

**THIS WEEK**  
**MONDAY:** Opinion  
**TUESDAY:** Politics  
**WEDNESDAY:** Election Coverage  
**THURSDAY:** Election Coverage  
**FRIDAY:** Opinion

# POLITICS

1996 election news and results

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## Preliminary ballot measure results

as of 5 p.m. Wednesday

<b>26</b>	YES:	423,467	63%
<b>YES</b>	NO:	245,395	37%
<b>27</b>	YES:	176,323	27%
<b>NO</b>	NO:	474,569	73%
<b>28</b>	YES:	360,456	55%
<b>YES</b>	NO:	297,211	45%
<b>29</b>	YES:	169,987	26%
<b>NO</b>	NO:	481,940	74%
<b>30</b>	YES:	358,238	55%
<b>YES</b>	NO:	296,592	45%
<b>31</b>	YES:	294,586	43%
<b>NO</b>	NO:	383,421	57%
<b>32</b>	YES:	308,677	46%
<b>NO</b>	NO:	364,203	54%
<b>33</b>	YES:	308,110	47%
<b>NO</b>	NO:	345,011	53%
<b>34</b>	YES:	288,046	42%
<b>NO</b>	NO:	390,436	58%
<b>35</b>	YES:	221,767	35%
<b>NO</b>	NO:	409,195	65%
<b>36</b>	YES:	383,157	56%
<b>YES</b>	NO:	304,100	44%
<b>37</b>	YES:	278,157	40%
<b>NO</b>	NO:	410,426	60%
<b>38</b>	YES:	239,297	35%
<b>NO</b>	NO:	436,982	65%
<b>39</b>	YES:	289,964	44%
<b>NO</b>	NO:	368,274	56%
<b>40</b>	YES:	378,165	56%
<b>YES</b>	NO:	293,256	44%
<b>41</b>	YES:	212,568	33%
<b>NO</b>	NO:	438,563	67%
<b>42</b>	YES:	226,388	66%
<b>NO</b>	NO:	443,568	34%
<b>43</b>	YES:	277,500	44%
<b>NO</b>	NO:	357,468	56%
<b>44</b>	YES:	380,654	55%
<b>YES</b>	NO:	307,872	45%
<b>45</b>	YES:	215,897	32%
<b>NO</b>	NO:	455,232	68%
<b>46</b>	YES:	74,799	11%
<b>NO</b>	NO:	604,177	89%
<b>47</b>	YES:	340,691	50%
<b>SPLIT</b>	NO:	342,789	50%
<b>48</b>	YES:	293,847	45%
<b>NO</b>	NO:	353,148	55%

## Vote-by-mail gains Kitzhaber's support

By Bob Baum  
 The Associated Press

PORTLAND (AP) — With more than a half-million absentee ballots to be counted, Election Day has turned into Election Week in Oregon.

As a U.S. Senate seat and a pivotal measure to limit property taxes hung in the balance, election workers on Tuesday tediously began hand-counting absentee ballots submitted, mostly by mail, over the past three weeks.

In many of the state's 36 counties, it will be Friday before all the votes are counted.

The messy, slow process is adding fuel to the drive for legislation that would make all elections in Oregon exclusively by mail.

"To me, this is a senseless way to run an election," said Secretary of State Phil Keisling, Oregon's top elections official and a chief proponent of vote-by-mail. "You have maximum confusion for voters and election workers."

If this had been a totally mail-in election, "by 10 p.m. . . we would have had 90 to 95 percent of the votes counted," Keisling said.

Gov. John Kitzhaber, who vetoed a bill to expand vote-by-mail to all elections last year, grudgingly admitted that Tuesday's outcome suggests he reconsider his stand.

"It's clear that a growing number of Oregonians want to vote that way and we have kind of a hybrid system right now," he said. "As much as I enjoy going to the voting booth, I think that clearly voting by mail is the direction the state is moving."

Given another chance, Kitzhaber said, he probably would sign a bill to make all elections by mail, with certain conditions.

Backers believe vote-by-mail boosts voter participation. The turnout among Oregon's 1.9 million registered voters could fall below 65 percent, Keisling said. That would make it one of the lowest turnouts for a presidential election in Oregon since statistics first were recorded in 1960.

In 1981, Oregon became the first state to authorize vote-by-mail in statewide elections, but the law requires the traditional polling booth method be used for primary and general elections.



However, voters can request absentee ballots up to three weeks before Election Day, and just under half of the estimated 1.2 million who voted Tuesday chose that method.

State law requires waiting until polls are closed before absentee ballots are tallied, and many county election officials didn't even begin tabulating the mail-in votes until Tuesday.

The bill that would have conducted all elections by mail was passed in the final hours of the 1995 legislative session, but Kitzhaber vetoed it, saying the bill had been rammed through at the last minute without a proper discussion.

His biggest concern now, he said, is the three-week period between the time ballots are mailed to voters and the deadline for their return to the counties. That allows people to vote before the full campaign is played out.

"I've indicated that if we can narrow the time frame between the times ballots are mailed out and the election date to seven to 10 days, I would probably sign such a bill," Kitzhaber said.

State Senate Majority Leader Brady Adams, R-Grants Pass, who figures to move up to Senate president next year, remains opposed to using vote-by-mail exclusively, although he believes some changes could be made to speed the counting.

"That's technology. That's solvable," Adams said. "But my feeling is what's wrong with a system that allows people to go to a polling place if they want to or to vote from their home if they want to. I don't find a persuasive argument that it has to be either or."

Keisling said an estimated \$1.5 million in taxpayer money would have been saved if this had been a vote-by-mail election.

In Marion County, which includes the capital city of Salem, two-thirds of the ballots were sent in absentee. County Clerk Al Davidson estimates his office could have saved 75 cents to \$1 for each ballot if the election had been entirely by mail. As it is now, he said, clerks are having to run two parallel elections, one for the polling booth and the other for absentee.

"I firmly believe that if we don't see something come out of the '97 legislative session, we'll see an initiative in the '98 election that would make all elections vote-by-mail, and it will pass overwhelmingly," Davidson said.

The clerks' unabashed preference for mail-in elections has led to behind-the-scenes rumbling that the counting is purposely slow to push the state toward total mail-in balloting.

"That accusation is offensive," Keisling said. "It's ridiculous. The clerks have been handed just a dreadful situation. The Lane County clerk got two hours of sleep last night. They are working overtime."

## Bottle bill proponents say they will keep fighting

The Associated Press

PORTLAND — Bitter over the big-spending opposition to their failed ballot measure, leaders of the move to expand Oregon's landmark bottle bill are vowing to take their case to the Legislature.

"We're not going anywhere," Campaign Director Chris Taylor said. "We have a coalition that's 450 groups strong. We're the real Oregonians in this thing. We're going to be pushing for this come January."

Measure 37, which would have expanded Oregon's bottle and can deposit law to cover bottled water and non-carbonated beverages, such as Snapple and fruit juices, had the support of a big majority in polls taken several months ago.

But it failed in Tuesday's election after the beverage, supermarket and packaging industries spent more than \$3 million to defeat it.

With 43 percent of the precincts reporting, the vote was 402,212, or 60 percent, against the measure, compared with 272,969, or 40 percent, in favor.

"We're real pleased that Oregon voters got the message that Measure 37 was confusing and complicated and would cost grocers across the state a lot of money and would undermine our recycling program," said

Gail Dundas, spokeswoman for Oregonians Against Measure 37.

Taylor said the arguments put forward in the anti-37 advertising blitz were untrue, but that proponents didn't have the money to counter that high-priced message. Backers of the measure were outspent by about 10-to-1.

"Distortion, dollars and deceit equal defeat," Taylor said. "That's a Tom McCall quote, and it's on the money tonight."

McCall, the late Oregon governor, was a prime force behind the state's passage of the first mandatory bottle and can deposit law in 1971. That law applied only to soda pop and beer.

McCall's widow, Audrey, was a chief petitioner of Measure 37. The measure also was supported by Gov. John Kitzhaber and both candidates for U.S. Senate.

But the support was no match for the big money of the opponents, Taylor said.

"It's certainly disappointing to see that out-of-state interests can come in here and spend \$3 million and convince people that water flows uphill," Taylor said. "Lying can be very persuasive. With \$3 million and no concern for the truth, you can convince people about anything."

Dundas argued that her group's accurate message, not the money that paid for it, made the difference.

"We found that once Oregonians were informed about the confusion Measure 37 would cause and the complications and the changes it would bring to the bottle bill, they were just well-informed voters, and they've made their decision," she said.

Measure 37 would have broadened the law to include water bottles up to two liters in

size and non-carbonated drinks, other than water, from six ounces to one liter.

Taylor, environmental advocate for the Oregon State Public Interest Research Group, said the campaign shows a need to do something to limit out-of-state spending on ballot measures.

"The No on 37 campaign was clearly driven by focus groups, PR firms and media consultants," Taylor said. "We're quite proud of the fact that ours was a classic grassroots initiative."

## Measure requiring industry toxin reports passes by wide margin

The Associated Press

EUGENE — An initiative to require city businesses to report their use of toxic and hazardous chemicals each year was firmly approved by voters Tuesday.

With 35 percent of the vote counted early Wednesday, the measure was passing 16,465 to 11,205.

The measure requires larger businesses in Eugene to keep a list of all the chemicals they manufacture, use, dispose of, transport or release.

Proponents wanted people to know what chemicals are being used in their community. Opponents called the measure unnecessary because businesses already must report their chemical use to federal, state and local government agencies.

The initiative affects only manufacturers that employ at least 10 people and generate more than 2,640 pounds of chemicals per year.