

Spotlight focused on triples

By Rene DeCair
Emerald Associate Editor

Triple-trailer trucks — not exactly vehicles of passion — have become the focus of a lot of heated attention this election season.

Because of Ballot Measure 4, which would ban triple-trailers on Oregon highways, the long trucks have moved into the spotlight of political rhetoric.



The measure's supporters say the triples are dangerous and unnecessary. The opponents say they're not and argue the ban would hurt Oregon businesses.

The measure is expected to increase state revenues by \$330,000, gained from registering more vehicles that would be needed to haul the goods normally hauled by triples.

But the extra trucks are expected to result in \$2.5 million in road repair costs, which will be paid for by the weight-mile tax collected by the Public Utility Commission.

Julie Dawson, campaign coordinator for Yes on 4, said the trucks are unsafe because they swing out of control into other lanes. As proof, she said, driv-

ers admit they can't control the trucks.

"They don't even belong on the roads at all," Dawson said.

Moreover, Anne O'Ryan — public affairs manager for the Automobile Club of Oregon that supports the measure — said 35 states do not allow triples because they are unsafe, and Oregon should follow suit.

But Paul Lepinski, president of A&P Recycling in The Dalles, Ore., said the trucks will produce more pollution and will hurt businesses in Eastern Oregon.

Lepinski and other Measure 4 opponents said that if triples are banned, businesses will have to pay more for shipping costs to use more trucks.

"I use a lot of triples," he said, adding that one-fourth of his 200 trucks are triples. "I get a real good shipping rate with them."

They're good to use, he said, because he and other businesses that ship goods to the western part of the state often ship a small amount of goods together in triples, which couldn't fit in regular trucks.

The cost of using two-trailer trucks would hurt, he said.

"Right now we're lucky to meet costs on plastic materials," he said. "That's why we're making so much stink on

this side of the mountain."

But O'Ryan disputes the ban will hurt business, saying that triples account for only about 2 percent of trucks on Oregon roads.

"They are not a lifeline," she said. "Their argument is consumers are going to pay through the nose," which isn't true.

Washington Fred Meyer stores — a state that has banned triples — do not have more expensive prices than in Oregon, she said.

Moreover, she said, the opposition has distorted the facts about the safety of triples.

A letter of opposition to Measure 4 in the Voters' Pamphlet cites an AAA Foundation study that said, "ELVs (extra-long vehicles) have a superior safety record."

"Triples are by far the most attractive ELV on the highway," the study said.

But O'Ryan said the study was done on interstates and not on two-land roads and did not thoroughly study triple-trailers but three kinds of trucks together.

Moreover, she said that by "attractive," the study meant how the trucks looked. "It was more pleasing to their eye — good-looking trailers," she said.

Effects of M7 prompt dispute

By Lisa Kneefel
Emerald Reporter

The Citizens to Save Our Schools Committee hopes Ballot Measure 7 will aid school funding and deliver the homeowner tax relief Measure 5 promised.

But opponents say the measure won't increase school funding at all and could drive up utility rates.



Measure 7 is expected to increase property tax revenues to local school districts and community colleges by \$380 million in 1993-94. The next year, 1994-95, the measure is expected to increase property tax revenues by \$592 million.

The cost of implementing the measure is expected to be \$2.2 million in 1993-94, and another \$250,000 in 1994-95.

Gary Carlson, board member of the Oregonians for a Sound Economy campaign, said revenue raised through the measure will replace — not add — to state funds that make up for school income lost to property tax decreases.

Carlson also said utility companies might use property tax increases to justify rate increases.

But Paul McKenna, research director for the Oregon Public Employees Union, said Measure 7 won't increase property taxes for either homes or businesses.

He said it's still a reduction from the average statewide tax rate in 1990, just not as liberal as Measure 5's amendment to the Oregon constitution projected.

"Measure 7 turns back the clock and says, 'Let's give some of the break to businesses, but let's give most of it to homeowners,'" McKenna said.

McKenna said Measure 7 does increase school funding because the revenue it raises alleviates the state's obligation to replace lost funds.

The school revenue lost to Measure 5's decreased tax rates is replaced by the state's general fund. For every dollar of state fund money, 63 cents are allocated to public schools.

McKenna said Measure 7 will reduce this obligation because the state fund money designated for schools will continue to replace Measure 5's lost tax revenue despite the emergence of new funding from the restored property tax rates.

McKenna also said power companies have yet to pass any of their Measure 5 savings on to ratepayers. He said the utility rate increase argument is false because Measure 7 won't increase taxes.

Measure 5's amendment to the Oregon constitution limits property tax rates progressively over a five-year period that began in 1991. The average statewide tax rate under Measure 7 will still be lower than it was before Measure 5 passage.

Measure 7, also known as the Split-Roll Initiative, maintains the reductions in owner-occupied home property taxes Measure 5 enacted, but it revises tax rate reductions for all other property.

Under Measure 7, property other than owner-occupied homes will be taxed at \$30 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

For every \$30 in property taxes collected from non-owner-occupied homes, \$20 will be allotted to local schools, and \$10 will go toward local governments.

unless the life of a pregnant woman is in danger.

DeFazio said that, because he has been so opposed to Bush, his opportunities in the House have been limited.

"I have to look for small victories in the face of working in the Bush administration," he said. "For me, it was pretty frustrating. The President governed by the veto, so we withheld a lot of things

and what we did put out was vetoed."

Schulz said he knows it's tough to beat any incumbent, but remains hopeful.

"In my travels, at the fairs especially, where you might a cross-section of people, there were a lot I talked to who were not pleased with Peter DeFazio. Whether that translates into votes, we'll find out next week."

Hosticka, Boehnke differ on how to resolve tax problem

By Daralyn Trappe
Emerald Associate Editor

The race for the State House of Representatives seat in District 40 offers voters a choice between two candidates with very distinct views of how to clean up the current tax mess.

Democrat Carl Hosticka, who has represented the district since 1983, is an advocate of Ballot Measure 7, the split-roll tax initiative. If it passes, Hosticka said he would advocate "a more progressive income tax" to make up the rest of the state revenue lost from cuts over the past two years.

Hosticka, also a University associate professor and associate vice president for statewide educational services, is being challenged this year by first-time candidate George Boehnke, a Republican.

Boehnke, a former small business owner who now works as a citizens advocate, is an opponent of Measure 7, saying it would drive business and industry away by increasing their tax burden.

"Measure 7 is a tax for big business, big labor and big government, and we are a state of small business," he said.

Boehnke, an opponent of personal property tax in general, said he believes government spending can be further streamlined and that federal money can be put to better use.

"If we get federal money, let's make sure it stays here, instead of going through a lot of red tape," he said. "We need to make sure that it's getting spent where it should."

Boehnke also supports a temporary moratorium on government money for programs such as the "One Percent For Art" funding program. If streamlining and spending cuts are not sufficient, Boehnke said, he would favor a small increase in income tax.

As for higher education, Boehnke said he believes state money could be saved if state colleges and universities redefine themselves and perhaps scale down. For example, the University of Oregon could focus on areas such as business and journalism while Oregon State University could focus on such things as engineering, Boehnke said.

In addition, Boehnke said he believes professors should agree to a temporary pay freeze so students' tuition burden could be lightened.

Hosticka, who has been a member of the House Revenue Committee for the past two sessions, said Measure 7 would make up about 65 percent of lost revenues as a result of cuts made after the 1990 passage of Measure 5.

But if it doesn't pass, Hosticka said the legislature should put a tax reform pack-



Hosticka



Boehnke

age before the voters next year. He said he would urge voters to pass a tax reform referendum similar to the one Gov. Barbara Roberts put before the legislature earlier this year. (That proposal was shot down by the legislature and never got to the voters.)

Although Hosticka calls tax reform an "issue that overrides all others right now," both he and Boehnke also see the need for health care reform.

Hosticka is an advocate of a universally accessible health care program.

Although tax reform that includes better funding for higher education is an obvious priority among student voters, Hosticka notes that health care will quickly become a concern for current college students.

"The ones who are about to graduate, get out of school and into families, if they have to choose a job based on whether or not they'll be getting health benefits, that's not a very good way to have to conduct their life," he said.

Boehnke said that, if elected, he hopes to advocate for a local health care program rather than an immediate national plan. That program would come out of a proposal from an organized coalition of those in the health care business, such as doctors, insurance brokers and lawyers, Boehnke said.

Hosticka said that, if re-elected, in addition to health care and tax reform, he will continue to push for stronger laws regarding clean air and clean water and stronger funding for early childhood development programs.

CONGRESS

Continued from Page 1B

prehensive, balanced bill — including worker and community assistance — would be put before Congress.

DeFazio said the Freedom of Choice Act will likely be voted on this coming term, and he anticipates a majority to vote in favor of it, as he will. Schulz opposes abortion