

## Taxes

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with the largest tax breaks going to Oregon's wealthiest individual and corporate taxpayers.

Measure 8 would prohibit state spending from outpacing increases in Oregonians' incomes. If the measure passes, the state would be allowed to spend no more than 15 percent of the state's personal income. The state currently spends about 18 percent of personal income, meaning the measure would trim the projected 2001-2003 state budget by \$5.7 billion.

"We're concerned about all of the measures," said Oregon University System spokesman Bob Bruce, "but Measures 91 and 8 would have a significant fiscal impact, not only on the university system but also on the entire state."

Bruce said the impact on the university system would be the equivalent of losing funding for the state's four regional universities and one of its three major ones.

"That major of a change would make Oregon public universities less affordable, less accessible and certainly less cost-effective," Bruce said. "It's unthinkable."

But supporters of the measures argue that the tax reforms wouldn't constitute a cut in funding, but rather an overdue cessation of increased spending.

"Governments want to grow as fast as they can — they want to spend every dime they get their hands on," said Don McIntire, author of Measure 8. "When government increases spending faster than the economy rises, that's a recipe for disaster."

McIntire, who also wrote the 1992 Ballot Measure 5, which sliced property taxes, said giving the state a spending limit is the best way to instill fiscal discipline in government without forcing the Legislature to cut programs.

"Measure 8 would establish the state budget on citizens' ability to pay rather than on a state's ability to spend," he said. "We will cut out no services. What we will do is finally force our Legislature to do the right thing. To cut costs and give taxpayers more bang for the buck."

Measure 91, on the other hand, seeks to scale back government by reforming the state's income rather

than expenditure.

The Oregon Voters Pamphlet states that it is unclear when Measure 91 would go into effect. If the measure applies to the 2000 tax year, state income would be reduced by \$870 million this year. After the 2001-2002 tax year, state revenue would be cut by about a \$1 billion each year.

But taxpayers must make \$81,000 a year to benefit from the tax break, and those making less would actually lose money in the first few years after the measure's passage, according to a Legislative Revenue Office report.

Every biennium, the Legislature returns the state's surplus, called a "kicker," to taxpayers if tax collections exceeded projections by at least 2 percent. The tax cut Measure 91 proposes would wipe out that surplus, which constitutes \$282 million for personal taxpayers and \$34 million for corporations, according to the report.

Those making more than \$81,000 a year, however, would receive a large enough tax cut to offset the lost kicker revenue.

For this reason, opponents of the measure have called it a regressive tax cut.

"It takes the notion of progressive taxation and turns it over onto its head," Coney said.

Becky Miller of Oregon Taxpayers United doesn't consider that claim a criticism, however.

"I don't believe in progressive taxation," she said. "Progressive taxation ends up rewarding people for not achieving because they can kick back and get an easy ride."

A more regressive tax system would reward the industrious and create opportunities for the unemployed, Miller said.

"When people get a tax cut, they invest it, they buy more and they make more jobs for the middle class," she said. "It's pretty obvious when people have more money in their pockets, they spend more money and give it back to the economy."

A recent poll conducted by The Oregonian and KATU-TV in Portland found that 54 percent of Oregon voters support Measure 91 and 41 percent oppose it. About 40 percent of Oregonians supported Measure 8 and 46 percent were in opposition.

"It's not that people don't want to comply," she said. "They just don't know that the policies exist."

Giving the development pattern some "teeth" by making its guidelines enforceable may present the biggest challenge to the plan's success. Ambiguous wording in the developmental pattern was revised at the meeting and replaced with more specific language, and the committee discussed a system of incentives for those who strive to comply with the new standards.

Additionally, new construction projects on campus will be held to national sustainability standards set forth by the U.S. Green Building Council.

The planning commission also approved a letter to University President Dave Frohnmyer requesting funding for a new administrative staff position — a manager who would work with architects, faculty, user groups and all others involved in developmental projects on campus to ensure development pattern compliance.

"We need someone who can run in all the different circles on campus," said Livelybrooks.

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## Planning

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"The initial cost of implementing these guidelines may be higher, but the long-term savings are going to offset that," he said, adding that increased efficiency in energy use will be the primary reason for those savings.

Committee members raised and addressed several concerns about how to implement the plan effectively. One concern is a question of changing attitudes — getting people to think environmentally by default, rather than by force.

"The goal is to ask 'How can we become more sustainable?' rather than 'How sustainable have we become?'," said Christine Thompson, a planning associate with the University Planning Office and a CPC member.

Another major concern is simply bringing attention to the plan. Carole Daly, regional director for the University development in southern California and a CPC member, said there is a general lack of awareness.

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