

...Oregon ballot measures

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general fund revenue on schools, 13 percent on public safety and most of the remainder serving children, seniors, and the disabled. Thus, this measure could cut spending on those things — in order that higher-income earners could pay less taxes. Voters turned this down by a substantial margin in 2000.

MEASURE 60: Teacher “classroom performance,” not seniority, determines pay raises. Pay for performance might work in real estate, one of Sizemore’s side businesses. But do you want to pay police officers for performance? In areas where crime is a problem, is that because police are incompetent and need to be replaced? Most people would say that’s ridiculous, yet Sizemore thinks it’s teachers who are to blame when students fail. Voters rejected this measure in 2000. This time, Sizemore has made it clear teachers would be banned from receiving even cost-of-living increases. All raises of any kind would have to be based on classroom performance, which the measure doesn’t define. To make that work would require that districts develop new quantitative methods of evaluating all teachers. That



This union button is from an unsuccessful “pay-check deception” ballot measure that Bill Sizemore sponsored in 1998. The button is back in vogue 10 years later, only this Sizemore Measure 59 deals with making federal taxes fully deductible from Oregon tax returns.

could include more standardized testing, at an official cost estimate of \$30 million to \$60 million a year. Or it could include trained classroom evaluators, at a similar cost. Currently, teacher salaries are set through collective bargaining agreements negotiated between each local union chapter and the local school administrators. Most

contracts have a single salary schedule with pay grades that reflect experience in the classroom and educational attainment. Such a schedule is very predictable and helps districts budget. If teachers are paid solely by how well students perform — with no allowances for differences in income, home life, and parental education and involvement — good teachers would likely leave low-income schools for more affluent schools that test better. Sizemore’s own kids were mostly private schooled, so this measure may be less about improving public schools than wrecking them to make private schools more attractive — and to punish public school teachers and their unions. Newly-formed Parents & Teachers Know Better PAC, backed by PTAs, school employees unions, and groups like Stand for Children, will campaign against this measure, and against Measure 58.

MEASURE 61: Mandatory minimum sentences for theft, identity theft, forgery, drug crimes and burglary. In 1994, voters passed Measure 11, which spelled out minimum sentences for violent crime. The measure led to new prison construction and increased rates of incarceration. Now Measure

11’s sponsor, Kevin Mannix, is back with a measure applying a similar approach to property and drug crimes. Offenses like burglary, identity theft, or making or delivering methamphetamine near a school would get minimum three-year sentences. The state prison population is 13,600 now. According to the official estimate, Meas-

ure 61 would add 4,000 to 6,000 more, at an additional cost of \$161 million to \$274 million a year — plus close to \$2 billion over two decades to build and finance new prison construction. And the union representing most corrections officers is opposed to it. Mary Botkin, lobbyist for AFSCME, says

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Labor Day Greetings

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