

Campaign finance reformers push for money limits

BY BRAD CAIN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SALEM — Advocates of campaign finance reform hope the publicity surrounding former Rep. Dan Doyle's alleged misuse of campaign money will boost their case for limits on political contributions.

The issue arose Tuesday when a Senate panel opened hearings on proposals to allow limits to be placed on the amount of money that can be contributed to candidates.

At the same time, a group of reform advocates filed a proposed initiative to take the issue to voters next year if the Legislature won't act.

The state Supreme Court has ruled that the Constitution's free speech protections prohibit capping donations, making Oregon one of five states with no limits.

But backers of contribution limits believe the public will demand change this year because of Doyle, the once-powerful Salem Republican who resigned from the House on Jan. 31.

Doyle left amid allegations that he illegally diverted more than \$60,000 in campaign money to personal use and submitted false financial reports about his November re-election race.

Testifying before the Senate Rules Committee, Norman Turrill from the League of Women Voters said the Doyle controversy has "raised doubts in the public's mind about trusting legislators with campaign funds."

"Unfortunately, this had led to questions about the ability of legislators to handle the state's budget," said Turrill, who is part of a coalition that filed the proposed initiative Tuesday.

Turrill and others said the cost of running for seats in the Legislature has skyrocketed, forcing lawmakers to spend a lot of their time trying to raise campaign dollars from special interests.

Sen. Kurt Schrader, D-Canby, called the controversy involving Doyle "a classic case that has just arisen." He supports limits both on campaign contributions and expenditures, saying big money interests far outweigh average citizens in the political process.

"I would argue that if campaign contributions are limited, there is less opportunity for members to use those funds for other purposes," he said.

But Sen. Ted Ferrioli, R-John Day, argued that the lack of contribution limits didn't come into play in Doyle's alleged misconduct.

"The tragedy playing out in the House will be dealt with under existing statutes," Ferrioli said.

Voters in 1994 overwhelmingly passed a law to impose limits on campaign donations, but in 1997 the Supreme Court overturned the referendum.

The court said that putting a cap on how much individuals or groups can donate violates their right to freedom of expression, a position supported by the American Civil Liberties Union.

SPRUCING UP FOR SPRING



LAUREN WIMER | SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

Facilities Services landscape designer Jane Brubaker, foreground, and senior religious studies student Angela Buxton clean a rose garden adjacent to Johnson Hall on Tuesday afternoon.

Drinking coffee may help protect against liver cancer

BY RANDOLPH E. SCHMID
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — That hot cup of coffee may do more than just provide a tasty energy boost. It might also help prevent the most common type of liver cancer.

A study of more than 90,000 Japanese found that people who drank coffee daily or nearly every day had half the liver cancer risk of those who never drank coffee.

The American Cancer Society estimates that 18,920 new cases of liver cancer were diagnosed in the United States last year and some 14,270

people died of the illness. Causes include hepatitis, cirrhosis, excess alcohol consumption and diseases causing chronic inflammation of the liver.

Animal studies have suggested a protective association of coffee with liver cancer, so the research team led by Monami Inoue of the National Cancer Center in Tokyo analyzed a 10-year public health study to determine coffee use by people diagnosed with liver cancer and people who did not have cancer.

They found the likely occurrence of liver cancer in people who never or almost never drank coffee was 547.2 cases per 100,000 people over 10 years.

But for people who drank coffee daily, the risk was 214.6 cases per 100,000, the researchers report in this week's issue of the Journal of the National Cancer Institute.

They found the protective effect occurred in people who drank one to two cups of coffee a day and increased at three to four cups. They were unable to compare the effect of regular and decaffeinated coffee, however, because decaf is rarely consumed in Japan.

It's the caffeine in coffee that makes some people nervous, and it has been shown in other studies to prompt mental alertness in many people. Some

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