

Frohnmayr speaks out against Measure 15

Ben Moebius
Oregon Daily Emerald

Although strong debate continues on Ballot Measure 15, an initiative that would lock in current levels of funding for public schools, all agree that the next two years will be hard on many Oregon institutions.

Dave Frohnmayr, University president and one of Measure 15's most vocal opponents, said the next biennium will mean possible cuts for everything from public safety to human services.

Greg Traweek, a member of the pro-15 Kids First Committee, agrees. "There are going to be a lot more cuts in the next legislative session," Traweek said. "That is why it is important that 15 passes. K-12 has been taking cuts for the last decade. It can't go on."

That's where agreement ends.

Measure 15 would mandate that \$4.3 billion of the roughly \$8.2 billion 1995-97 budget be set aside for K-12 schools and community colleges. By doing this, it would ensure current levels of funding for public schools and community colleges with adjustments for inflation and enrollment.

According to Frohnmayr, the measure is a self-centered attempt at protection from further legislative cuts. The next two years will represent the final phase-in of the 1990 property tax limitation. The property tax will bottom out this biennium and will then grow as assessed values rise, he said.

"This next biennium represents the last of the worst shortfalls," Frohnmayr said.

Frohnmayr said Measure 15 would force other institutions, such as higher education, to take cuts of up to 30 percent.

"If this passed, tuition could increase substantially," he said. "There are limits to tuition increases and federal grants."

The 1994 Student Voter's Guide, published by the Oregon Student Lobby, states the cut would equal about \$174 million dollars in General Fund support and about \$9.2 million in lottery support. This would be about \$80 million more in cuts than already being suggested by Oregon governor Barbara Roberts in her 13.8 percent cut strategy for the Oregon State System of Higher Education (OSSHE).

According to the pamphlet, the OSSHE would either have to reduce enrollment by 8000 students, or raise tuition by more than 30 percent each year if the measure passed.

Measure 15 would drive students out of the state, Frohnmayr said. It would also hurt juvenile services and other programs that help students.

Traweek said those institutions would only face what public schools have been facing for years. Public schools and community colleges have been unfairly hit by 1990s property tax limitation, despite promises at the time that schools would not be affected, he said.

"Public schools have seen their funding go down roughly 10 percent," Traweek said, "while other state programs were actually granted more funds. We no longer have the money to provide a proper education."

Frohnmayr blasted the pro-15 supporters for skewing their numbers. "Some of the people who are for this can't count," he said. "They consistently make errors of over a \$100 million and they underestimate the damage to other sectors."

The No on 15 Committee for Effective Government states that the legislature has tried to make up for schools' lost revenue by diverting an increasing share of the General Fund money to K-12 schools. The share of General Fund money going to schools has increased from 27 percent in 1989-91 to 39 percent for 1993-96, the committee reported.

"All this measure attempts to do is preserve the quality of schools today," Traweek said. "The budget increase would be a reflection of inflation and enrollment, which could go up or down, it is not an automatic kicker."

According to Frohnmayr it attempts much more. "This is a selfish money and power grab by a special interest group masquerading under very benign colors," he said.

LIBRARY

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graduating classes and private individuals have contributed \$5,000 or more to the project.

With a new \$150 million capital campaign that is scheduled to begin today, the University Library System plans to build on current funds with additional private gifts. Library goals for The Oregon Campaign include creating a \$4 million endowment to provide a stable funding source for acquisitions and collection growth, as well as a second \$4 million endowment to support continued upgrading and refinement of information-access technology.

Those who tour the Knight Library on Friday will notice that not only have the funds helped finance expansion and technology. They've also financed artwork and sculptures by eight artists selected in a national competition that have been integrated into the library's

architecture as well.

Two of the artists include University alumni Anne Storrs and David Bayles, who have constructed a series of four cast-concrete decorative panels called "The Seasons." The panels, which are each about 5 feet by 7 feet, are on the exterior wall of the Kincaid Street addition.

Students who have descended the new circular Solari South Stair Gallery in the south addition may have noticed a series of 15 molded glass panels lighted from behind. The sculptured glass stair lights feature portraits of literary figures, library patrons and characters from literature and history, all relating to the Knight Library's collections. They were created by Linda Ethier of Portland.

With these and other artwork additions, plus the new technology and increased services that have been incorporated into the library, Shipman said he believes that it is a more hospitable place.

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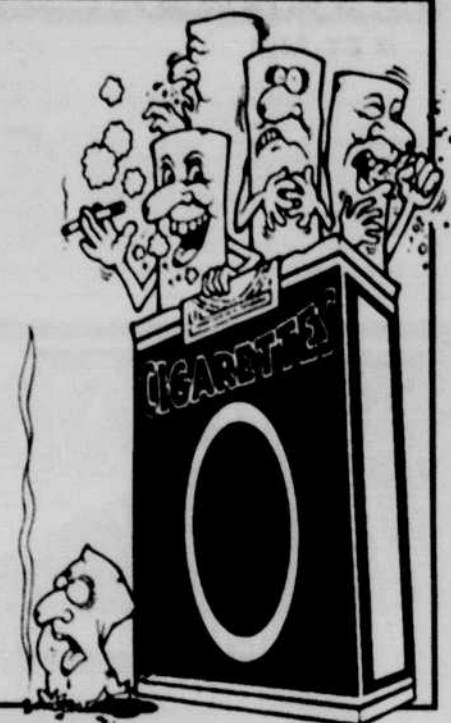
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