

1994 Ballot Measures

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On Nov. 8, Oregonians will be voting on ballot measures 3 through 20.

Ballot measures will range from issues about taxes, to minority status for homosexuals, to the death-with-dignity measure. Measures being voted on may drastically change the standard of living for all Oregonians.

It is important that all voting Oregonians familiarize themselves with all the measures and vote on Nov. 8. Here is an outline of the measures, a brief summary of each and the pros and cons of each specific case.

☑ Measure 3

Measure 3 - Filling deadlines at general elections:

Summary: Ballot Measure 3 would amend Oregon's constitution to increase the deadline for filling vacancies at general elections from 20 days to 61 days. The measure states that if a vacancy occurs more than 61 days before the next general election, it shall be filled at that next general election. If a vacancy occurs within 61 days of a general election, the vacancy will not be filled at that general election and would be filled by appointment.

Pro: This measure would give voters more time to evaluate candidates who fill a vacancy. The measure also allows county election offices more time to reprint ballots, mail them to absentee voters, and complete all other preparations for the election.

Con: There is no organized opposition to this measure.

☑ Measure 4

Measure 4 - Bans convicted felons from serving on legislator:

Summary: Ballot Measure 4 would prohibit any legislator convicted of a felony during the period starting from the day the member was elected to the day the term of office ends, from serving on the legislature. The measure would also prohibit a convicted felon from being elected to the legislature until the end of his or her sentence, including any probation time and payment of fines or penalties.

Pro: This measure would set character standards for office. It also reaffirms the legislature's commitment to both making and abiding by the laws. Public officials should be expected to play by the same rules as other citizens do.

Con: Voters should be able to

judge through an open election who should represent them in office. Measure 4 may also violate due process if there is no provision for reversal of appeal. The only Oregon legislator ever convicted of a felony resigned rather than face a recall election.

☑ Measure 5

Measure 5 - Voter approval for new or increased taxes:

Summary: Measure 5 would bar any new or increased state or local taxes without voter approval. Two tax elections annually would be permitted. An automatic six percent tax base increase, school tuition, fines, port and utility district fees will still be permitted without voter approval.

Pro: The measure would restrict tax and fee increases and curb government spending.

Con: If measure 5 is passed, voters would be asked to go to the polls again and again to vote on things like whether or not the fee for marriage licenses should be raised a nickel or the cost of a local building permit should be increased. It would also place tight restriction on the power of public officials and lawmakers to make budget and tax decisions.

☑ Measure 6

Measure 6 - Campaign contributions allowed only from district residents:

Summary: Measure 6 would limit local and state candidates to only accept campaign contributions from their electoral district residents. It prohibits passing any contributions from nonresidents to district residents. This does not apply to federal elections, such as President and members of Congress.

Pro: The measure would require candidates to work within the district and not be influenced by outside interests. It will force candidates to gain the support of the people in their district, instead of finding favors elsewhere.

Con: If this measure is passed, it will restrict candidates' ability to raise campaign money. It may also draw political boundaries through neighborhoods split by different districts. Most neighborhoods cross district lines. Opponents feel that this is a poorly written, simplistic solution to problems that don't exist.

☑ Measure 7

Measure 7 - Equal Protection:

Summary: Measure 7 would prohibit discrimination based on

race, color, religion, gender, age or national origin. It would amend Oregon's constitution to guarantee equal protection.

Pro: A clear statement of non-discrimination would be made in the Oregon Constitution for the first time. People who suffer discrimination will be able to bring their complaints to court under the new constitutional language. The new clause will enable Native Americans, women, children and Asian Americans to be protected from discrimination.

Con: Equal protection is already guaranteed under the U.S. constitution. This measure may weaken equal-rights protection already in the Oregon Constitution and could undercut protection based on gender.

☑ Measure 8

Measure 8 - Public employees pay part of salary for pension:

Summary: Measure 8 would require public employees to pay six percent of their salaries towards their pension plans. It also prohibits counting unused sick leave in an employee's final year of salary for purposes of calculating pension benefits based on that final salary. Government would not be able to increase salaries or any other benefits as an offset towards this measure.

Pro: Public employees would have greater responsibility in saving for their futures. Taxpayers should not shoulder the entire burden. Boosting a final salary artificially by using acquired sick leave distorts the long-term cost to the Public Employee Retirement System, forcing taxpayers to pay more than is fair or necessary.

Con: The measure is an attempt to make public employees pay for the state budget problems. The measure would take away a benefit that public employees negotiated in preparation for a salary increase in 1979. It would also make a cut in take-home pay for public employees.

☑ Measure 9

Measure 9 - Limits campaign contributions and expenditures:

Summary: Measure 9 would limit contributions from individuals, political action committees and businesses to \$500 for statewide candidates and \$100 for legislative candidates. The measure establishes campaign spending limits for candidates and bans some personal use of campaign funds. This excludes federal, judicial and local candidates.

Pro: The measure would help

prevent excessive campaign spendings and the influence of special interest groups from dominating Oregon politics. The voter will be more in control of the political dialogue of the candidate because the campaign will be on more of a grass roots level.

lent crimes and would prevent violent teenagers from facing more lenient treatment in the juvenile court system. It makes it harder for the legislature to reduce a criminal sentence that has been set by a vote of the people.

Con: Problems in the budget may



Con: It may be more difficult for unknown challengers to take on opponents. There is also the question of money being laundered through anonymous political party committees and independent expenditures, thus reducing the public's ability to know who is paying for the campaign. Opponents also argue that the measure violates the basic right of freedom of political expression.

☑ Measure 10

Measure 10 - Legislature cannot reduce voter-approved sentence without a two-thirds vote:

Summary: Measure 10 requires a two-thirds vote of each house of the legislature to pass any bill that would reduce a criminal sentence previously approved by the voters through initiative or referendum. This would set mandatory sentences for certain felons and require juveniles 15 and up to be tried as adults.

Pro: The measure would reduce crime by making criminals serve minimum terms for certain vio-

be caused by overcrowding, making it necessary for the state to build more prisons. This measure might also unfairly treats children as adults.

☑ Measure 11

Measure 11 - Mandatory sentences for listed felonies for persons 15 and older:

Summary: This measure sets mandatory sentences for crimes such as murder, assault, rape, kidnapping and robbery. The court may not impose a shorter sentence for any reason, without a two-thirds majority vote.

Pro: The measure would reduce crime by making criminals serve full terms. It would also make it more difficult for the legislature to reduce sentencing categories. Sentences imposed by judges would no longer have meaning. **Con:** Budget problem may be created by this measure, requiring the state to build more prisons. Oregon's constitution requires correctional facilities to be oriented to rehabilitation, not