

ASSISTANCE

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skills of life.

Additionally, the opponents of the measure are concerned the benefits for the elderly and disabled will be cut off, even though there would be an advisory board which could give hardship waivers to individuals unable to work.

"There is no guarantee that help would be provided for people who aren't able to work," Taliaferro said.

She claimed the initiative's supporters falsely assume the only person who would be affected by the measure are single people with no dependents. Opponents also point out that the move does not guarantee child care for mothers who would have to work and would then be unable to stay home with their children.

"I just don't know what (proponents)

are thinking," she said. "This doesn't make any sense at all."

Opponents concerns also go beyond the issues of the elderly, the disabled and people with children. The realm of businesses and workers also has become a point of contention in the debate over the measure.

Taliaferro said that businesses in the six counties that have access to the cheap labor provided by Measure 7 will gain an unfair advantage over firms in the state's other 30 counties.

Moreover, the AFL-CIO labor union has expressed opposition to the measure, seeing it as a possible incentive for businesses to layoff their regular workers and hire others at a cheaper wage. AFL-CIO members are concerned because the government, and not the employer, would pay workers' wages.

"(Measure 7) might sound nice on the face of it, but I don't think it's work-

able," said Steve Lanning, political education coordinator for the Oregon AFL-CIO. "The potential is there for the exploitation of workers. There's no doubt about it."

Thompson said the AFL-CIO's concern is not an important question, and that it need not be addressed.

"You call it a 'straw man' to create a false problem," he said.

Furthermore, opponents believe making people work in lieu of welfare assistance is impractical because many recipients already have jobs. They point to figures from the Department of Human Resources showing 28 percent of AFDC clients already work at full- or part-time jobs. Additionally, Taliaferro said more than half the people who receive food stamps are also working.

"There's not a lot more (welfare and food stamp recipients) can do to help themselves," she said.

VOTE '90

Measure 7

Question: Shall Oregon law establish program of work by public assistance recipients for government-funded wages in lieu of welfare benefits?

SUMMARY

- Requires work for pay in lieu of food stamp, unemployment or AFDC benefits in six counties selected for three-year pilot program. Program is subject to federal approval.
- Program workers paid 90 percent of Oregon minimum wage, more for special skills requested by employers, limited to 40 hours per week. Private and public employers provide jobs.
- Except for special skills, workers' wages funded by unemployment taxes, available federal assistance funds at no additional cost to employers. Authorizes regulations, county advisory boards. Employment Division administers program.

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