

PERSPECTIVES

Emerald endorses state measures

This year's issues range from the complex to the controversial

TITLE	DESCRIPTION	ODE VOTE	REASON
Measure 54: School bonds	This measure would amend the constitution to allow schools to sell bonds backed by the state government.	YES	This proposal provides a viable option for financing the construction of new schools and remodeling existing ones. It has been estimated that this measure would save Oregon schools and community colleges \$70 million over the next 20 years.
Measure 55: Prepaid college tuition	Allows state government to guarantee earnings on prepaid tuition trust funds.	YES	With college costs ever increasing, the option to lock in current tuition levels is one many Oregon families would welcome.
Measure 56: Land-use notice	Measure 56 would require that landowners be given advance notice from the government about zoning changes that would affect their property.	YES	Property owners should be kept abreast of actions that might affect the value of their land, whether the changes are being made by neighbors or state government.
Measure 57: Marijuana possession	Under this measure, possession of less than an ounce of marijuana would become a Class C misdemeanor punishable by up to 30 days in jail and a \$500 to \$1,000 fine.	NO	We believe this to be a misguided attempt to target youth drug use that would suck much-needed resources away from other programs and services.
Measure 58: Open adoption records	Allows adult adoptees access to original, unaltered Oregon birth certificates.	NO	While there are some compelling arguments in favor of allowing adoptees access to their birth records, the fact that this measure contains no exceptions, even for cases of sexual assault, makes us wary. This measure, as currently worded, jeopardizes the confidentiality that many birth mothers prize.
Measure 59: Union dues	Would make it illegal to use public resources to collect money for political use.	NO	If passed, Measure 59 could substantially restrict the amount of information relayed to voters. Its far-reaching definition of political activity and failure to demonstrate any significant benefit to the public warrant a no vote.
Measure 60: Vote by mail	Would require that primary and general elections held in even-numbered years be vote by mail.	YES	Not only does mail voting save money, it is much more convenient for the bulk of the electorate than physically going to the polls. If this leads to more citizen participation in the political process, then it is a worthwhile experiment.
Measure 62: Campaign finance	Titled the Open and Fair Elections Act, this measure would require additional disclosure of campaign finance information and regulate certain contribution methods.	YES	This is a step toward making politicians more accountable to the populace they claim to serve.
Measure 63: Supermajority	Would require that measures that require a greater-than-majority vote receive at least that same percentage of votes to be valid.	YES	It makes sense for measures to be subject to the rules they propose.
Measure 64: Logging and pesticide use	Would restrict the size and number of trees that may be harvested, as well as the use of chemical pesticides and herbicides.	NO	While we agree the issue of forest sustainability is important and needs to be addressed, Measure 64 is overboard.
Measure 65: Administrative rules	Would create a way to review state agency administrative rules.	NO	Sometimes the most compelling reason to oppose a measure is the lack of compelling argument in favor of it. Such is the case with this measure. Measure 65 is too convoluted and wouldn't bring about any real change.
Measure 66: Lottery money	This proposal would require that 15 percent of state lottery money go to state parks and habitat protection.	NO	Once again, this is a worthy effort, but one we must oppose. Using lottery money this way means less for schools.
Measure 67: Medical marijuana	This initiative would allow those with debilitating medical conditions to grow and use a limited amount of marijuana to manage symptoms. Also establishes a permit system to identify those who would be exempt from existing criminal drug statutes.	YES	Those who are going to medicate themselves with marijuana will do so in spite of criminal law. Prosecuting these individuals is a waste of state time and money. The provisions of this measure are specific enough to refute claims that enacting it is akin to legalizing marijuana.

Candidate Endorsements

Incumbents favored by this year's editorial board

Governor

Gov. John Kitzhaber, Democrat

Kitzhaber's support of higher education issues definitely helps his case, but the lack of serious opposition is what puts him over the edge.

U.S. Senate

Sen. Ron Wyden, Democrat

Wyden has admirable stances on education, crime and the environment. His 17 years of Congressional experience give him a strong advantage over his opponent.

U.S. House: 4th District

Rep. Peter DeFazio, Democrat

Arguably Eugene's most beloved public official, DeFazio has that distinction for a reason. Strong support for higher education and a

wealth of experience earn our vote.

State Senator: 20th District

Susan Castillo, Democrat

While we admire the initiative of Republican challenger and University student Scott Austin, we believe the state would be better served by Castillo's leadership experience.

State Representative: 40th District

Floyd Prozanski, Democrat

Prozanski's advocacy on behalf of public education and strong stance on civil rights and anti-discrimination legislation make him the person for the job.

These endorsements represent the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.

Letters to the Editor

Emerald's position irrational

I must take issue with the Emerald's position on the Eugene parks and open space measure (ODE, Oct. 26). First of all voters should understand that Eugene has not passed a parks bond measure since before I was born in 1977. As such, the city has fallen behind in the purchase of parks and open spaces, especially when compared with similarly sized, and perhaps less-progressive, cities such as Corvallis and Beaverton.

Secondly, it should be noted that any parks district must balance the needs of all of its constituents. That being said, consider how large a percentage of Eugene's parks demand is for athletic facilities. It is neither fair nor realistic to expect the private sector to underwrite the construction of athletic facilities while the public foots the bill for more traditional "parks." Parks systems benefit the whole community and not just

the athletes.

Take a moment to observe the South Hills of Eugene. See those houses encroaching on the formerly green hillsides? This parks measure is about preserving water quality, preventing landslides and other environmental hazards and maintaining the natural surroundings that characterize Eugene — three crucial elements which your editorial managed not to include. The time to preserve those lands is now and voters should act accordingly.

"Sav[ing] the taxpayers a few bucks" is a weak argument for the rejection of a bond measure; an argument that reflects a lack of thought and effort. There was a time when the Emerald could be counted on as a voice of rational, progressive thought; it's a shame to see that time has passed.

Sean Williams
Music Education