

state labor commissioner

Mary (Wendy) Roberts: Democrat

In the race for state Labor Commissioner, state Sen. Mary Roberts targets management reorganization as her major goal if elected.

She plans to conduct a management study to ensure efficient use of the commission's staff and resources, and to make appropriate staff or funding reductions.

The senator, 33, wants the labor commissioner to have a more prominent role in advocacy for Oregon's economy. Roberts thinks the Bureau of Labor should have representation on the Economic Development Commission.

"I favor legislation to give the labor commissioner the tools to affect policy in areas of statutory responsibility," she says.

Addressing the current backlog of affirmative action suits, which has accumulated over the past six years, Roberts says the civil rights staff within the Bureau needs to be trained in management techniques so that it can deal with the large number of cases more quickly.

Roberts thinks the number of formal complaints filed could be reduced by better educating employers on the state's civil rights and wage and hour laws. Six years of working on labor-related issues in the Legislature gives her an edge over opponent John Smets, she says.

Though the bureau was awarded an emergency grant of nearly \$1 million by the Legislature to hire additional civil

rights staffers, Roberts says that increase in personnel won't prevent future accumulation of cases.

She says it is the labor commissioner's responsibility to make sure the divisions' staff can accommodate the cases rapidly.

Roberts also wants to help the bureau's apprenticeship and training staff establish ways to predict the kinds of vocational training programs that will be needed in the future.

Prior to her present senate term, Roberts served as a state representative. She holds a masters in political science from the University of Wisconsin.

Roberts defeated seven other candidates in the May primary, including Nellie Fox.



John Smets: Republican

John Smets is confident his campaign for labor commissioner will produce an upset.

"People recognize that I'm the only qualified candidate," says the 50-year-old machine manufacturer. "I've worked in a business from the time I built my first machine."

Smets sees the commission as an administrative job, and claims he has "working" knowledge of the wage and hour statutes and how they actually apply. But he differs greatly from his opponent, Mary Roberts, on the issue of civil rights.

"I think the laws are probably ade-

quate and enforcement of the laws is probably practical," Smets says. He contends that the labor commission staff should be "streamlined" for more efficient action on discrimination suits and that some could be eliminated by shortening the time for appeals.

Citing his main priority as "100 percent employment for Oregonians," Smets says he doesn't necessarily favor proposed increases in the state minimum wage. "Young people don't get on-the-job experience due to the high starting wage."

Lower minimum wages, he suggests, would keep those people from pricing

themselves out of jobs.

Smets favors making the temporary waiver, which permits 10- and 11-year olds to work in strawberry and other commercial harvests permanent.

"It's a good idea to let them work," Smets says. "America is known for its work ethic."

An advocate of free enterprise, Smets draws a parallel between Oregon's livability and employment opportunities.

"I see damage to the liveability of Oregon when you have nitpicking of work places by bureaucrats," he says. Smets named the forest manufacturing industry as an example of businesses that are

being "threatened" by environmentalists.

Smets favors Ballot Measure 6, and believes it will pass. He says that and the fact he carried every county in the May election indicates he stands a good chance of beating his Democratic opponent.

"There's a general trend in Oregon toward conservatism," he says.

Smets owns the Smets Machinery Company, located in Tigard, which manufactures material handling machinery for use in the wood products industry. He holds a degree from the University of Washington in business administration.

public instruction superintendent

Verne Duncan

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Verne Duncan says the most important function of his job is day-to-day administrative duties.

Based on this criteria, the incumbent is well qualified. He has four years of experience at his job and holds an M.B.A. from the University of Oregon.

He is also critical of opponent Ruth McFarland's abilities in this regard. "She's never had a day's experience in management," he says.

McFarland, however, emphasizes leadership abilities as paramount in dealing with the impact of either Ballot Measure 6 or 11 or the taxpayers' revolt in general if neither passes.

Duncan, a former Idaho legislator, takes great pride in having, with the Legislature, increased basic state school support from 29 percent to 40 percent in 1977. He says he brought together teachers organizations, school boards and administrators to achieve a unanimous front.

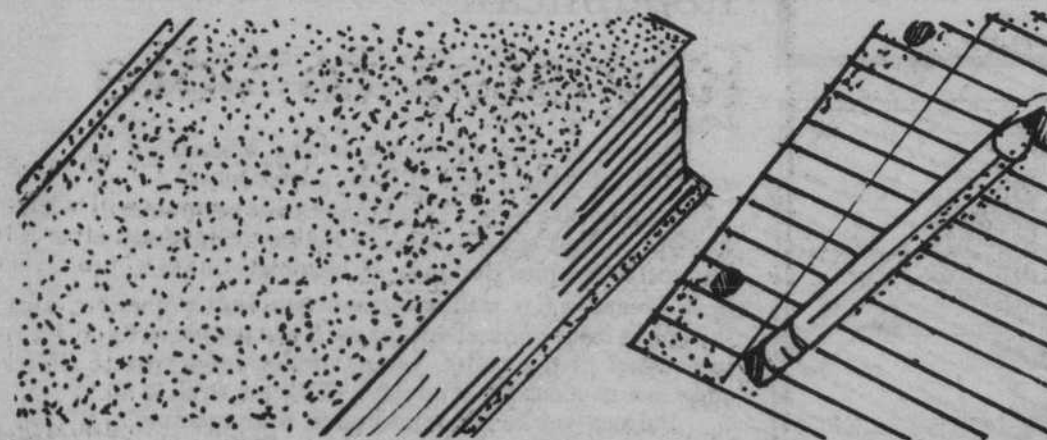
He intends to seek an increase in basic school support to 45 percent in the 1979 Legislature, with an eventual goal of 50 percent.

Duncan foresees few changes if he is re-elected. He says 1979 will be a "tough year." He is pleased with education in general. Schools are now teaching stu-

dents more about the responsibilities that go along with privileges, something he feels is important.

Should Measure 6 pass, he intends to seek even greater state school support to make up for the tremendous loss of property tax income that will be suffered by many school districts.

He seeks the increase in school sup-



port, he says, for equalization among districts. This will allow for "minimal standards" which some districts can choose to go above.

Duncan also says he prepared for the taxpayers' revolt long before it became reality. He says when he made the decision to go for increased school support in 1977, he decided to not allow any new programs in the Department of Education and froze the number of personnel.

Ruth McFarland

The major issue in the race for State Superintendent for Public Instruction, according to candidate Ruth McFarland, is leadership and communication with the Legislature and the State Board of Education.

McFarland says incumbent Superintendent Verne Duncan has failed in these aspects of his job. McFarland calls Duncan "inept" in his working with the 1977

the need for administrative ability in the superintendent's job. He says that day-to-day responsibilities of running the Department of Education are paramount.

McFarland particularly emphasizes the need for leadership in dealing with the taxpayers' revolt, whether or not either Ballot Measure 6 or 11 passes.

McFarland is looking ahead to education's needs under tight money circumstances. "If 11 passes cuts won't be immediate. Over the long haul there will be large cuts. If neither (6 or 11) passes, I'd like to see basic school support up to 50 percent."

McFarland says this increase to 50 percent will alleviate "wide discrepancies in education in the state" that exist between individual school districts.

McFarland opposes Ballot Measure 6 and especially fears its impact on local control of education. "It removes local control," she says, adding that the Legislature doesn't really want control passed on to themselves.

She says she prefers 11 because it "addresses the need for cutting property taxes." The emphasis of the taxpayers' revolt is not specifically property taxes she believes, though. "They are voting against waste in government of taxpayers money." She says she will economize in the state Department of Education.

How does McFarland see herself? "Someone with vision, communication strength and skills and someone pretty gutsy, too."