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... Ballot Measures

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NO: Measure 104 is anti-democracy.

Democracy is about majority rule, but in Oregon, a long-ago ballot measure established rule by minority when it comes to one subject: the tax revenue the state needs to pay for everything it does, from schools to public safety to caring for disabled seniors. Thanks to Ballot Measure 25, which passed by 54 percent in a May primary election in 1996, Oregon lawmakers can lower taxes by a simple majority vote, but must have a 2/3 supermajority to raise them. That goes a long way to explain why Oregon now has one of the shortest school years in the country — and the nation's lowest overall tax burden on corporations. Measure 104 would make that even worse. If it passes, not only will it take a 2/3 supermajority to raise taxes on corporations and the rich, but also to reduce or eliminate special interest tax loopholes. Those tax breaks may be passed with the best of intentions, and some of them may accomplish what they set out to. But lawmakers often find that the jobs that the tax breaks are supposed to incentivize never materialize, or that the cost in lost revenue is higher than anticipated. For example, a few years ago state lawmakers changed a tax law to incentivize Google to install fiber, but

Google never came, and Comcast and Centurylink took advantage of the tax break without doing anything new. Measure 104 would make it harder to repeal wasteful tax breaks like that.

NO: Measure 105 would repeal a 1987 state law that bars state and local law enforcement officers from apprehending people SOLELY on suspicion that they violated federal immigration law. Back then, the law passed with support from both parties, in response to racial profiling by police, like a case in which Polk County sheriffs demanded that a U.S. citizen of Mexican descent prove he was in the United States legally. Under the law, local police are still arresting immigrants if they commit crimes. But Oregonians can't be stopped, detained or interrogated just because someone thinks they might be an undocumented immigrant.

NO: Measure 106 would amend the Oregon Constitution to prohibit public funds from being spent on abortions. It would impact not just the 271,833 women of reproductive age who are enrolled in the Medicaid-funded Oregon Health Plan, but also the 77,344 women who get health insurance as a public employee benefit. The majority of those are union members, and those are benefits they bargained for.



METRO-ONLY

YES: Measure 26-199 is long overdue.

In polls, Portland metro residents name homelessness and a lack of affordable housing among their top concerns. Measure 26-199, a \$653 million regional housing bond, would make a serious dent in the problem. At a cost to the average homeowner of \$5 per month, it would pay to build or renovate affordable housing for low-income families, seniors, veterans and people with disabilities, up to 12,000 people in all. [Bonus: It would also mean union construction jobs!]

PORTLAND-ONLY

YES: Measure 26-201, sponsored by a coalition of community groups, would require retailers that have over \$1 billion in revenue to pay a 1 percent surcharge on their Portland revenues — to fund clean renewable energy projects and job training. Sales of

groceries, medicine, and health services would be excluded from the tax. About three-fourths of the estimated \$30 million a year in revenue would pay for projects like rooftop solar installations, urban tree planting, and energy efficiency upgrades in affordable housing complexes, while about a fourth would pay for job training so that women, people of color, people with disabilities, and the chronically underemployed could benefit from the jobs created by the measure.

WASHINGTON STATE

YES: I-940 requires that police be trained for violence de-escalation, mental health, and first aid. It also removes legal immunity, adopts a standard of an objectively reasonable response to a situation, and requires independent investigations of police use of deadly force.

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CORRECTION:
In the Oregon Union Election Guide in our Oct. 5 issue, we mistakenly left Oregon Building Trades Council's out of the list of endorsers of Janelle Bynum for House District 51 (Clackamas).

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