

Healthier Kids

Less smoke helps make it happen

Big Tobacco is trying to buy the Measure 50 election with the largest war chest we in Oregon have ever seen. Don't let them. Let's clear the smoke and not be confused by the false and misleading claims of Philip Morris, RJ Reynolds and others who profit from Oregonians' addictions.

Measure 50 will do two very useful things: First, it will fund health care for uninsured kids. Second, the higher price for cigarettes will lead many (mostly young) Oregonians to stop smoking or never take it up in the first place, both great reasons to pass Measure 50.

Why spend the money primarily on kids' health care? We have more than 117,000 Oregon kids who are uninsured. We know that children without healthcare coverage are more likely to be sick and do less well in school. The future of our state depends on us doing well for our children. It is just as important for kids to be healthy as it is for them to have an adequate number and quality of teachers and classrooms. Kids who don't have access to medical care cannot succeed in the classroom. Without basics you and I might take for granted, like eye exams, glasses, dental care or asthma medication, children cannot focus on their studies.

You may have seen ads on TV paid for by "Oregonians Against the Blank Check" (a check of campaign finance records shows this group is paid for almost entirely by Big Tobacco, companies like Philip Morris and RJ Reynolds. There are a few actual Oregonians who contribute to the committee, and they are powerful cigarette, alcohol and adult entertainment industry lobbyists.) In these ads, misleading and distracting claims are made about the tax increase made to cover the cost of the insurance. The increase in taxes per pack of cigarettes raises Oregon to the level already established by Washington state. This amount still doesn't come close to matching the costs non-smokers bear to cover smokers' medical costs. This small increase HAS been demonstrated to reduce the number of kids who begin smoking in the first place. So Measure 50, the Healthy Kids initiative, is a win-win for everyone.

The health effects of tobacco are so enormous that even with the increased tax, tobacco related health costs will still be at least five times the total amount collected in tobacco taxes. That means that non-smokers will still be significantly subsidizing the health costs of smokers, both in dollars and in the costs of non-smokers' own illnesses contracted because of second-hand smoke.

A "yes" vote on Measure 50 will allow us to pay the entire state share of the Healthy Kids program and the use reduction and education program for many years. Most of this money will be matched by federal taxes you already pay that are now being spent outside Oregon.

There's a good reason I joined with a bi-partisan group of legislators to refer Measure 50 to the voters. I think the people of Oregon are tired of standing by while children in this state go without medical care. Last year Oregon voters showed that they could stand up to big out-of-state interests and their huge misleading campaign spending. I believe we can do it again by sending a message to Philip Morris, RJ Reynolds and other big, out-of-state corporations to butt out of our elections.

Let's reject Big Tobacco's attempts to hijack Oregon's democracy, and give our kids the healthy start in life they deserve.

Join me in voting yes on Measure 50.



Phil Barnhart represents central Lane and Linn counties in the Oregon House of Representatives. He can be contacted at phil@philbarnhart.com or 607-9207.



rise to power? Who is this man? He is no more intelligent or tactful than the grub living under my steps. He reminds me of myself. Yet he controls a great deal of our interests. I control nothing. I want to be him. I want to be a good version of George W. Bush. We all can be.

For this reason I am formally demanding President Bush to skip the book tour following his term and instead become America's greatest motivational speaker ever to have lived. Imagine huge crowds in total silence taking detailed notes as he reveals his basic skills, secrets, sound advice, catch-phrases, -isms, etc., and speaks on how to go from living in darkness and dumbness under the steps to fine dining and signing important documents in the White House.

This man is motivational material! His profound influence as a traveling motivational guest speaker would make America unstoppable. Success through failure in high places is good medicine for the unemployment force. We need inspiration. We need motivation. Bring it on! If George W. Bush can be president of the U.S., then I can find it in me to be ... whatever I damn well want to be.

Stephen Sandberg
Eugene

PAINED IN CORVALLIS

Thanks, Timberhill Corp., for buying up a ridiculous amount of pristine landscape and slowly destroying it for profit. This is progress, but boy is it painful to watch. The hillside I gazed upon as a child while riding my bike up the hill from Kings is now being turned into wretched sprawl. Farther up the same path, quiet woods have already been turned into yet more houses. Riding the path to its completion at Chip Ross Park leaves you again with the feeling that Corvallis is developing in the wrong direction.

A church at the foot of the park? I'm not so sure God would smile as His earth was being crumpled into a useless ball of human excrement in His name. Why aren't we enacting laws that protect our last wild places? Can we (the city) not buy back *some* of this land and set it aside for future generations? Why does *everything* have to be developed? Why do we have to keep developing everything everywhere? When is enough enough? Probably never.

Brandon Goldner
Corvallis

FETID FACADE

Should Hillary Clinton win the 2008 election and then be re-elected, this will represent

nearly 30 years of the Bush-Clinton-Bush-Clinton Regime. Jeb, waiting in the wings! Josef Stalin had a longer reign, as did Caesar Augustus. I can't think of any other. Franco in Spain? Hitler only lasting 12 years! In the land of the "free" we have just two families running it all! Two families, one regime, for a third of a century.

It is said that things begin as an ideal, become a business and then degenerate to a racket! Our electoral system has simply degenerated into that, a racket, a gimmick, scam! Rigged elections and jimmied voting machines no longer provoke outrage or even surprise. Here in the sweet land of liberty, elections have virtually predetermined outcomes where the candidate with the most money nearly always wins. A two-party dictatorship where only the insiders with the real big bucks can even hope to play! A two-party sham where more often than not people vote against, not for, a candidate.

Third parties are legislated out, minimized or frightened off. What ever happened to Ross Perot? Perot got 21 percent of the vote and was never heard from again. Why? Candidates not toeing the establishment line are regularly branded as "outsiders" (Kucinich), "rogues" (Mike Gravel) or "longshots" like Ron Paul. They are minimized, caricatured and ridiculed by a "free" press! Yes, here we do have a choice, but a limited, contrived choice unlike obvious dictatorships. Make no mistake, however; the choice afforded is a very limited choice, and in the case of the presidency apparently a choice between just two families. This is really scary!

Joe Mogus
Philomath

CARBON TALK

"Carbon Loser" (10/4) had some minor flaws in the carbon (C) reporting. 594 MMBF (million board feet) roughly equates to 300,000 tons of C removed from the forest, and let us assume that all areas were clearcut and necessitate reforestation.

However, not all C removed is emitted to the atmosphere. In fact, approximately 35 percent (105,000 tons) is converted to wood products and stays sequestered for up to 100 years or longer. Another 35 percent becomes bioenergy, partially offsetting fossil fuel consumption. Even if we do not assume that wood energy is C neutral in terms of emissions (which it eventually will be if the harvested area is reforested), energy from wood contributes significantly less emissions than fossil fuels.

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