

Measure 17 aims to cut age requirement

The minimum age for a state senator or representative would be lowered to 18 if Ballot Measure 17 passes

Oregon votes 2002

Ken Paulman
Freelance Reporter

In Oregon, 18-year-olds can vote, pay taxes and enter into a binding legal contract. They can run for secretary of state, attorney general, state treasurer, and any number of local and municipal offices.

If students want to run for the state Legislature, however, they have to wait until they're 21.

Ballot Measure 17 seeks to change that. If the measure is passed, the Ore-

gon Constitution will be amended to lower the minimum age of a state senator or representative from 21 to 18.

Supporters of the measure say that a candidate's age should not be the sole indicator of their qualifications, and that the decision should be left to voters.

Measure 17 enjoys unusually widespread and bipartisan support, but at least one group opposes the measure.

"Voting — and being voted for — are two distinct things," said Dennis Tuuri of the Parents' Education Association. "It's not logical to equate voting with holding office."

The PEA, based in Canby, is a Christian political action committee. According to a statement on the group's Web site, "The Bible places tremendous emphasis on age, maturity and wisdom for those given re-

sponsibility to rule in society."

Tuuri said that society would not consider letting an 18-year-old run for governor or president, and that the Legislature should be held to an equally high standard. A candidate must be 30 to run for governor of Oregon and 35 to run for president.

"The people that make the laws are just as important as the people

that carry them out," he said.

While supporters acknowledge many 18-, 19-, and 20-year-olds may not be qualified to serve in the Legislature, there have been some notable exceptions.

Derrick Seaver, an 18-year-old high school senior, was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives in November 2000.

Seaver, now 20, has earned a reputation as a dedicated public servant and is highly regarded by his colleagues, according to an article in *The Columbus Dispatch*.

That same year, 19-year-old Jesse Laslovich won a House seat in Montana.

According to the Montana Kaimin, Laslovich, who was a University of Montana sophomore political science major at the time, took 65 per-

cent of the vote in a three-way primary, then cruised to victory unopposed in the general election.

Jake Oken-Berg, another young political hopeful and chair of the Yes on 17 Committee, was student body president of Pomona College in California before running unsuccessfully in this state for mayor of Portland at age 20. Oken-Berg said that at least 20 candidates between the ages of 18 and 21 have been elected to state legislatures nationwide.

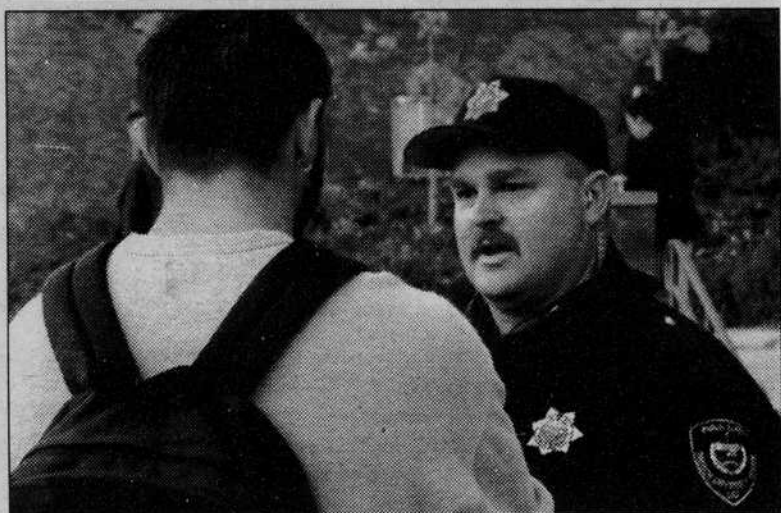
Oken-Berg said Measure 17 does not guarantee 18-year-olds will be elected, it merely gives them the right to run for office.

"If a candidate is not qualified, vote against them," he said.

Ken Paulman is a freelance writer for the Emerald.

"The people that make the laws are just as important as the people that carry them out."

Dennis Tuuri
Member of the Parents' Education Association



Mark McCambridge Emerald

Sgt. Lynn Brown of the Department of Public Safety answers questions about safe party procedures at the ASUO-hosted event.

Party safety

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suggestions for students dealing with authorities. He said students do not have to admit to committing a crime, but they should comply with the process by giving accurate information about their identity.

"Do not lie or give false information," he said. "Otherwise you're meat."

Complying with police officers also applies during riot situations, ASUO Legal Services Director Iona Koleszar said. She said if a riot is occurring, students wanting to return home have the legal obligation to comply with police authorities if asked to clear an area, whether that means finding an alternate route or going somewhere else.

Koleszar said the best advice she has for students this Halloween is to stay away from large parties that attract police attention.

EPD Sgt. Kris Martes said if students are unclear about what the officer wants from them, they should ask the officer to clarify whether they are being detained,

investigated or arrested.

"Students should choose their battles wisely," ASUO Legal Services staff attorney Laura Fine said. "There are different ways to change the way police conduct their business — other than arguing with them."

Martes said students who do not think they have been treated properly also can ask for the officer's badge number, and officers are required by law to share this information.

As for the Halloween response, DPS Lt. Herb Horner said all the department's officers will be on duty and handing out fliers to students.

The fliers will include information about events going on in the community and at the University. Horner said DPS wants to encourage students to partake in fun activities that do not involve alcohol or drugs.

"Alcohol is a mood-altering drug and it changes people's behavior, and that is why we are discouraging it," he said. "We just want everyone to be safe and have a good time."

Contact the reporter at daniellegillespie@dailyemerald.com.

Affirmative

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just aren't enough of them," said Padoongpatt. "And it isn't that the

"We want to increase awareness of the positive benefits of affirmative action."

Brenda Sifuentez
OSCC Board Chair

University isn't looking, it is just hard because students of color aren't put on the University track."

Participants also called politicians state-wide like governor John Kitzhaber and candidates Kevin Mannix and Ted Kulongoski.

"We don't expect them to return our call," Sifuentez said. "We simply want to make clear we support equal access for students and faculty, and that there will be a student voice heard if affirmative action is threatened."

Andrew Shipley is a freelance writer for the Emerald.

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