

he says, “In loose terms, a fee is usually a fee for a service provided, and it’s a direct service fee — you’re paying for what you get,” while taxes are more widely collected for the greater public good.

Whether the proposed fee would be a true fee or a tax might not matter in terms of taxing federal agencies in Eugene, though. “The only federal agencies that we deal with right now would be the GSA, and that’s for the federal courthouse,” Harwood says, and it would be pretty easy to exempt a single agency from a fee. — Shannon Finnell

WHO IS FUNDING THE JAIL CAMPAIGN?

Out-of-state corporations have begun to fund the pro-jail levy “Yes on 20-213” campaign. The companies may or may not be interested in improving public safety in Eugene, but they could benefit if the levy goes through because both Corizon Health, Inc. and ABL Management, Inc. are both national corporations that the county has contracted out with, cutting

local union jobs in an attempt to cut costs.

In an interview with *EW* about the proposed jail levy, Sheriff Tom Turner said that the contracting out did save thousands but not the millions that he had hoped for. The levy seeks to impose a tax of 55 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value on a home for five years, possibly raising property taxes more than 3 percent. Without the levy Turner said that the amount of jail beds could drop as low as only 26 beds for Lane County’s felons. The levy is for jail beds only, not victims’ services, increased patrols or rehabilitating criminals.

Corizon got a two-year contract to take over as the jail’s medical provider in May 2012. The company donated \$5,000 to the Yes on 20-213 political action campaign on May 2, according to the Oregon secretary of state’s elections website.

Corizon has been dogged with criticism of its inmate health care across the country. The company paid out \$1.2 million for the paralysis of a man under its care in a Fort Myers, Fla., county jail and is being sued over the death of an inmate in Tennessee. In Idaho, the state “fined Corizon \$200,000 for missing contract benchmarks, and a federally appointed expert concluded its medical care was so bad it

amounted to cruel and unusual punishment,” according to an *Associated Press* story. The company recently demanded a raise of hundreds of thousands of dollars from Idaho, the article says.

ABL Management also gave \$5,000 to the campaign. The Lane County Jail contracted with ABL in 2011 for food service. ABL uses inmates instead of employees to prepare food.

Other donors of \$1,000 or more to Yes on 20-213 are the Springfield Police Association, Delta Construction Co., Jon V. Jaqua, Alex Gardner for DA PAC, frequent Republican donor Hugh Perrine and the Lane County Peace Officers Association Benevolent Fund. *EW* co-owner Art Johnson donated \$500 and King Estate gave \$10,000.

Citizens for a Safer Lane County PAC has an argument in favor of the levy in the Voters’ Pamphlet, which takes \$300 or 1,000 signatures. *EW* found no listing for the PAC on the state website. A group called Lane County Public Safety Committee PAC is on the website but shows no expenditures since 2012. Steven Sieczkowski, who furnished the ballot measure argument, is associated with both groups. — Camilla Mortensen

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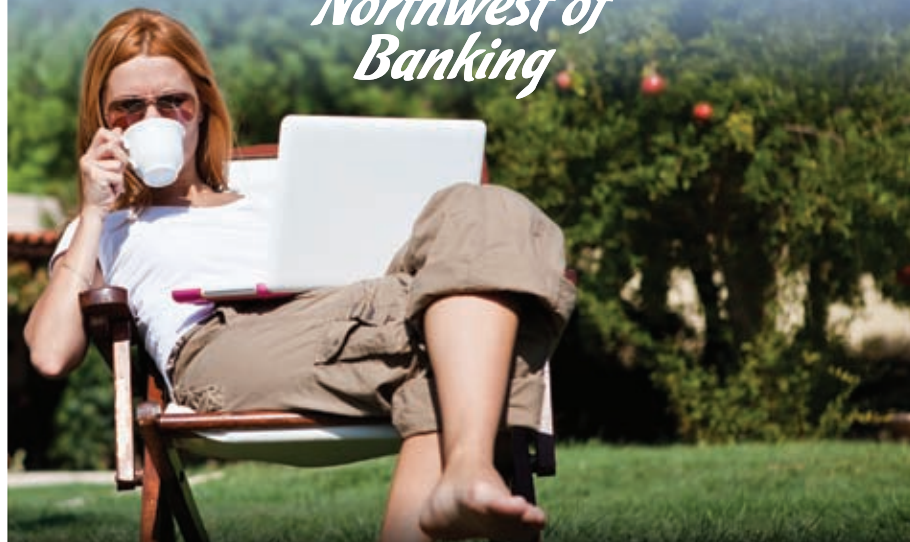


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