

ZIMMERMAN, from page 12

3. What are you going to do to curb opiate deaths and addiction?

I've seen firsthand in my family that dosing policies alone aren't enough. Addictions treatment capacity must grow in our community, and I support funding that places programs in the community, in community organizations, with specific models for different populations. No one-size-fits-all model works. I find the work of CODA and others to be promising, and they are in the trenches on critical work. I envision addictions treatment access in nearly every level of county health and human services. The earlier we provide intervention, I believe the more lives we can save.

4. In addition to the issues addressed above, what do you want to fix in the county?

I am deeply concerned about the needs of people living on our streets and the impact that is having on our community. I support the efforts to provide permanent housing opportunities to get people into care, treatment and employment opportunities. But I also cannot accept the current policy that does not also provide a shelter bed available for every person living outside tonight. We need to look at all unused county properties to determine how we can better meet this need. We must also expand access to mental health and addiction treatment, whether it is through shelters, street teams or permanent housing.

Climate change is the greatest long-term threat to our future. The county has a critical role to play in this work, helping push land use decisions that make it easier for people to travel for work,

commerce and recreation with a smaller carbon footprint. We also must educate the public about energy conservation improvements to homes and buildings in the community and efficiency practices that can be incorporated into our daily lives. Protecting farm and forestland, as well as our green spaces, serves a critical role in reducing our region's carbon footprint. These areas act as critical carbon capture and storage opportunities in our urban environment, as well as reducing energy consumption through better shade, wind reduction, and extending the life of our transportation infrastructure by reducing maintenance costs.

5. Why should people vote for you and not the other guy?

I am the best candidate to begin addressing the challenges we face on my first day in office. Through my time at the county and in the community, I understand the work we are doing and what we are not doing. We need to open up the way our commission does business and be more willing to explore new ideas. In addition, I also believe I have the ability to bring together the diverse parts of this community to make lasting change. There is a reason I have the endorsement of the county workers, AFSCME Local 88. I also have the support of Gov. Barbara Roberts, Commissioner Loretta Smith, and many other community leaders. Visit my website, ericzimmerman.org, to learn more.

Visit news.streetroots.org to see how the candidates answered other questions in the Street Roots pop quiz this past April.

Election reform for City Council would make each voice count

BY SERENA CRUZ
CONTRIBUTING COLUMNIST

The amount was \$400,000. In four months. That's what I had to raise to run for Portland City Council.

Running to be the third person of color and the eighth woman ever to serve the city I love was an incredible experience. And it taught me that there must be a better way. That's why I'm supporting the Open and Accountable Elections reform that Portland City Council will consider on Nov. 3.

As a candidate, I spent hours each day on the phone or in meetings, trying to raise an obscene amount of money. I'm guessing my opponent had to do the same.

Don't get me wrong; dialing for dollars taught me a lot of important skills. I became expert in giving a brief but meaningful pitch. I enjoyed talking to people about why I was running and how I wanted to make a difference. I got to hear their ideas and thoughts on what could make Portland work better. All of this made me a better candidate.

But if I'm honest, most of the people I raised money from didn't look like plenty of Portlanders. They were, more often than not, men, white and with a vested interest in the business of the city. And many stood to lose

or gain depending on decisions Portland City Council could make in the future.

And while I got to meet many Portlanders in town halls, candidate forums and house parties, I didn't have as much time for connecting with voters face-to-face as I wanted nor, I felt, any voter deserved.

I don't necessarily think that taking big donations from people means you listen to them more, but what I like about the Open and Accountable Elections reform is that it treats everyone like a big donor, so even small donations have a big impact.

When every donation counts, then so does every perspective. Candidates are freer to think about a broader set of issues, and hear from more of Portland - in particular those underrepresented in City Council: women, people of

color, LGBT people and east Portlanders. There are barriers to running for office, as my experience can attest. And those barriers don't end at our city boundaries.

But we can start removing some of them right here in Portland, giving future candidates a different path to local democracy. So I urge Portland City Council, please support Open and Accountable Elections.

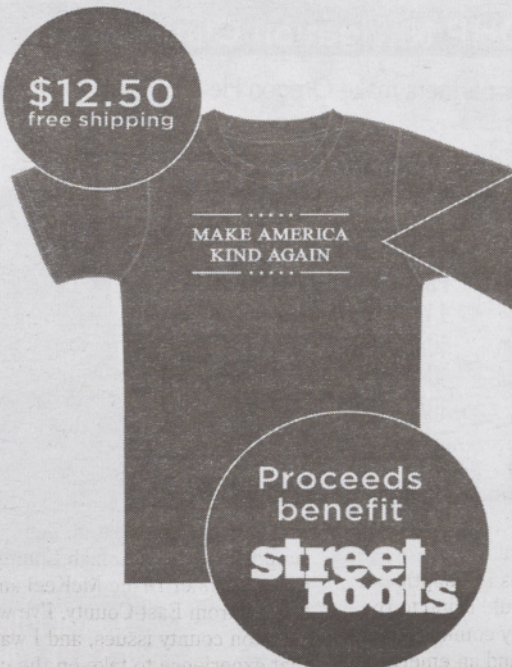
Learn more about Open & Accountable Elections at avoiceforallportland.org.



Serena Cruz is a former Multnomah County commissioner and former candidate for Portland City Council.

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