

# Will Oregon voters pass tobacco, vape tax?

## Measure 108 seeks \$2 per pack, \$1 per cigar

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Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Backers of Measure 108 hope broad, bipartisan support and a well-funded campaign will push the effort to increase taxes on cigarettes and create a tax on vapes to victory in November.

Supporters of the measure say it can save thousands of lives in a state where people pay more than a billion dollars a year in smoking-related healthcare costs.

Opponents say the tax has a disproportionate impact on low-income smokers and will hurt small businesses.

A "yes" vote increases the cigarette tax by \$2 per pack, increases the cap on cigar taxes to \$1 per cigar and establishes a tax on nicotine inhalant delivery systems, such as e-cigarettes and vaping products — which are not currently taxed. The funds from the tax increase would be used for public health programs

including smoking prevention and cessation programs.

### Returning after failed effort

The ballot measure, which was referred to voters by state lawmakers at the request of Gov. Kate Brown for the Oregon Health Authority, is the first serious attempt at raising tobacco taxes since 2007.

Tobacco interests outspoken proponents of the tobacco tax in 2007 by about \$8 million, according to reporting from Oregon Public Broadcasting.

Voters shot down the 2007 proposed tax hike, which would have funded uninsured children through the Healthy Kids Program, with the majority in every county except Multnomah County voting against it.

The Statesman Journal reported in 2007 that "tobacco companies demonstrated their muscle in a decisive \$12 million ad campaign."

At the time, it was the most expensive ballot measure campaign in Oregon history.

### \$13 million in support

This time around, proponents of the tobacco tax increase have come prepared with a stocked war chest.

According to Oregon Secretary of State campaign finance records, the Yes for a Healthy Future/Oregonians for a Smoke Free Tomorrow political action committee has collected \$13.1 million in campaign contributions, with the bulk of the money coming from hospitals like Providence Health & Services, Legacy Health System, PeaceHealth, Kaiser Permanente and Salem Health.

The measure has gained widespread support from more than 200 organizations and supporters like the American Heart Association, the Heart Association, the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems, the NAACP and several chambers of commerce.

No formal political action committee opposing the measure has been filed with the Oregon Secretary of State's Office.

"We haven't seen Big Tobacco or the tobacco

lobby come in yet," said Stephanie Vandehey, communications director for Yes for a Healthy Future. "What we've known from past campaigns is they usually come in pretty late. They have deep pockets and they could come in and within 24 hours drop \$30 million."

Vandehey pointed to a survey of 1,300 likely voters earlier this summer that indicated strong, bipartisan support for the measure. Of those surveyed, 68% said they support the measure.

That widespread support might have scared off Big Tobacco, she said.

### Impact to consumers, businesses

The Taxpayers Association of Oregon leaders, whose political action committee advocates for lower taxes, submitted a voter statement opposing the measure.

Association leaders said the tax would hurt low-income consumers the most. They also argued the tax would hurt local neighborhood businesses selling tobacco and vapes, and drive cus-

tomers to use online companies.

They said Oregon shouldn't be raising taxes during a pandemic and worldwide recession.

The ballot measure would increase the cost of a pack of cigarettes from \$1.33 to \$3.33 and would also add a 65% tax for electronic cigarettes.

The hike would bring Oregon more into line with California and Washington when it comes to the cost of cigarettes.

Projected new annual revenue from increasing the cigarette tax by \$2 per pack is \$134.86 million.

### 8,000 deaths a year

Vandehey said smoking is the number one cause of preventable death in Oregon and a huge public health concern.

"We really all pay the price for that," she said. "(Oregonians) pay \$1.5 (a billion a year) in smoking-related health care costs."

Oregon Vital Statistics data indicates smoking leads to nearly 8,000 deaths per year.

An analysis of the measure by the Cam-

paign for Tobacco-Free Kids, Tobacconomics and the American Cancer Society Action Network predicted the tax could prevent nearly 12,000 premature deaths and lead to almost 30,000 current smokers quitting.

Vandehey said people are shocked when they find out vapes are not currently taxed, especially in the midst of a "youth vaping epidemic."

According to Oregon Health Authority data, youth vaping increased by 80% from 2017 to 2019.

Right now, one in four high schoolers in Oregon report vaping. And teens who vape are three times more likely to start smoking cigarettes, according to national research.

With the pandemic nixing traditional campaign activities like canvassing and door-knocking, the Yes on 108 campaign has taken to social media, YouTube, television ads, phone banking and mailers.

All money collected from the vape and tobacco taxes will be dedicated to the Oregon Health Plan, smoking prevention and programs to help people quit.

"We're really trying to get across that with Measure 108, we can reduce youth vaping, we can save lives and we can actually reduce the cost of health care," Vandehey said.

*This story includes reporting from the Associated Press*

*For questions, comments and news tips, email reporter Whitney Woodworth at wwoodworth@statesmanjournal.com, call 503-910-6616 or follow on Twitter @wwoodworth*

## Obituaries

### Lauretta Patricia (Pat) Schroeder

**MOUNT ANGEL** - Pat was born August 14, 1922 in Antigo, Wisconsin to James and Loretta McGrath. She was the youngest of six children. She graduated from Antigo High School in 1940 and finished secretarial training at Antigo Vocation School in 1941. Pat moved to Clintonville, WI and worked for Clintonville Transfer for four years. In 1946 she married Willis Schroeder and a year later they moved to Tillamook, Oregon with their first child. Eventually, Pat's sister Eugenia McGrath joined them. During the next seven years Pat worked at Thornton and Johnson Attorneys and had three more children. In 1954 with four children, the family moved to Monmouth, OR. Pat worked at Central High School in Independence, OR until 1969 and then for Oregon College of Education (now WOU) in Monmouth until 1987.

Willis (Bill) Schroeder died May 22, 1976. He was only 54 years old. Pat was then the hub of her family.

She lived in Monmouth until 2004 where she was active in Meals on Wheels and the Monmouth Independence Community Arts Association. During all of her time in Monmouth Pat was part of St. Patrick Catholic Church and its Altar Society in Independence. In 2004 she moved to the Towers and later to Providence Benedictine Orchard House in Mt Angel, OR.

Pat had many good friends with whom she traveled. She visited Ireland, which was the home of her ancestors, and took many trips around the US. She was a prolific painter and had an art room in her house. She could cut hair. She could decorate cakes into princesses, locomotives and Easter bunnies. She enjoyed golf and belonged to the Oak Knoll Ladies Golf Club. She was also part of many community and church events. She liked swimming and cross-country skiing.

People were drawn to Pat by her kindness and friendliness. Everywhere she went she made friends, both young and old.

Her husband and all of her sisters and brothers preceded her in death.

She is survived by her children: Kathleen Ranning (Bruce), Barbara Townsend (Dick), Karen Savage (Tom), and Jim Schroeder (Marie). Grandson Christopher Dunn (Brenda) and Granddaughter Erica Nelson (Steve).

Pat was fortunate to have step-grandchildren: Lucas Townsend (Ana), Matt Townsend (Yan), and Kendall Dunning (James). Combining the families she is survived by seven great-grandchildren.

The family wishes to thank the staff at Orchard House, her doctor Dan Hyde, and the staff at Willamette Valley Hospice for their dedicated care.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Western Oregon University Foundation for Scholarships, or Willamette Valley Hospice. Farnstrom Mortuary is caring for the family. Memories at FarnstromMortuary.com.



### Patricia Ann Craig

**MT. ANGEL** - In the early morning hours of Saturday October 10th, Patricia Ann Craig passed away peacefully in her home surrounded by loved ones. Patricia (Pat) was born on February 17th, 1941 in Seminole, Oklahoma, and moved to Oregon as an adolescent, where she was part of the first graduating class of North Eugene High School.

While working as an attendant on a traveling bus route, she met a handsome driver named Eddie Dean Craig; Patricia would sit on the steps next to Eddie and talk any chance she could, and the two quickly fell in love. In the Spring of 1963, Eddie and Pat became husband and wife, and later that year they welcomed their first son Dean. Over the next several years, their family grew as they were blessed with a daughter Rozanne and another son Chris. After living in the Portland area, they moved their family to the Mt. Angel area in 1976, where they built a loving community of friends and family. It is here where they spent their fondest years passing time at Tiny's Tavern; playing Dominoes and Cribbage around the kitchen table; watching the local softball league play at Ebner park; participating in the annual Christmas caroling hayride; attending the Oktoberfest; and enjoying large family gatherings.

The thing that Patricia valued most in life was her family--particularly their work ethic, strong bond, and the love they had for each other. She had an unwavering support for her loved ones and was constantly helping them see their own potential, even when they didn't. Anyone who visited with Pat will feel better about themselves and truly loved. Pat took pride in never forgetting someone's birthday and always made sure to make them feel special. Pat had a knack for making a person feel as though they were the most important person in the room, and never let anyone leave her home without receiving one of her patented hugs. Pat's love and support led her to be referred to as simply "Granny" even by those who weren't her family, and her genuine warmth and support made her little corner of the world a happier place.

Patricia is preceded in death by her husband Eddie, mother Mary, brother Bill, and daughter-in-law Susan. She is survived by her children Dean (Jodi), Rozanne and Chris, ten grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren. An intimate service was held at Calvary Cemetery in Mt. Angel to honor and celebrate her life. In lieu of flowers or donations, the family asks that you honor her memory by enjoying a family meal at the table of chicken and dumplings.

## Miller

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He got out of the cab of the pickup and walked back to release the tie-downs on the small aluminum craft before backing down.

The unattended truck either popped out of park or slipped out of gear and began rolling backward down the ramp.

The driver ran frantically around to get in the cab, but the water was halfway up the door, and the pressure kept it from opening.

By the time he was able to reef it open, the water was up to the bottom of the windows.

He slogged into the cab behind the wheel and frantically tried turning the key, without success, as the truck settled in the shallows with the warm water of the gulf just starting to lap over the top of the hood.

The boat struggling mightily, and successfully, to stay afloat with the weight of the trailer pulling it down.

We were agog, except for one wag who I assume ended up as a stand-up comic.

As the guy was fruitlessly turning the key amid the flotsam bobbing inside the cab, angler came up with one of the best punch lines in memory.

Wait for it.

He cupped his hand to his mouth and yelled at the guy, "I think the engine might be flooded."

**FISHING QUOTE OF THE WEEK:** "About 95 percent of the stuff that you find in tackle stores is designed to catch anglers, not fish" - Origin unknown, but said by many.

Contact Henry via email at HenryMillerSJ@gmail.com





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