

Washington unions' top priority is Inslee for governor

Voters will also find a medley of initiatives on their general election ballots this year

Washington voters have big decisions to make this year, including who will be the next governor, whether to hinder state lawmakers' power to tax, whether to allow charter schools, and whether to legalize marijuana and same-sex marriage.

For the Washington State Labor Council (WSLC), AFL-CIO, the top priority is the governor's race, which has Democratic Congressman Jay Inslee facing off against Republican attorney general Rob McKenna.

"In states around the country," says WSLC publications director David Groves, governors' offices "seem to be the focal point of attack to take away union members' rights and blame pub-

lic sector workers for the global economic downturn."

Polls show the Inslee-McKenna race to be close, though Inslee is leading. That, Groves says, underscores the importance of the "ground game" — people-to-people get-out-the-vote efforts.

Inslee, like the rest of Washington's Congressional delegation, has been a supporter of free trade agreements that labor opposes. But otherwise, Inslee has a pro-labor voting record: The national AFL-CIO says he has a lifetime rating of 89 percent.

McKenna, on the other hand, has been on the opposite side of labor on most issues. As attorney general, he went to court to block a 12 cent minimum wage increase, a suit that was summarily dismissed by the court.

"We think that's a pretty good indication of how he would look at the issue as governor," Groves said.

McKenna also has been a big oppo-

nent of the health reform known as Obamacare. As attorney general, he joined the multi-state lawsuit against the law, which mostly lost at the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court did rule, however, that states can opt out of the law's requirement that they expand Medicaid coverage to everyone under 133 percent of the poverty level, and McKenna would opt out as governor. McKenna has said he's no Scott Walker (the Wisconsin governor who stripped public employees of all meaningful union rights), but he's also told supporters that public employee unions are dangerous. He's said he wants to change the law to reduce state employee union rights to negotiate over wages and benefits.

WSLC is also prioritizing the statewide race to replace McKenna as attorney general. There, Democrat Bob Ferguson has labor's endorsement against Republican Reagan Dunn. Both are current members of the King

County Council, and have a history of being on opposite sides of issues. Dunn, named for Ronald Reagan, is the son of former Republican Congresswoman Jennifer Dunn. On the King County Council, Dunn voted against a resolution to beef up enforcement of the requirement to pay the prevailing wage on public construction projects — a key issue for building trades unions.

Washington voters once again will find a medley of initiatives on their general election ballots this year. WSLC is opposing measures on taxation and charter schools, and supporting measures on same-sex marriage and marijuana legalization:

- Longtime union foe and ballot measure entrepreneur Tim Eyman is back with a biennial measure to limit the state ability to tax. **Measure I-1185** would extend the requirement that any bill to eliminate tax breaks or raise taxes must have a two-thirds majority in both legislative houses to pass — or go to voters for approval. The requirement already exists, but the state Constitution allows lawmakers to amend voter-passed laws two years after passage, so Eyman is returning it to the

ballot every two years. In 2010 it passed by 64 percent. This year, his initiative campaign received heavy financial backing from the oil and alcohol industries. The problem, says Groves, it only takes a simple majority to pass a tax break, but a two thirds majority to repeal it. The law is currently facing a court challenge: A King County judge ruled in May that it violates the state Constitution, and the state Supreme Court heard the case this month. Labor opposes the measure.

"All it takes is this tiny minority of 17 senators in one legislative branch of state government to tie the Legislature's hands," Groves said, "but nowhere in the state Constitution does it say anything about supermajority votes, except when amending the Constitution."

- **I-1240**, co-sponsored by the Oregon-headquartered group Stand for Children, would authorize up to 40 public charter schools. Washington voters have rejected charter school initiatives three times before, in 1996, 2000, and 2004, but charter school supporters keep coming back. WSLC says the measure would siphon millions of dollars out of existing public schools,

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2012 Endorsements

LEGISLATURE

17TH DISTRICT: Senate: **TIM PROBST**
House #1: **MONICA STONIER**
House #2: **JIM GIZZI**

18TH DISTRICT:
House #2: **DAVID SHEHORN**

49TH DISTRICT: Senate: **ANNETTE CLEVELAND**
House #1: **SHARON WYLIE**
House #2: **JIM MOELLER**

U.S. SENATE

MARIA Cantwell

U.S. HOUSE

OPPOSE: JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER

STATEWIDE

Governor — **JAY INSLEE**

Lt. Governor — **BRAD OWEN**

Secretary of State — **KATHLEEN DREW**

Attorney General — **BOB FERGUSON**

Insurance Commissioner —
MIKE KREIDLER

Public Lands Commissioner —
PETER GOLDMARK

(Paid for and authorized by the Southwest Washington Central Labor Council.)



CLARK COUNTY

Commissioner Dist 1: **JOE TANNER**

Commissioner Dist 2:
OPPOSE: DAVID MADORE

U.S. PRESIDENT

BARACK OBAMA

SUPREME COURT

Position 9: **SHERYL GORDON McCLOUD**

BALLOT MEASURES

Yes on Referendum 74:
Marriage Equality Act allowing same-sex couples to marry.

Yes on Initiative 502:
Marijuana reform that decriminalizes possession of small amounts of regulated marijuana and taxes it.

No on 1240:
Legalizing taxpayer-funded private for-profit charter schools, which would divert funds from public schools.

No on 1185:
Tim Eyman "minority rule" measure that requires two-thirds super-majority to repeal special interest tax breaks or raise taxes.

DON'T FORGET TO VOTE MARY NOLAN FOR CITY COUNCIL

PROUDLY ENDORSED BY:

Portland Firefighters Association
IBEW Local 48
AFSCME Local 189, Local 328, Council 75
SEIU Local 49
ILWU Local 8 and Oregon State Council
Portland Police Association
Columbia Pacific Building Trades
Roofers Local 49
Sheet Metal Workers Local 16
Carpenters Local 156
Teamsters Joint Council 37
Painters & Allied Trades District Co. 5
Laborers Local 320
Operating Engineers Local 701
Laborers Local 296, Local 320 and District Council



With a record of protecting economic fairness and advancing family-wage jobs.

(Paid for and authorized by Mary Nolan for City Council)