

MEASURE 13!!!

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local news

This is it

The campaign is "winnable," but there is still work to do

by Inga Sorensen

Campaign officials heading up the effort to defeat Ballot Measure 13 say people who want to join them in that effort still have ample opportunities to do so—even with four days left before the election.

"We'd like to have at least 500 volunteers meet us at the No on 13 field office [329 NW Broadway in Portland] at 10 am on Nov. 5 to help us canvass the inner core of Portland," explains No on 13 campaign manager Julie Davis. "That's where our support is the most solid, so we need to ensure that people remember to vote and realize how necessary it is that they do."

State officials estimate 75 percent of voters will participate in the Nov. 8 election. Political observers say the lower the turnout, the more conservative campaigns will be favored. An estimated 85 percent of Oregon voters turned out for the 1992 November election. More than 800,000 voted against Ballot Measure 9, while nearly 640,000 voters favored it.

"While I can tell you this campaign is certainly winnable, we still are at some risk," says Davis, adding those who cannot actively campaign against Ballot Measure 13 must make sure to vote against it.

"When you get into the polling booth, make Measure 13 the first thing you vote on," she says. In addition to Ballot Measure 13, voters will decide the fate of at least 16 other initiatives, as well as gubernatorial and congressional races. "We don't want to run into situations where somebody gets into the polling booth but feels rushed because they have to pick up the kids at school, so they wind up skipping the issues further down the ballot. Go first to Measure 13 and work from there," urges Davis.

Oregon's bishops recently issued a statement in which they noted their "lack of support for Measure 13."

That language is in sharp contrast to the vigorous denunciations that came from the bishops two years ago in relation to Ballot Measure 9.

In their most recent statement, Archbishop William Levada and Bishop Thomas Connolly asked citizens to avoid the "divisiveness and polarization which too often are the residue of political battles," and said that although Ballot Measure 13 supporters have "legitimate objectives," those objectives should not be pursued through a constitutional amendment.

They added: "As Catholic bishops we would be remiss in the eyes of many were we not to reiterate the constant teaching of the Judeo-Christian tradition that homosexuality is contrary to God's law, reflected in the love of man and woman in the union of marriage, which is itself the foundation of family life, the basic unit of human society. Laws which are based upon and foster the natural human institutions of marriage and family are important for promoting the common good of society, and

should not be called discriminatory against homosexuals."

For her part, Davis says No on 13 will "take whatever support we can get."

In related news, the pastor of Portland's Immanuel Lutheran Church admits it was "inappropriate" for a school administrator to send "Yes on 13" letters home with the 35 preschool and kindergarten children who attend classes there.

"I guess I really don't think it is appropriate that we did that," says Sid Johnson, Immanuel's pastor for 12 years. "I guess our school administrator is really passionate about this issue and that's why she did this.... I wasn't aware that she was going to do this [and] we'll try to ensure it doesn't happen

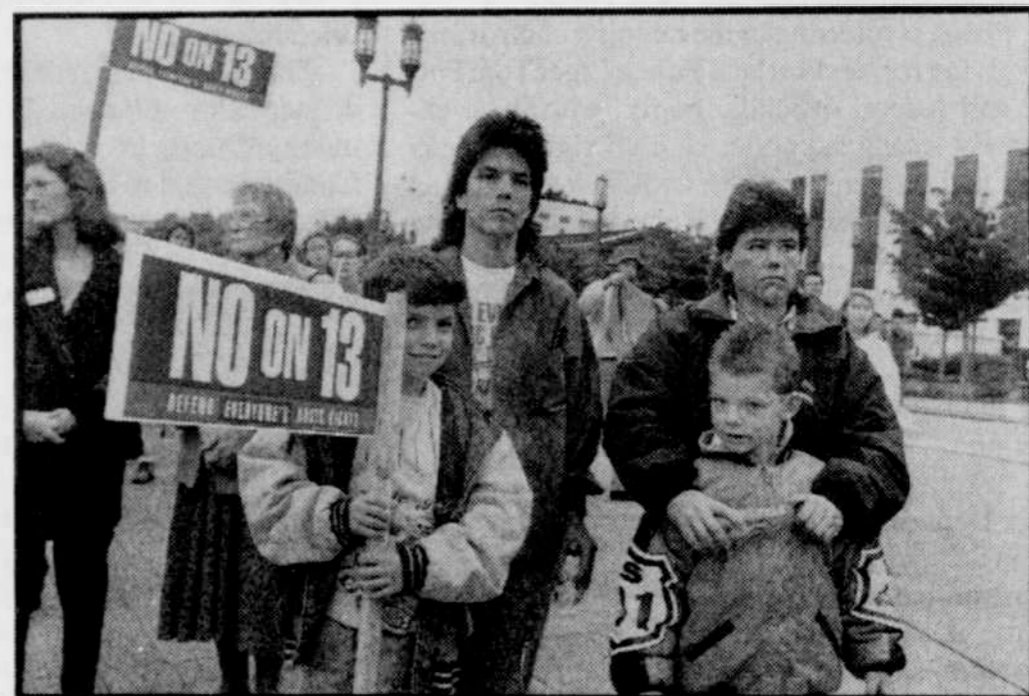


PHOTO BY LINDA KLEVER

Families stand up against Ballot Measure 13. Pictured (L to R): Brenda LeBlanc, Wendy O'Leary, Christopher Haase, Kenny Haase.

again." Johnson says Immanuel Lutheran Church has not taken a formal position on Ballot Measure 13.

The letter, which was produced by the Colorado-based Focus on the Family, a national conservative organization, urges Oregonians to vote yes on Ballot Measure 13, which the group incorrectly calls the "Stop Special Rights Initiative."

In the letter, Focus on the Family president James Dobson states: "The battle over special rights for those who participate in aberrant sexual

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behaviors has come to the state of Oregon. As a resident of Colorado I speak from experience when I say that it's a crucial battle, a strategic battle, a battle that will most certainly

be hard fought and not easily won.... [Ballot Measure 13] is constitutionally sound, pro-family in intent, and designed to protect the public from the serious threat posed by the radical 'gay rights' movement. As such, it deserves the solid support of the Christian community."

In addition to Ballot Measure 13, Dobson urges Oregonians to support Ballot Measure 19, an initiative dealing with obscenity and censorship issues, and reject Ballot Measure 16, which would allow for doctor-assisted suicides.

Finally, No on 13's Davis welcomes the public to a "No on 13 Election Night Victory Party" beginning at 8 pm at Portland's Montgomery Park, 2701 NW Vaughn St. The committee is also sponsoring a post-election community summit Nov. 15 at the Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1624 NE Hancock St., in Portland. Post-election meetings will also be held in Salem, Eugene, Corvallis, Bend and Medford. For more information, call No on 13 at (503) 222-6151.