

RIGHTS

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can afford that shelter."

The growing population of homeless people, he said, is a testament to "the failure of our current way of doing things."

West, 35, has been homeless off and on since October of 1992. In February of 1993, he started the "Homeless Organization for Peace Everywhere (H.O.P.E.)" newsletter to "give homeless people a voice."

West said he has been harassed by police while living in his van but has never been ticketed for prohibited camping. He wants to make people aware of the discrimination that homeless people face.

"[The lawsuit] is a chance to address illegal camping issues in Eugene and address civil-rights violations and oppression of the minority class of homeless people," West said.

"Homeless people are human beings with individual personalities and emotions and

they deserve equal rights. [The camping ordinance] is discrimination, plain and simple," he said.

The two men said they decided to name themselves as plaintiffs because most homeless people expend so much energy in just surviving that they are rarely in a position to focus on legal issues.

"Homelessness is a downward spiral, and at a point, homeless people adapt to that structure and those conditions," he said.

"Homelessness is so degrading," West said. "It is a violation that strips you of your dignity and you lose your sense of purpose."

West also said that being on the street often causes confusion, exhaustion and depression.

"When you're homeless you have a sense of not being grounded," he said. "I wouldn't wish homelessness on my worst enemy."

If the court finds that their



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constitutional rights have been violated, the state legislature would then decide which law or laws would change.

If they lose the case, Musselwhite and West said they will continue to advocate for homeless rights.

They may not get to the polls tomorrow, but both men said it is only matter of time before they do.

MEASURE

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After the opposition outspent Bruce \$1 million to \$300,000, voters approved the measure by a 4 percent margin.

The rhetoric in Colorado has cooled considerably since the 1992 campaign. George Delany, Governor Romer's director of budget and planning, recently called life under Amendment 1 "a mixed bag" where proposed tax increases depend on "how the voters feel about it."

Delany said that the votes needed for tax increases — similar to those that could result from Ballot Measure 5 — rung up a \$1 million price tag in the 1993 election.

Only one state-wide tax increase has gone to the polls since Amendment 1 took effect. **Hard times for Huskies**

Washington voters approved a spending-limitation law in 1993. Republican State Senator Linda Smith authored Initiative 601, which limits growth in state spending to the rate of inflation and population.

Although I-601 doesn't take affect until July 1995, it has already sent shockwaves through the state's capital in Olympia.

"There weren't very many proposals accepted to initiate new programs or expand existing programs," Randy Hodges, the staff coordinator for the Washington Senate's Ways and Means Committee said. "It brought more fiscal discipline on the part of members in general."

The state teacher's union, which lobbied hard for pay increases as part of the 1994 supplemental budget, returned to the classroom empty handed. Lawmakers, Hodges explained, feared that any pay hikes going into the I-601 restriction "could jeopardize salary increases in 95-97 for everyone."

The concern in Olympia today is that entitlements — the toughest of all government programs to reduce — are growing at a rate more than two and one-half times faster than I-601 will allow for overall spending.

Discretionary programs, primarily higher education, seem to be caught in the squeeze, Hodges said, as welfare, medical assistance, long-term care, remedial and bilingual education entitlements eat up an increasing portion of the budget I-601 will allow.

A fight in Oregon

Opponents of Ballot Measure 5 claim that, if passed, the initiative will overburden the electoral process.

"It would put in front of voters hundreds of little fee increases that just don't belong in that purview," said Pat McCormick of the Citizens for Oregon Committee.

Bill Sizemore, executive director of Oregon United Taxpayers PAC, which authored the measure, disagrees. He said that increases Ballot Measure 5 exempts many "minor increases" that "reflect a documented cost increase."

According to the explanatory statement in the voter's pamphlet, "incurred charges and local improvements," utility and port district fees — as well as state university tuitions — would be exempt from the initiative.

Sizemore estimates that Ballot Measure 5 draws its support from "ordinary working Oregonians who believe that their taxes are too high." He gives his initiative a "50-50" chance of passing at the polls, and believes that the more voters know about it, the more they will like it.

"What's more important than what this will do to state programs is what it will do for taxpayers, who are overburdened today," Sizemore said. "If it puts more money in the hands of people who earn it, the effects on government are secondary."

A wide array of Oregon groups have come out against Ballot Measure 5, including environmental and business organizations.

Anna Goldrich, executive director of the Oregon League of Conservation Voters, fears that if Ballot Measure 5 passes, voters will defeat nearly all increases put before them.

"We are concerned that it would hit environmental programs particularly hard because there are a lot of environmental programs that are funded by fees," she said. "Voters don't understand the wide-ranging impact this will have on programs that benefit everybody."

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