and two years after voters decided to allow the use of recreational pot, many Oregonians will think they are experiencing déjà vu when they see the issue on their ballots for the Nov. 8 election.

Oregon voters legalized recreational marijuana in 2014, but Measure 91 gave counties and towns the opportunity to opt out and ban pot businesses. About 100 towns and counties did so. Now, residents of about 50 of them will be voting on the issue again.

A lot of money is riding on the outcomes. Some cannabis entrepreneurs invested vast sums in the business, only to see local jurisdictions then outlaw pot commerce.

Other states across America are also grappling with the issue of how to deal with the emerging marijuana business.

## ESTERMAN: Candidate established residency in City

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and putting egos aside.” He believes a Councilor must always be prepared by listening to the people, doing their homework themselves by researching both sides so as to always be prepared, and remembering that the Council works for the citizens and needs to treat them with respect.

“If I am on Council, I will be open to hear what people have to say. I will put differences aside,” he said.

The new City Council will be charged with hiring a new permanent city manager. Esterman thinks a city manager should not be a politician.

“They need to be consistent, fair, and objective,” he said.

He thinks a background in management is important as well as possessing people skills, “perhaps having some charisma.” Esterman believes “if the city manager has a positive attitude, positive things will happen.” He also wants to see the City do a thorough background check on the candidate.

Esterman first discovered Sisters when he stopped here to visit a friend, on his way from California to Alaska. He liked what he saw, bought a piece of land, and moved to

Tollgate in 1989.

That home in Tollgate just went on the market in late September. Esterman said he needs to downsize and he said he began renting a small house in town on Oak Street in October 2015. He reported he has been using his Tollgate house as his office. Questions have come into the City regarding Esterman’s actual residency and whether he has been residing within the city limits for 12 months prior to the election, a requirement for running.

Esterman is often traveling in support of his event coordinating. He started his Central Oregon Shows 16 years ago on a dare. Nineteen years ago when he was a vendor selling his photographs at a fair, telling another vendor his assessment of the fair, the other man said, “Richard, do it yourself.” He promotes a variety of 12 shows and fairs, most of them here in Central Oregon.

“When I started doing the shows, I decided to always share the proceeds with a charity,” he explained.

Make-a-Wish has received funds all 16 years. Veterans receive some funds

from the antique show here in Sisters, and recently the Sisters High School visual arts program has received funds. Esterman also donates booth space at his fairs to nonprofits.

In earlier days, Esterman was a professional photographer, traveling to 38 countries.

“I got to witness all kinds of lifestyles. That caused me to look at life and families in a different way. We forget — we have an arrogance here. It’s easier here. Every country has something for you to learn.”

His interest in photography began when, as a 17-year-old, he went to Japan as a Lions International exchange student, equipped with his 126 camera.

An adult who saw his photographs told him he had a talent in his composition skills and encouraged him to pursue his photography, which he did, capturing many more images and selling them. In 1982 he gave up his full-time job to become a full-time photographer.

Esterman has never held elected office, although he did make a run for governor



PHOTO BY SUE STAFFORD

Richard Esterman.

against Ted Kulongoski. He has served as chairman of the board for the Tollgate Homeowners Association.

In 1994, he used his own money to found “Parents for Equal Rights,” representing parents who were involved in custody disputes regarding their children. They staged a public protest in front of the district attorney’s office in Bend, protesting the arrangement in which the county received 33 cents from the Federal government for every dollar it collected in past-due child-support payments.

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**Richard Esterman**

**Sisters City Council**  
November 2016



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