

# NEWS

BY KELLY KENOYER

## VOTE 'YES' ON 101

Hundreds of community organizations support Measure 101

SEN. JAMES  
MANNING



PHOTO: TRASK BEDORTHA

**W**e've all seen the signs on lawns around town asking for a "yes" vote on Measure 101, but just what that measure is can be a little confusing.

In July 2017, Gov. Kate Brown signed a bill into law that would continue providing health care for one million Oregonians through the Oregon Health Plan as part of the overall state budget.

House Bill 2391 created a 1.5 percent assessment on insurance companies and the Public Employees' Benefit Board and a 0.7 percent assessment on profits from hospitals that would continue to fund the Medicaid expansion for one in four Oregonians on OHP.

Following the passage of HB 2391, three Republican legislators launched a petition drive that led to Ballot Measure 101 in an effort to get voters to repeal the assessments that were signed into law back in July.

get gap that would need to be filled in the upcoming short legislative session.

At a Jan. 4 town hall on Measure 101, Rep. Julie Fahey and Sen. James Manning answered questions about the measure and provided a platform for citizens to discuss it.

Fahey said the assessment "is used in 49 other states and the district of Columbia, so it's not a new way of funding Medicaid."

Fahey supports Measure 101 and says she hopes it passes so she can focus on other legislative goals in the upcoming short session instead of scrambling to fill a budget gap that HB 2391 was already meant to fill.

Fahey said of HB 2391, "*The Oregonian's* editorial about Measure 101 said the Legislature should have come up with a solution to fix this — we did!" A "yes" vote simply reiterates the previous actions of the legislature to fill the budget gap and maintain health care coverage for a mil-

proved, and it never had to come up for a vote. This is a total waste of time for all of us to even have to deal with all of this," Manning added.

Rep. Julie Parrish of Tualatin is the "Measure 101 chief petitioner to Stop Healthcare Taxes on public schools, college students, small businesses, and everyday Oregonians," according to the Voters' Pamphlet. That means that she led the push to bring Measure 101 on the ballot, and she seeks a "no" vote on the measure.

Parrish says, "The crux of 101 is not whether we should fund Medicaid, it's how we should fund Medicaid."

Parrish calls the pieces of HB 2391 in Measure 101 "the most unfair, inequitable and unsustainable way of funding Medicaid."

Parrish says that the assessment on hospitals and insurers "targets people who are struggling to pay for their own health care, people who are seeing double-digit rate

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*'It's not going to cost us anything. It was already approved, and it never had to come up for a vote. This is a total waste of time for all of us to even have to deal with all of this.'*

— SEN. JAMES MANNING

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So in the upcoming Jan. 23 special election, a "yes" vote on Measure 101 would confirm HB 2391, keeping the assessments on hospitals and insurers and creating about \$210 million to \$320 million in revenue to fund Medicaid. When matched by \$840 million in federal dollars that means \$1.3 billion in total revenue to the state.

A "no" vote repeals those assessments, leaving a bud-

lion Oregonians, according to Fahey and Manning.

At the Junction City town hall, Manning seemed similarly exasperated about this measure's coming to a vote. "Voting 'yes' just agrees with what had already been done," he said. "Everyone had approved it, bipartisan, the hospitals, everyone!"

"It's not going to cost us anything. It was already ap-

increases year over year for the past several years."

Yes for Healthcare, one of the main committees behind the yes campaign, appears to have many large contributions from health care groups, including Kaiser Permanente, Providence Health and Services, CareOregon and PeaceHealth. Some of the top donors to the Yes for Healthcare campaign include Willamette Valley Community