

Oregon State Ballot Measures

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trolled by assumption and not by legislation. And if property taxes do increase, it will be homeowners and renters who will bear the burden of the increase, not corporations.

Mike Dolan

4 a bond, not a tax measure

State Ballot Measure Number Four is a bond measure, not a tax measure. It allows the state to sell bonds at an interest rate set by the state treasurer.

A bond is like a "governmental IOU." The state promises to buy back each bond it sells, at a later date and at a higher price than it sold the bond.

In the mean time, it uses the money it gets from the bonds to invest and make more money.

Measure Four allows the state to sell bonds and then loan out the money it makes to help Oregon farmers and agri-business persons irrigate their lands. The governor must approve all projects.

It also allows the state to purchase other bonds being sold by local communities. However, the local bonds must be for the purpose of paying for local water systems.

The bonds might pay for themselves. But if they do not pay for themselves, the Legislature can assess a property tax of not more than one-and-one-half per cent.

The idea behind the measure is that more irrigation should increase farm productivity.

The Legislature has already passed the law establishing the bonding system. Measure Four just pays for it.

The irrigation system it enables is not the only one in the state. Other government and non-government organizations already provide loans for irrigation.

Mike Dolan

5 to meet veteran loan demand

Demand for state loans for home building by veterans is booming. In fact, demand has increased beyond the authority of the State of Oregon to raise money for such loans.

State Ballot Measure Number Five would authorize the Department of Veterans' Affairs to issue, as needed, additional self-liquidating bonds to meet the increased demand.

Loans in 1973 were at a record level of \$225 million, 56 per cent above the year before. Measure Five would allow the total to increase to approximately \$497 million.

Measure Five has an overwhelming trait of non-controversiality. It would not raise taxes in any amount, as the bonds are self liquidating. It would allow the state to obtain funds from the private sector at low rates of interest (as municipal bonds), and then loan the funds out to veterans who need them at correspondingly low rates of interest.

A state official familiar with the operations of the veterans' department suggested that Measure Five was so non-controversial that the committee responsible for drawing up arguments in opposition to it had difficulty in doing so. Another official stressed, however, that the lack of controversy ought not to obscure the importance of the measure for veterans.

The biggest issues involved seem to center around the philosophy of making costs clear. That is, by offering benefits to veterans, the state is indirectly subsidizing the military by making military service more attractive.

On the other hand, voters may be penalizing those who have already been through the military service if they vote no.

Another argument centers around the fact that the loans are available only to the particular group of home-buyers who happen to be veterans. Many other people need assistance too, so it has been suggested that a no vote would register disapproval of limiting the loan program to a special interest.

Proponents point out that the program costs the taxpayers nothing, and that denying loans to one group of needy people is a peculiar way to secure loans for all.

If Measure Five fails, the only funds available for veterans' home loans will come from incremental repayment of current loans.

David Novick

6 allows Legislature to call itself into session

Perhaps in the spirit of resurgent legislative power that now seems to be present in the federal government, the Oregon State Legislature has referred a measure to primary election voters that would enable the Legislature to call itself into session during emergencies.

State Ballot Measure Number Six would allow the Legislature to convene in special session if a majority in each house filed a written request for such a session if they thought any emergency affecting state government (the energy crisis, for example) existed.

Presently, the state constitution provides only for sessions beginning in January of each odd-numbered year, and for sessions called by the governor. If the governor did not agree that a session was necessary, under the present system the Legislature would not be able to act.

Analysts and editorial writers are quick to point out that although the state currently enjoys the benefits of having an agreeable governor, that happy situation may not continue forever.

Opponents of the measure cite increased costs of additional sessions, estimated at \$12,000 a day and see it as a way of getting around the constitutional prohibition of annual sessions, suggesting that an explicit

constitutional amendment to permit annual sessions would be better than what they see as a stop-gap procedure.

The opponents point out that Measure Six does not restrict the number of bills that may be introduced in a special session, nor does it restrict the subject of bills to the topic of the emergency responsible for the session's calling.

Those advocating passage of Measure Six, who include most gubernatorial candidates, suggest that the benefits of a new check on executive power in the state outweigh the disadvantages. They contend that the flexibility to conduct special sessions will serve to shorten regular sessions, and balance gubernatorial powers that have increased due to new legislation concerning energy emergencies.

The governor's power to convene special sessions at his or her discretion would remain unchanged, as would the requirement for regular biennial sessions.

David Novick

7 gives LCC a new tax base

County Ballot Measure Number Seven gives Lane Community College (LCC) a new tax base. A tax base is the amount of taxes the college is allowed to raise in order to fund the school.

LCC will probably not spend all the money Measure Seven makes possible.

If the measure passes, the college will be able to raise enough money for the next two or three years without having to go to the taxpayers.

The measure allows the college to increase its budget about 11 per cent this year. It would have to raise the budget that much just to be able to provide for the same amount of students next year as it did this year.

The new base would increase property taxes 28 cents for every thousand dollars. The current rate is \$1.41 per \$1,000, the proposal measure would increase the rate to \$1.69 per \$1,000.

Mike Dolan

8 & 9 for more efficient solid waste disposal

If Lane County voters pass two measures—Measure Number Eight and Measure Number Nine—on the May 28 primary ballot, they will have a more efficient and accelerated solid waste disposal program, according to Jo Ann Youngblood, Lane County Community Relations Director.

The tax base under Measure Number Eight would be increased to provide an on-going finance for garbage disposal so that the county would not have to ask voters for more money every year or every four years, depending on the kind of tax levy used, said Youngblood. She noted that this increase is for managing the program, for paying salaries and for operating costs.

With Measure Number Eight, Lane County's current property tax base would be increased to provide \$975,000 for the purpose of including the county-wide solid waste management (garbage disposal) operations within the general fund of Lane County, said Youngblood. She said it would also provide \$156,988 for general county operations which would be the normal six per cent annual increase in the current tax base.

Currently the county's solid waste management program is financed by a special serial levy on property taxes which expires July 1 of this year, by fees paid at the landfills and by supplementary funds from the county's general budget.

An increase in the tax base by over \$1 million dollars as the measure proposes would permit operation of a county-wide solid waste management program based on one of two options, said Youngblood.

The first option would be a continued operation of rural transfer stations and regional sanitary landfills as a primary means of disposal. The other option would be an accelerated program including new facilities for processing, recycling and transferring garbage or other new technology, depending upon the

availability of additional funds and facilities.

Measure Number Nine, requires up to \$3,500,000 worth of bonds needed to construct facilities for processing, recycling and transferring of garbage and to acquire other land and equipment necessary for carrying out a county-wide solid waste management program which would include capabilities for resource and energy recovery, said Youngblood.

A grant from the state Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has been requested, Youngblood said, which could provide \$1,050,000 toward construction of the resource recovery facilities. Measure Number Nine, she said, gives the voters an opportunity to indicate whether they support a garbage disposal system which would be more costly regardless of whether it is constructed and operated by public or private organizations.

If the measure is approved, Youngblood said, private industry will be able to make proposals indicating their methods of construction, operation and financing. She said if, after review of these proposals, the county determines it is more economical, and in the public interest, to encourage private ownership and—or operation, it is possible that all or a portion of the bonds would not have to be used.

Youngblood also added that if the county gets the \$1,050,000 it needs from the DEQ, then it would not need to use the general obligation bonds worth \$3,500,000 for solid waste facilities construction.

But the \$3,500,000 general obligation bonds measure must be on the ballot for voter approval because the county is not sure if state and federal money will come to them, Youngblood noted.

Bob Galvin



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Paid by the Redden Committee, Janie Cox Treasurer, 225 West Main, Medford 97501, 5-15-74.