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...Ballot measures around the nation

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South Dakota, unions backed an initiative that would have created an end-run around the state's "right-to-work" law, by allowing unions to charge non-members for services, but it was defeated by nearly 4-1.

Taxing the rich and corporations

Oregon's Measure 97 — a 2.5 percent gross receipts tax on corporate sales over \$25 million — went down to defeat. But Californians voted to increase the personal income tax on incomes over \$250,000, and Mainers approved a 3 percent tax on household income over \$200,000 to fund K-12 schools.

Drug prices and single payer

After drug companies spent \$109 million to oppose it, a California measure requiring state agencies to pay the same as the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for drugs was defeated 54-46. And in Colorado, a ballot measure to set up a single payer health care system went down spectacularly, 79-21. But in Ashland, Oregon, voters approved a measure encouraging the 2017 Legislature to

move forward with a system of comprehensive health care for all Oregon residents.

Money out of politics

In its 2010 *Citizens United* decision, the U.S. Supreme Court eliminated limits on independent expenditures for political candidates. This year, voters in Washington and California passed measures calling for a federal constitutional amendment to overturn that ruling. The Washington measure declares that constitutional rights belong only to individuals, not corporations.

Marijuana legalization

It was a breakthrough year for marijuana legalization. Voters in California, Maine, Massachusetts and Nevada legalized recreational marijuana, and voters in Arkansas, Florida, Montana, and North Dakota approved measures allowing medical marijuana. The only marijuana measure to fail this year was in Arizona. Unions have mostly been neutral on the measures, except United Food and Commercial Workers, which supports legalization and represents some workers in the

cannabis industry.

Electricity deregulation

Remember Enron? Apparently voters in Nevada don't. Ignoring appeals from the Nevada AFL-CIO, IBEW Local 1245, and Culinary Local 226, Nevadans approved a constitutional change that removes all limits on what electricity providers can charge.

Leave homecare workers alone

Washingtonians approved a measure sponsored by SEIU 775, the union that represents state-paid homecare workers, to exempt from public disclosure the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of in-home caregivers and the clients they serve. Canvassers working for the anti-union Freedom Foundation were knocking on their doors to talk them into dropping the union. The measure also increases civil penalties on those who defraud senior citizens and other vulnerable people.

Carbon tax

Washingtonians rejected a measure for a carbon emission tax. The measure was opposed by labor because rather than use

the funds to build clean energy infrastructure and increase conservation, it would have lowered business taxes and resulted in a \$100 million a year cut to the state budget.

Oregon's 2 million voter turnout breaks record

Oregon voters returned a record number of ballots in the Nov. 8 general election, breaking 2 million votes, the Oregon Secretary of State reported.

The 2.02 million ballots returned in the recent election beats the previous record, which was 1.84 million ballots returned for the 2008 general election.

The ballot return figure accounts for 78.9 percent of all ballots mailed to voters who were eligible to vote in this election.

Of the 2 million-plus ballots cast statewide, 28,322 ballots are being challenged and reviewed for issues like a missing signature or a signature that doesn't match the registration record.

Oregon's new Motor Voter program registered 230,000 voters for the general election, Secretary of State Jeanne P. Atkins said.

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Presents From Partners Children's Holiday Party is the premier cooperative effort among the union trades. During the event the Credit Union sponsors the Parents Room where children select presents for their parents or caregivers. Help us bring joy by making a donation!

- * **Bring an unwrapped gift for a man or woman to the Credit Union (suggested value of \$10)**
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POSITION OPEN Executive Director

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