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Roberts bows under budget pressure

NORTHWEST
 SALEM (AP) — When Gov. Barbara Roberts took office three years ago, she vowed that the Measure 5 property tax limit would not "topple" her administration.

"This administration will not be consumed by Measure 5," Roberts said in her inaugural address on Jan. 14, 1991. "We understand its implications and its limitations and we will deal decisively with those issues."

In the end, though, the property tax limit and its resulting squeeze on the state's finances proved to be too much for Roberts to handle during her rocky first term in office.

Roberts' announcement that she's dropping her re-election bid saddened friends, supporters and others who know her as a decent, down-to-earth individual who has tried to help those who exist in the shadows of life.

Both as the mother of an autistic child and as a political figure, Roberts has spent much of her life working to promote the rights of the handicapped, the elderly, minorities and homosexuals.

"I have never met a more caring individual," says U.S. Rep. Ron Wyden, D-Ore. "In my view, her legacy is going to be being the voice for people without clout and influence."

In a way, Roberts also could be viewed as a victim of the times. She was elected governor on the same day that Oregon voters rebelled against high property taxes and approved Measure 5.

Hershel Taylor, the Myrtle Creek retiree who led two unsuccessful recall attempts against Roberts, often said he had nothing against Roberts personally but was just trying to tweak government's nose in general.

Still, Roberts and her advisers never responded consistently or effectively to the challenges presented by the Measure 5 budget crunch.

At the beginning of her term,



Gov. Roberts, who found it hard to govern Oregon with diminishing funds, announced she will not seek re-election.

Roberts warned that, without tax increases, "people will die" because social programs, public safety and education would be devastated by Measure 5 budget cuts.

In her "state-of-the-state" speech a few weeks ago, however, Roberts told Oregonians that state government could get by by doing "better with less" and not asking taxpayers to dig deeper into their pocketbooks.

Roberts' biggest setback came in July 1992, when legislators refused to send to voters her \$1 billion tax increase plan.

The governor had called legislators into special session to consider her proposal to create a sales tax and raise property taxes for businesses as a way to avoid state budget cuts.

At the time, Roberts said legislative egos and a dash of sexism helped derail her proposal. But lawmakers blamed the defeat on the governor's decisions not to work closely with them and to

spring her tax plan on them at the last moment.

Roberts had spent the year leading up to the special session traveling the state and speaking with 10,000 people via the state's closed-circuit television hookup in hopes of drumming up support for her tax program.

Aside from the special session debacle, the governor never was able to make good on an earlier promise to cut 4,000 jobs from state payrolls.

Senate Republican Leader Gordon Smith has said he thinks Roberts is "a wonderful human being" who just never was able to exert leadership on crucial Measure 5 issues.

"Measure 5 and Barbara Roberts were elected on the same day," the Pendleton lawmaker says. "Undoubtedly, it has been difficult and disheartening for her to govern with diminishing revenues and to see so much of her public work undone by this process."

Governor urges women to enter world of politics

PORTLAND (AP) — Gov. Barbara Roberts is urging more women to enter politics.

A day after she announced she would not run for re-election, she told an audience in Portland that politics offer women a chance to make a difference.

Roberts spoke Saturday morning at a campaign school run by the Oregon Women's Caucus. She told the nearly 150 women candidates and campaign staffers that she saw nothing strange in her recommendation.

Roberts, who's now 57, has decades of experience in politics.

Although serving only one term as governor, Roberts has been on the ballot 15 times, for six offices ranging from the local school board to the governor's seat.

In all those years, she lost only one race. She says it was the first time she ran, and she didn't like losing.

Roberts, who became Oregon's first woman governor in 1990, says public service offers hard work and continual challenges — but also offers community honor and sheer fun.

Roberts announced Friday she would not campaign for a second term, citing personal and professional concerns. She says she couldn't do her job, herself or her family justice and still find the time to run a campaign.

Skis, snowboards hit by thieves on the slopes this winter

SEATTLE (AP) — Crime in Washington takes on a chilling aspect during the winter. Nearly 300 people have lost more than \$122,400 worth of skis and snowboards at Snoqualmie Pass, Stevens Pass and Crystal Mountain ski areas since late November.

"What skiers don't realize is that a lot of people who frequent ski areas aren't skiers," said Mike Hunter, a King County deputy sheriff assigned to the western half of Snoqualmie pass. "And a lot of those are there for only one reason — to steal."

The number of thefts is down a bit from previous ski seasons, because poor weather has kept skiers away from the Cascade slopes. But thefts had been increasing at a 10 percent annual clip, Hunter said.

So far this season, 26 ski and snowboard thieves have been arrested at Stevens Pass, seven at Ski Acres and Hyak, and three at Crystal Mountain as of late last week. If a thief isn't caught, the stolen items are likely gone for good.

"Lose a pair of skis or snowboard, and tracking them is like trying to find a needle in a haystack," said Kittitas County sheriff's deputy Dan Papineau, who patrols the east side of Snoqualmie Pass.

Part of the problem is the tradition of simply leaving equipment stuck in the snow or at unattended racks while the owner stops for a rest or refreshment.

"Someone may be watching closely," Hunter said, "and as soon as the owner disappears into a restaurant or whatever, the move is made and the skis or snowboard are gone."

Randy Anderson, head of private security at Stevens Pass, was reluctant to discuss the profile he has worked out of the stereotypical ski or snowboard thief.

In general, though, security officials watch for people not dressed for skiing who loiter around ski racks; people carrying more than one pair of skis or two snowboards to a vehicle in the parking lot; and people examin-

ing different sets of skis at a rack.

Anderson recently spotted a man following another skier. After the skier split his skis on two different racks, the thief grabbed them and headed for the parking lot.

"At first he said he picked up the wrong skis. But he soon confessed," Anderson said.

Stevens Pass has a video-camera system that also helps. Earlier this month, when a skier reported his skis stolen, security officials viewed the tape and saw the theft.

"Using his clothing as a guide, we soon spotted him at the lifts and made the arrest," Anderson said.

Officials say skiers and snowboarders should take time to record serial numbers and place identifying marks on their equipment. They also recommend paying a small fee to stash equipment at attended ski racks.

"It's only a fraction of the cost for a day of skiing," Papineau said. "Would you leave your wallet or expensive stereo equipment on a restaurant table without watching it?"

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