

Oregonians would be wise to winterize

One summer's day, a grasshopper was hopping about, chirping and singing to its heart's content. An ant passed by, carrying with great toil an ear of corn to its nest.

"Why not play," said the grasshopper, "instead of toiling and mowing in that way?"

"I am laying up food for the winter," said the ant, "and recommend you do the same."

"Why bother about winter?" said the grasshopper. "We have plenty of food at present."

We all know the ending. When winter comes the grasshopper starves because of its short-sightedness.

Aesop's fable of the ant and the grasshopper reminds us of the tax measures on the November ballot. Measures 86, 91, 93 and 8 would all make unwise tax policy a part of the Oregon Constitution and threaten higher education funding. They treat our booming economy like the grasshopper: There's plenty of money right now, so let's cut taxes and limit the state's ability to plan and invest wisely in the future.

Well, guess what? As we saw from Monday's heavy rain, winter is coming. And if we tie our hands now, state services will suffer through the dreary, wet winter — when it comes.

Measure 86 enshrines the state's "kicker" law in the Constitution. The kicker law says that when actual taxes collected exceed the state's estimates, the extra taxes are returned to taxpayers. This can be a good thing; it acts as a check on the legislature so they don't underestimate and spend the extra money for special interest projects. But this is already the current law. If we write it into the state constitution, our legislators can't

react when the state needs extra funds. This is bad planning that takes our current boom for granted.

Measure 91 is appealing. Currently, Oregonians can only deduct \$3,000 of their federal tax liability from their state income taxes. Measure 91 would allow a deduction of the entire federal tax liability. Initially, this sounds fair. But this change cuts state revenues, to the tune of \$800 million a year, without offering any replacement. And the majority of the savings goes to large businesses, which have already benefited greatly as a result of our strong economy — and plenty of tax cuts in the last 20 years. According to the state's Legislative Revenue Office, in 1979, businesses shared the tax burden with individuals in Oregon equally. By 1998, businesses were only paying 39 percent of the state's bills. It isn't fair to hand successful corporations a big tax break at the expense of the state — especially at the expense of education. A good school system is crucial to our economy. Measure 91 is poor fiscal policy.

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Measure 93 treats politics incredibly naively. Sponsored by Bill Sizemore, the same man responsible for Measure 91 and a grasshopper of the highest order, Measure 93 would make voters approve all "new or increased taxes, fees or charges proposed by state and local governments, unless exempted." There are few exemptions. The vast majority of fee increases — like hairdresser license fees and photocopy charges at the county courthouse — would need to be approved by voters. Ahh, grasshopper, this is why we elect lawmakers. If we're that cynical about our representatives, then we had better vote for someone different or completely change our form of government. This constitutional amendment is foolish, and would tie the hands of government agencies to levy taxes and collect fees for the services they provide.

Measure 8 poses a real danger, by arbitrarily reducing

spending. It would limit the state's two-year spending plans to 15 percent of Oregonians' total personal income in the prior two years. Oregon currently spends about 18 percent of our prior personal income. This change would cut funding by nearly \$3 billion per year, some of which would have to come out of higher education. Given the current summer of abundance in Oregon, we should be thinking of investing some money in our future. If businesses operated on the same strict rule (this measure would also be written into our constitution, unchangeable by our lawmakers), major capital investments wouldn't occur. Oregon deserves investment in its future.

All of these measures treat taxpayers as though their only concern is simple greed about the size of their pay-

check. But most taxpayers aren't so concerned with reducing taxes. Recent polls conducted by The Center on Policy Attitudes, The Washington Post and ABC News show that only 20 percent of Americans want to cut taxes. The rest of us want to use our combined wealth to improve our country and save for later.

Measures 86, 91, 93 and 8 threaten the future of higher education and the future of our state. Vote no on these constitutional amendments that chirp and sing all summer long, without a thought for the cold, rainy winter ahead.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses can be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.



OCA condemns 'liberal dogma' in schools

GUEST COMMENTARY

Barry Dean Williams

The Oregon Daily Emerald (10/9) accused the Oregon Citizens Alliance of trying to rip Oregon apart again and said the previous Measure 9 subjected homosexuals to harassment, death threats and physical abuse. The biggest news story of that period, claiming harassment, death threats and physical abuse to a homosexual was proven to be false. The facts are that the Mabons' home was shot into, OCA members had their cars vandalized, pink triangles painted on their garage doors and yard signs stolen or vandalized.

Recently in California, homosexual activists destroyed more than 1,000 yard signs during the vote to defend traditional marriage. The "tolerance/diversity" crowd has cost the Boy Scouts of America \$3 million as it defended its right to have God in its oath and to set moral standards for its organization. Conservative speakers have been prevented from speaking at some universities. Attempts were made to censor a Jewish woman, defending biblical morality, from radio and TV.

Liberals/homosexuals seek to create revolutionary changes in our society and if you dare oppose them, they will demonize you as hateful, intolerant, narrow-minded, ignorant, divisive and diseased (homophobia). The only way to avoid these labels is to blindly submit to their dogma. This is not valuing tolerance and diversity. It is tyranny enforcing liberal dogma.

My dogma is already banned from the public schools. Measure 9 simply removes the promotion, encouragement and sanctioning of liberal dogma on homosexuality from the public schools. If you want to continue to have public schools, they will only survive if they focus their mission on those objectives on which there is broad consensus.

If we really value tolerance and diversity, then we should direct the full per-student share of the educational budget to parents through vouchers, paying for their choice of home-schooling, private, public or some combination, as long as their child scores appropriately each year on standardized testing, as home-schooled students already do.

Why not let the anarchists have their own educational approach as well as the liberal, conservative, homosexual, heterosexual, Amish, Christian, humanist, etc.? Liberals

won't accept this, because they want massive public institutions to turn us all into liberals, just like themselves. The Emerald suggested we err on the side of tolerance. Well, that is what it would look like and I am ready for it.

Measure 9 does not prevent HIV/AIDS education. Just teach objective facts. Teach that condoms don't work. Abortion is Planned Parenthood's backup plan and we have had to use the backup plan 30 million times. One-third of the siblings of University students are missing, murdered in the womb. Condoms are even less reliable for preventing disease and the backup plan is death. Thirty percent of HIV-free individuals using condoms with HIV-positive individuals will get HIV/AIDS (and die). The sexual revolution is over. Liberal sexuality will kill you. The baby boomers were wrong. Sex isn't free. The price of free sex was to send divorce and sexually transmitted disease rates off the chart and to abort 30 million children.

See the evidence at www.ocayeson9.com. Protect our children from dangerous and failed liberal dogma. Vote yes on Measure 9.

Barry Dean Williams is the Lane County director of the Oregon Citizens Alliance.

Letters to the editor

Vote yes on Measures 20-38, 20-39

On July 5, 2000, the Lane County Domestic Violence Council voted to support Measure 20-38, the Work Camps, Jails and Services Levy, and Measure 20-39, the Jail Improvements Bond.

The Council urges voters to vote yes on these measures because they will help keep victims of domestic violence and their children safe from batterers and stalkers. The measures will do this by:

- Increasing the number of slots at the Forest Work Camp and the jail's intake center, making more space available for abusers. This will mean that when domestic violence offenders are arrested, they can be held longer in the jail.

- Funding services for juveniles, many of whom grew up in violent homes. Studies show that without intervention, some of these youth will become batterers or victims themselves.

- Maintaining funding of existing public services, so that resources already in place will not have to be cut.

Please vote yes on Measures 20-38 and 20-39.

Emily Heilbrun
 coordinator

Lane County Domestic Violence Council