



International Day of Cultural Reconciliation

You are invited to join speakers from the African American, Chicano, East Timorese, Japanese, Japanese American, Jewish, Native American, Palestinian, Romany (Gypsy), Vietnamese, and Vietnamese American communities in presenting testimony and sustaining a dialogue to re-examine our historic relationships, and consider sharing our collective home and its limited resources in ways that transcend cultural imperialism and genocide.

Friday, May 9, 1997
12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m.

EMU Fir Room
University of Oregon Campus

For more information contact the Center for Asian and Pacific Studies at 541-346-4816



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Measure 49 would amend 17

■ **LAW:** The proposed bill addresses issues concerning inmate-produced goods

By Jennifer Schmitt
Community Editor

Parts of the 1994 Measure 17, which requires inmates to work full-time, have come into conflict and are now the focus of this election's Measure 49.

Measure 17 was passed by voters in 1994, but the measure did not take into account how to define full-time employment and it does not comply with the federal rules for selling inmate-produced goods across state lines, said Jim Lockwood, public affairs director for the Department of Corrections. Measure 49 fixes many of the problems that have popped up as a result of the first measure.

"These are all unanticipated issues that are common sense but we have to make sure we're doing things according to the law," Lockwood said. "We're just trying to take some of the kinks out of the hose."

One flaw in Measure 17 is that it doesn't comply with federal laws regarding inmate compensation for work that is sold across state lines.

Under Measure 17, the earnings inmates receive must go toward the prisoners' housing, health care, court costs, and rehabilitation costs. These costs can eat up most, if not all of the inmates'

MEASURE 49

■ **WHAT IT DOES:** Measure 49 modifies the existing state prison work program requirements in the Oregon Constitution.

■ THE CHANGES INCLUDE:

- Permitting the state to continue to operate and expand Oregon's prison industries by bringing them into compliance with federal laws for out of state commerce.
- Emphasizing no inmate has a right to a job or to participate in work, on-the-job training or educational programs.
- Modifying the definition of full-time employment to include time spent on security measures and transportation of inmates while they are participating in work or on-the-job training.

SOURCE: Statewide Special Election Home page

salaries. According to federal law, for products sold outside of the state inmates must be able to keep at least 20 percent of their salary for their own personal use. Measure 49 would change the pay scale to meet the federal requirements for goods sold out-of-state.

Through interstate and international sales of inmate products such as blue jeans and furniture, the state prison system makes approximately \$600,000 a year, Lockwood said.

"The opportunity for Oregon to

make money on the inmate work program is enhanced if we can market beyond our state's market," Lockwood said. "Face it, you can only sell so many pairs of jeans in the Oregon."

Money made from the sales of the inmate products is put back into the inmate work program to put more inmates to work. If the measure does not pass, the products made by inmates will be sold in to in-state clients only.

Measure 49 also redefines the term "full-time work." The measure would allow security check and transportation times to be included as part of the inmates' eight-hour work day.

As the law currently stands, corrections staff members are working overtime while conducting security checks and transporting the inmates to the job sites.

"Right now we have to run staff over eight hours a day in order to get the inmates to work an eight hour day," Lockwood said.

Measure 49 also emphasizes the idea that inmates are not guaranteed a job in the work programs. At least one lawsuit has been filed by an inmate who claimed he had a right to a job, Lockwood said.

"One reason this was brought to the legislature is because we didn't believe voters wanted inmates to be able to sue the state for a job," Lockwood said. "Some inmates say they have a right. We don't think they do."

Cuts: Courts unlikely to overturn measure

■ Continued from Page 1

three percent a year, but taxpayers will be getting less of a rebate than under Measure 47, he said. The measure would have cut taxes by approximately \$1 billion over two years. Measure 50 will cut an estimated \$800 million.

Some people also are concerned about the lack of public hearings and discussion regarding the measure.

"Everything has happened so fast," Ramsdell said. "Most of the legislators haven't even read the whole thing. There should have been hearings and more discussion about it."

Measure 50 "cleans up" a lot of the mistakes in Measure 47, Beyer said. The first step in the process was to exclude rural hospitals from the Measure 47 cap.

MEASURE 50

■ **WHAT IT DOES:** Measure 50 restructures Measure 47 and is designed to correct the technical and legal problems of the measure. It also sets a limit on the amount assessed property values can increase each year and requires a vote for any increase to the tax base.

"Rural hospitals rely heavily on the property tax base," he said. "Without funding, these hospitals would have to close down and in some areas this is the only form of medical service for people."

Although they were strongly opposed to Measure 47, the Oregon Public Employees Union is supporting Measure 50 as a way

to solve some of the problems surrounding the "cut and cap" measure, said Sue Bettine, University chapter president.

Bettine said she believes there needs to be an alternative to Measure 50, such as tax reforms that shift the burden of taxation off the poor and onto the shoulders of the rich.

Some people who voted against Measure 47 and are against Measure 50 argue that the state should wait and see what the courts decide regarding the constitutionality of the measure.

But Beyer said he thinks that is a big risk to take.

"Looking at the history of the courts in this state, there is a reluctance on the part of the courts to overturn the will of the voters," he said.

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Ever the Dragon

May 9, 10,
15, 16, 17,
23, 24 8 pm

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