

SANCTUARY: State could be a front in immigration battle

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called Oregonians United Against Profiling held nearly simultaneous news conferences in five cities Monday across Oregon to voice opposition to the proposed measure.

Backers of Initiative Petition 22 turned in more than 105,000 voter signatures by a July 6 deadline; under state law, the measure's sponsors must gather roughly 88,000 valid signatures by that date to get it before voters. It may be another two weeks or more before all the signatures are validated.

"We've decided to move ahead so that we have the strongest coalition possible," said Andrea Williams, executive director of Causa, an immigrant rights group. "If it were to pass, we believe that it would take Oregon back to a time when racial profiling was even more rampant than it is today."

The 1987 sanctuary law prohibits state agencies from inquiring about a person's immigration status if they haven't committed another crime and bans state and local law enforcement from coordinating with federal immigration officials on raids and roundups.

The law, which passed with bipartisan support, grew out of an episode in the town of Independence, where officers singled out a group of Latino men in a restaurant and aggressively interrogated them about their citizenship status.

It was passed to address racial profiling, Williams said, and not to make a political statement about immigration.

"Oregon legislators said that's not the Oregon way and they also said it's not a good use of our resources.

It's critical to remind voters this was passed for a real reason in our state and if we were to take it away, it would take us back to a time when Oregonians weren't treated fairly," Williams said.

With help from anti-sanctuary groups, a trio of Republican lawmakers from rural parts of the state sponsored the initiative to repeal the law. A group behind the effort, Oregonians for Immigration Reform, has been labeled an anti-immigrant hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center — a designation it is refuting.

Cynthia Kendoll, the group's president, said in a phone interview Monday that because Oregon's state Legislature is controlled by Democrats, a voter initiative is the only way to change immigration law.

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— Andrea Williams

Kendoll's group was involved in a 2014 ballot measure campaign that successfully overturned a law passed by the Oregon lawmakers to give driver's licenses to immigrants in the country illegally.

"The only thing this initiative does is give the voters the opportunity to decide if Oregon will be a sanctuary state or not — and they either will or they won't," she said, as she watched elections workers checking signatures.

"We're working on giving people the chance to vote on this. Voters very rarely have an opportunity to have a say in immigration policy."

Commentary... Off to Edinburgh

By Macgregor Hay
Correspondent

Edinburgh, Scotland: Five festivals; U.S. dollar value up; weather, mild; people, exceptional; accommodations, plentiful.

Edinburgh this time of the year is THE place to be for book lovers; the Edinburgh International Book Festival is the largest in the world. More than 900 authors and thinkers gather to present thought-provoking experiences to the 225,000 festivalgoers, including this correspondent from Sisters, Oregon.

"The Book Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland is an unbeatable place for meeting inspiring people and sharing big ideas," said Nick Barley, director of the festival.

Scotland's Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs Fiona Hyslop said, "... this year's program with it's focus on freedom and it's wide range of compelling talks and events is sure to stimulate debate and intrigue audiences, raising Scotlands cultural profile on the international stage."

The interaction between the presenters and audience is an exceptional experience for both. Having attended the Festival previously, the stimulating atmosphere is something I look forward to all year. The authors are always available to chat either at their book signing, on the Festival grounds or at the nearest pub. Check out the Festival website for specific information on the theme, authors, timetables for the event which runs from August 11-27 this year (www.edbookfest.co.uk).

The Book Festival has a children's component

for young adults as well as the artistic side of print literature. The Fringe Festival (www.edfringe.com), Edinburgh Art Festival (www.edinburghartfestival.com), The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo (www.edintattoo.co.uk) and the Edinburgh International Festival (www.elf.co.uk) are all ongoing during August as well.

In and around Edinburgh you will find golf courses, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh Castle, Holyrood Place and the Royal Mile to name a few. Day tours are plentiful, via train or bus — Inverness, Stirling, St. Andrews, the Highlands, and an extensive local bus system easily gets you around town.

Edinburgh is a major tourist city, and it's ready for your visit. Treat yourself

to a stimulating and educational vacation. Fly into either London, England, or Edinburgh, Scotland, both serviced by numerous airlines. Too expensive? For this trip I used, for the first time, my accumulated miles; the total cost to London Heathrow from Redmond, Oregon was \$190! Train service to Edinburgh from London is a 4-1/2-hour ride through beautiful countryside, and a chance to overcome jet lag in comfort.

Hopefully you are encouraged and curious enough to consider, plan, and book a trip to Scotland for the festivals. I will be covering the events for *The Nugget* and you can see the Festival City 2018 through my eyes — and plan your own visit in 2019!

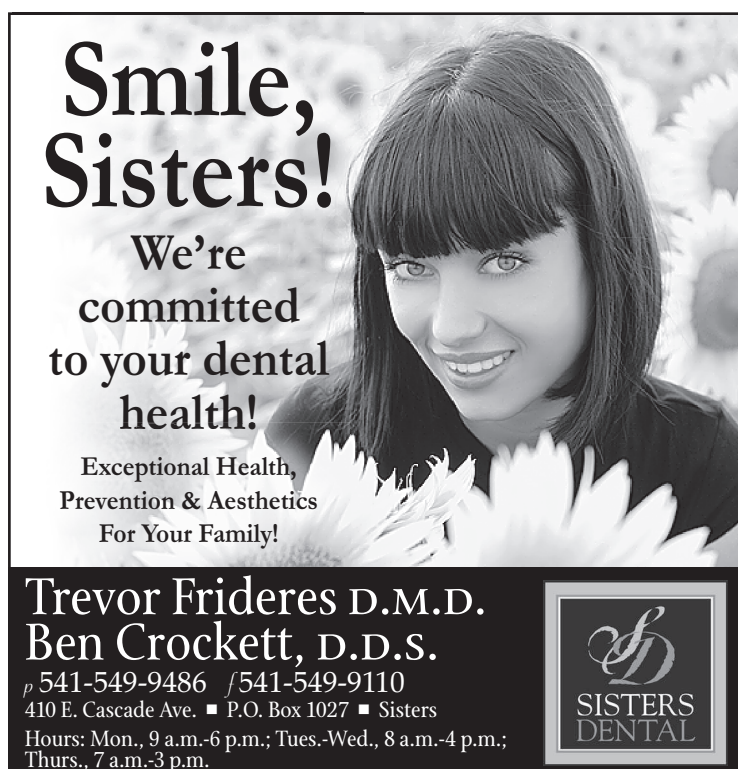
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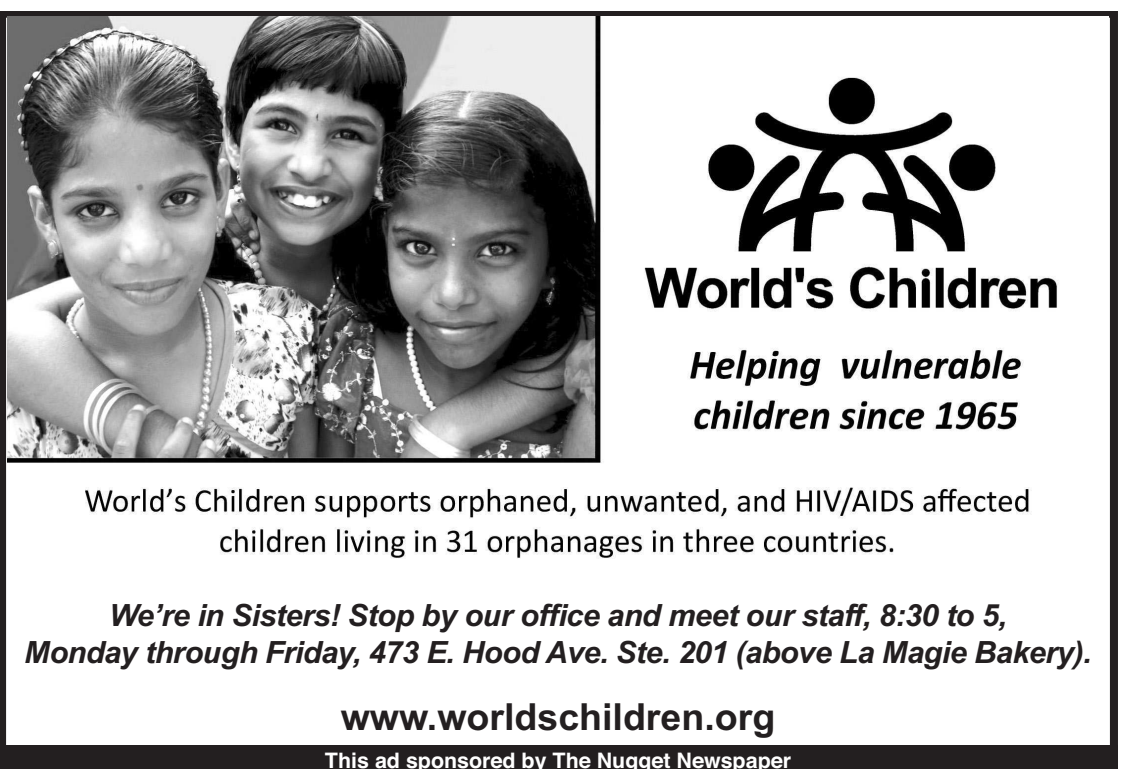
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