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Measure 9 may put limits on campaign contributions

Daniel West
Oregon Daily Emerald

Ballot Measure 9 adopts contribution spending limits and changes other campaign finance laws.

This measure limits campaign contributions of \$500 for state candidates and \$100 for legislature candidates from individuals and Political Action Committees (PACs).

Also, it would create voluntary campaign spending limits and end tax credits for candidates who violate spending limits.

"This would take big business out of Oregon state politics," said Tim Rapheal, a public relations representative for OSPERG.

"This measure would level the playing field between PACs and individual contributions. They will each give the same amount," Rapheal said.

Public Action Committees give money to candidates. This money accounts for about two thirds of their campaign costs. But, individuals contribute only about \$50 to \$100. Thus, PACs are buying more political influence with their donations.

For example, the Phillip Morris tobacco company invested money in some legislators campaigns in 1992. A year later, a bill came before the legislature that would restrict the sale of tobacco. The bill failed. Most of the legislators who received

campaign support from Phillip Morris voted against the bill.

"It's not the PACs or individuals who are responsible, but the process is flawed where many candidates become reliant upon these contributions," said Rapheal. Oregon is one of the last seven states that have no set limits for campaign contributions.

However, the opposition stated that this measure is constitutionally flawed.

"Campaign expenditures are protected by the first amendment. You can't limit speech because it costs money or money is involved," said Warren Derras, an attorney who opposes Ballot Measure 9.

Also, campaigns won't run effectively if there's a limit on the amount of money groups can give.

"The political campaigns cost money. There are a lot of expenses involved such as printing, postage and advertising that cost money," according to Derras.

The candidates could not raise enough money to communicate properly with voters and these limits will make it impossible to run a campaign.

Derras asserted that individual contributions are only a reflection of individuals interest in Oregon politics and setting campaign limits won't solve voters apathy. "Democracy has a price," Derras said.

Measure 7 may specify certain types of bias

Daniel West
Oregon Daily Emerald

Ballot Measure 7 would amend the Oregon Constitution to prohibit government discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age and national origin.

Currently the Bill of Rights forbids privileges and immunities of any citizens to be denied.

Supporters of Ballot Measure 7 said the amendment is needed because current amendments aren't specific enough to provide adequate discrimination protection for all minorities.

The amendment doesn't

change the existing law, it's in addition to the law.

Because the existing amendment doesn't list specific types of discrimination, courts have specified those types in judicial decisions.

"The privileges and immunities amendment was ratified in 1859," said Gene Sullivan, an aide for the Oregon Equal Protection Amendment Committee. "This amendment hasn't changed in over 135 years. It doesn't protect women and other minorities, and this doesn't provide any case law for these groups," Sullivan said.

However, opponents of Ballot Measure 7 contend the measure doesn't list some groups who were traditionally protected by existing discrimination laws.

"Whenever you create lists, you leave other people out," said Bob Horenstein, director of community relations for Jewish Federation of Portland.

"This amendment leaves out groups of people who were protected by state and national law, such as marital status, sexual orientation and the disabled," he said. "This amendment doesn't mention creed or other religious beliefs," Horenstein said.

Coburg Fire District wants new tax base

Anne Moser-Kornfeld
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Coburg Rural Fire Protection District needs to improve its services and wants voters in that area to approve a new tax base of \$200,000. The tax base, if passed, begins in the 1995-96 fiscal year and includes replacing older equipment to comply with current federal training and safety standards.

The county measure covers the city of Coburg and boundaries ranging north to the dividing line between Lane and Linn County and as far south as Armitage Park. The ballot measure goes before voters living in these areas on Tuesday.

The current president of the board of directors, James Green, said the continuing influx of new businesses and more residents in the area has made it necessary to bring on full-time staff and updated vehicles.

"The district has been growing by leaps and bounds in business and population," Green said.

The tax base currently provided under the Oregon Constitution is \$94,015. The proposed tax base allowed by Article XI, Section 11, of the Oregon Constitution allows the District to meet the costs of emergency fire and medical services.

Coburg's Rural Fire District is 100 percent volunteer having only 30 firefighters and one chief available on an on-call basis. If the measure passes, the district will hire a full-time chief, retain book-keeping services and may hire an assistant chief.

The proposed tax measure could reduce property taxes. But because property values in the Coburg area are rising dramatically, an estimate of how the new tax base's will impact the area is uncertain.

Green did not comment in this area and was unavailable to discuss how the property tax in other units of governments could be reduced. He did say local support for the measure is strong because of the size of Coburg's municipality and the awareness area residents have when the fire department's alarm sounds.

Two slain boys mourned by hundreds



UNION, S.C. (AP) — A single white coffin stacked with yellow roses held the bodies of two young brothers, "precious jewels" whose drowning was mourned by hundreds crowded into a small country church on Sunday.

David Smith, with bowed shoulders and a handkerchief stifling his sobs, followed as the coffin holding his sons, 3-year-old Michael and 14-month-old Alex, was wheeled from the church to a cemetery.

The boys' mother, Susan Smith, was absent — behind bars and charged with killing her sons by strapping them into

their car safety-seats and sending the car rolling into a lake.

About 300 people crowded into the Buffalo United Methodist Church for the 45-minute service, where ministers assured mourners that the children were in better hands.

"Sometimes God takes from us the most precious jewels in life so he can give them back to us in eternity," the Rev. Joe Bridges said.

Outside, the gray sky hanging over the nearby Bogansville United Methodist Church cemetery matched the mood of this textile town of about 10,000 in northwest South Carolina.

Cars lined the small county road as mourners viewed the

coffin. "I just wanted to be a part of it," said Cathy Jones of Hartwell, who drove more than two hours to attend the funeral.

The boys were found at the bottom of Lake John D. Long on Thursday. Nine days earlier their mother told police that a man with a gun took her car and children and drove off.

As the community and the nation mourned, new details surfaced.

CBS news, citing a law enforcement source, reported that the investigation into the killings continued and that at least one other person could be arrested. However, state police Chief Robert Stewart told The Associated Press that he knew of no other arrests.

Many pray for Reagan with Alzheimer's

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Worshipers at former President Reagan's church bowed their heads Sunday to pray for a "healing hand" to fight his Alzheimer's disease, while messages wishing him well poured in from around the country.

"We are concerned and shocked to hear of his illness," the Rev. Paul Pierson said while leading parishioners at Bel Air Presbyterian Church.

One day after Reagan's disclosure that he had been diagnosed with the incurable brain disease, the pastor praised him for making his condition public.

"It may help others seek help," Pierson said.

Reagan's handwritten letter disclosing the disease was accompanied by a statement from five doctors. They said that while Reagan's health was otherwise good, "it is expected that as the years go on it will begin to deteriorate."

Reagan, 83, and his wife, Nancy, didn't attend Sunday services at their 2,000-member church overlooking the San Fernando Valley. They also were not at their Bel-Air estate, where TV cameras were set up outside the gate.

Reagan's spokeswoman Cathy Busch said the Reagans were out of town and she wouldn't disclose where.

Telephone lines to the Reagan offices were jammed and the staff left after a short time Sunday because they were unable to handle the volume.

"It's unbelievable," Busch said. "The calls and faxes are flooding in. There's too many to count. The outpouring is incredible."

At the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, northwest of Los Angeles, visitors trickled into the museum.

"It's sad, very sad," said library docent Michael Markese. The letter, in which the former president said he would stay active and enjoy life, was vintage Reagan, he said. "He's always been such an optimist."

Alzheimer's disease is an irreversible neurological disorder that destroys the brain's memory cells. In addition to memory loss, symptoms include impairment of judgment, disorientation and personality change.

Among diseases, it is the fourth leading cause of death for adults after heart disease, cancer and strokes.

CORRECTION

University graduate student Tom Muller was incorrectly identified as Tom Mullen in an article that appeared in Monday's paper. The Emerald regrets the error.