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# Measures decided by voters

## Some win, some lose

By Brad Berton  
Of the Emerald

Interested parties expressed either delight or disappointment as Oregonians defeated three of five statewide measures on Tuesday's primary ballot. Ballot Measures 1 and 2, which faced little opposition in

the pre-election campaign, both passed by comfortable margins. "I'm delighted," says Oregon Health Division Administrator Christine Gebbie about the success of Measure 1, which will broaden the existing water development project bond authority to include loans for drinking water systems in small municipalities.

"We've been working to improve smaller systems for years, and this is a source of funds we will certainly be able to use," Gebbie says.

"Smaller systems will be much more likely to come to us with money problems, such as improvement and enlargement of their water systems," Gebbie adds.

Passage of Measure 2 will allow the state to sell bonds to help finance construction of multi-family housing for the handicapped and the higher-income elderly in addition to the state's current funding of housing for the low-income elderly.

Chairman Ralston Smith of the Committee for Elderly and Handicapped Housing says, "We were concerned that with three bond issues on the ballot, people might not understand that Measure 2 won't create new bonding authority."

"We are very pleased at the measure's success," Smith says, "because it will provide more housing for the elderly and handicapped."

"We are very disappointed — we don't know what we will do next," says Tom Tombs of the Oregon Corrections Division in response to the failure of Ballot Measure 3. The measure would have empowered the state to issue \$60 million worth of general obligation bonds to finance construction and improvement of state and local corrections facilities.

"The most immediate effect of the measure's failure," says Tombs, "is that the outcome of the retrial of the division's overcrowding suit may be altered because the judge won't have

the options he might have had if a plan had been prepared for use of the funds that the measure would have provided."

"Most people speculate that the measure failed because it was a money issue," Tombs says. "People just don't want to spend when the economy is poor."

"I'm not against good roads," says Greg Wasson of Oregonians for Fair Truck Taxes in response to the defeat of Ballot Measure 4, which would have raised the state's gasoline and truck weight/mileage taxes by approximately 37 percent over the next three years to fund road construction and repair.

"The measure's defeat helps facilitate our goal, which is to have heavy trucks pay their fair share of road maintenance costs," says Wasson, adding, "It gives added incentive to pass an alternative measure, for which we will need 63,000 signatures."

"If we don't do something soon," Wasson says, "we'll see the Legislature allocate money from the general fund to the Highway Division, Oregon's version of the (U.S.) Defense Department, at the expense of other programs."

"I'm secretly delighted (at the measure's failure)," Wasson adds, "but publicly I'd say that it's a small step toward our major goal, which is making highway maintenance laws more responsible."

"By the next time a similar measure is placed on the ballot," says Lane County Public Works Director Don LaBelle, "deterioration of the county's roads will likely be quite visible, and people will see more potholes and base failures."

LaBelle says he is pleased that 51 percent of Lane County's voters favored Measure 4, but adds, "maybe the economies of other counties are worse, or their roads aren't so bad."

"There was some division among lawyers and judges on the issue, but I agree with the majority," says University law school dean Derrick Bell on the defeat of Ballot Measure 5. The measure would have empowered the governor to appoint the chief justice of the Oregon Supreme Court.

"Members of the Supreme Court should appoint their chief justice," says Bell, "because they will be aware of the administrative problems (that the measure was theoretically designed to alleviate) and be as responsive as the governor would be to those problems."

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