Common Cause says

Measure 7 cuts media blitz by altering campaign funds

By TODD JOHNSTONE
Of the Emerald

Oregon Ballot Measure No. 7, calling for public campaign financing for major state candidates, was labeled the "most important issue for Oregon Common Cause members and for Oregonians in general" during a meeting of local Common Cause members last week.

Oregon Common Cause is the state branch of a national citizens lobby and has a Lane County membership of 400.

If approved by the state's voters, Measure No. 7 would enable Oregon citizens to donate $1.50 of their income tax payment to a special campaign fund which would be administered by the Oregon Government Ethics Commission.

Money from the fund would go toward communication expenses of candidates running for various state positions during the November general election.

Utilization of the fund would be on a voluntary basis by each candidate. But if a candidate does decide to use money from the fund, the amount the Ethics Commission would allocate to him would depend on the amount of campaign money he receives from private sources.

For example, if a candidate wants to utilize the full amount of money available to him from the fund, he would have to limit the amount of campaign money he receives from private sources.

If a candidate receives over a specified amount of campaign money from private sources, then the amount of money by which he exceeds the limit would be subtracted from the full amount due to him from the fund.

Measure No. 7 would provide up to $90,000 for the campaigns of candidates for governor, secretary of state, attorney general, treasurer, labor commissioner, and superintendent of public instruction. The measure would provide up to $4,900 for state Senate candidates and up to $2,450 for state House candidates.

Only candidates who have demonstrated voter support, such as winning a primary or gaining a spot on the November ballot as an independent, would be eligible to use the fund.

Candidates would not receive their portion of the fund in cash; instead, they would send the bills received for their communication expenses to the Ethics Commision and the commission would use money from the fund to pay the bills.

"Ballot Measure No. 7 will encourage candidates not to drown the public and their opponents in a media blitz," said Bill Fritz, who is the executive director of Common Cause for Oregon.

Fritz said the measure would not legally prohibit candidates from spending as much as they want, but that it would encourage candidates to limit their spending.

Ballot Measure No. 7 presents a "unique opportunity" to Oregonians, because it is the "first time that the concept has been put to the voters," Fritz said.

Fritz said the measure will remove a candidate's dependency on big money interests and enable a candidate "to spend more time discussing issues and less time raising money." He also said the measure will provide a financial base for challengers. It is a "constitutional way of putting a ceiling on skyrocketing campaign spending," he said.

National candidates feed on special interest groups

WASHINGTON (AP)—Special interest groups are pumping money into congressional races at nearly twice their rate of two years ago, according to figures compiled by Common Cause from reports made to the Federal Election Commission.

Twice as many special interest committees are active this election, and in a major change from past practices, corporate and business groups are contributing more money to Democrats than to Republicans.

New federal laws bar contributions from such groups or any other private source to the Ford or Carter presidential election campaigns, which are publicly financed this year.

Common Cause, a citizens' lobby organization, said in a report released Wednesday that through Sept. 1, House and Senate candidates received $10.1 million from 1,041 special interest committees.

As of Sept. 1, 1974, comparable contributions totaled $5.5 million and came from 504 committees.

Most active of the special interests was the American Medical Association, which contributed $963,725, or nearly 10 per cent of the entire interest group total.

Dairy committees, which were the subject of Watergate-related milk fund investigations during 1973 and 1974, are back in action this year with $682,184 in contributions through Sept. 1, the second-highest total. That's more than triple their 1974 level.

The only other group topping half-a-million dollars are the AFL-CIO committees on political education, at $630,974.

Corporate and business committees have had the fastest growth rate, more than quadrupling in numbers since the last campaign.

Common Cause said Democrats have received $1.45 million from these groups to $1.31 million for Republican candidates.

Labor groups have so far given more than $4.1 million, all but $100,000 of it to Democrats.

Dairy and other agricultural groups have given $627,600 to Democrats, $151,000 to Republicans. But health groups led by the AMA prefer Republicans, $702,000 to $546,000.

Three Democratic senators — Vance Hartke of Indiana, John Tunney of California, and Harrison Williams of New Jersey — are among the top 10 recipients of contributions from both the labor sector and the business-professional-agricultural sector, Common Cause reported.

The top recipient of labor money was Sen. Hubert Humphrey, D-Minn., at $96,375. Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, D-Tex., topped the list from the business-professional-farm group at $100,450, but Common Cause said that included some donations to his short-lived presidential campaign.

Hartke was second in both categories, with $90,850 from labor groups and $85,150 from business-professional-agriculture.

Bookstore prices may increase

By JOCK HATFIELD
Of the Emerald

A 10 per cent increase in the price of books, along with other major changes in the University Bookstore's policies, will be discussed at a bookstore board meeting today.

The bookstore, presently operates as a non-profit corporation headed by students, faculty and classified staff. In the past the bookstore offered students a 10 per cent discount on book retail prices. However, according to James Williams, assistant manager of the bookstore it is the job of the board to annually review the practicality of this discount.

Williams explained, "In the event of a financial deficit, we would have to rescind the discount. Remember, we are not subsidized, and although we do get tax breaks, no one is going to give us any money. Obviously we can't go in the hole."

When asked if the bookstore's present financial condition would warrant the price change, Williams replied, "In my opinion the bookstore is in good health, but we won't know the exact statistics until the financial statement is carefully examined."

In addition to price changes, the board will consider replacing the bookstore's present technical equipment, including cash registers and bookkeeping devices. Williams said "The present equipment is antiquated, but we have to take into account the University's growth potential. If the University is going to keep growing, new equipment would certainly be a wise investment. We will have to be sure first whether this is in fact going to be the case."

The subject of raising employe wages at the bookstore, will be brought up by Williams at the meeting. However, Williams emphasized the decision on this, as with the other issues, will be left with the board.

"I have no major recommendations for the board." said Williams. "We are one of the few bookstores that has an operating system of this kind, and I don't want to pressure them into any decisions."

The board meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. in the EMU. The public is welcome to attend.