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A Measure, er, Measures of Reason

Today the Emerald editorial board presents its endorsements for all 26 of the state ballot measures. Many of these are critically important to education funding. Please think about these issues and vote. Watch for the Emerald's voters guide, a news supplement that will appear on Wednesday. On Thursday, we will offer our endorsements of the state and local candidates and the city and county ballot measures. Ballots must be returned by Tuesday, Nov. 7, at 5 p.m.



CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

Measure 83

YES: This measure allows veterans who served 210 days of active duty or in certain eligible operations later than 1976 to be included in the Veterans' Home Loan program. Currently, veterans who served after 1976 are not allowed the benefits of this program and they should be.



Measure 84

YES: In 1996, voters approved this constitutional amendment requiring the Legislature to provide money to local governments if the Legislature mandates programs or services for those local governments. In other words, if you tell a city or county to do something, pay for it. The 1996 measure required a review in 2000. It's still a good idea.



Measure 85

YES: In 1857, Oregon decided that in order to be a county, an area of land needed to be 400 square miles and have 1,200 inhabitants. It's now 143 years later. This amendment would update the requirement, allowing new counties to be formed with less than 400 square miles if more than 100,000 people inhabit the area.



Measure 86

YES: Makes the state's "kicker law" a part of the Oregon Constitution. The kicker law says that when state income exceeds the state's estimates, the extra money gets returned to the taxpayers. It works fine as a law, but it doesn't need to be added to the constitution. If our economy changes, our lawmakers need to have flexibility when dealing with taxes.



Measure 87

NO: Removes the "free expression" protection from sexually oriented businesses. Currently, if a locality wants to regulate where a sexually-oriented business is located, it can do so by showing actual or threatened harm. A business shouldn't be refused existence simply based on the content of what they sell. We should protect free expression.



Measure 88

NO: Increases the amount of federal income taxes that are deductible on Oregon income tax returns, and would reduce the amount of money the state has to spend on services like education and public safety. It would cost the state \$47 million in 2001-2002.



Measure 89

YES: Creates an investment fund from Oregon's share of the tobacco settlement to be used specifically for health, housing and transportation programs to benefit the most needy Oregonians without using the principal from the settlement. Let's use this free money for as many health-related causes as possible.

Measure 90

NO: Allows public utilities to raise rates in order to get a return on investments in utility property that is shut down. Essentially, Portland General Electric wants to raise electric rates to make money off of the closed Trojan nuclear plant. In 1998, the Oregon Court of Appeals ruled that PGE's plan violates Oregon law. Then the Legislature voted to change the law. Last year, more than 53,000 voters signed petitions to have the changed law put to a vote of the people. Sorry that nuclear power thing didn't work out, but no.



Measure 91

NO: Makes federal income taxes fully deductible on personal and corporate Oregon income tax returns. Would reduce state revenue by between \$800 million and \$1 billion, drastically reducing the state's ability to fund education and public safety.



Measure 92

NO: Requires organizations to get specific written authorization from employees before allowing those organizations to collect money through payroll deductions for political purposes. This hampers one group of people's ability to engage in the political process and is unfair to workers.



Measure 93

NO: Requires voters to approve nearly every tax and fee that any state agency implements. This unnecessarily ties the hands of state government to work efficiently and keep agencies running.



Measure 94

YES: Repeals the mandatory minimum sentencing requirements of Measure 11 and requires resentencing of criminals sentenced under Measure 11's minimums. Measure 11 has hijacked justice in Oregon, so we recommend repealing it. But Oregon needs to increase rehabilitation efforts for juveniles and increase penalties for violent crimes like rape.

