

10 of 18 ballot measures hurt workers, public services

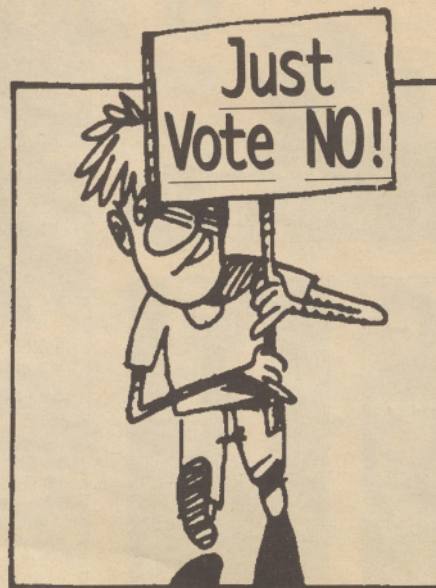
Voters will see 10 initiatives that attack workers (especially public workers), government, or have significant and harmful budget impacts, when they look down their ballot this November and confront 18 ballot measures.

At 18, Oregon voters face more initiatives and referendums on the General Election ballot than they have since there were 18 in 1952.

The measures this year of particular concern to workers and public employees are:

• **Measure 5: Vote on Everything.** Ironically called Measure 5 like its progenitor in 1990, this "son" of 5 would require a vote of the people on every increase — or decrease — in library fees, health division fees, inspection fees, firefighting fees to timber-owners, and all other fees, taxes, and assessments. Aside from requiring more complicated ballots and more frequent elections on taxes, this measure would hurt business development and restrict government's ability to serve the people. It amends the Constitution. (See story, Page 11.) *Vote No!*

• **Measures 6 & 9: Campaign Finance Reforms.** There is no doubt that campaign finance reform is needed in Oregon. Ballot Measure 6 prohibits voters from contributing to any political campaign except those in the district in which they reside. In other words, a candidate's own mother couldn't contribute to her son's campaign unless mother and son live in the same district. Ballot Measure 9 would give the wealthy an advantage over the rest of us in Oregon, by taking away the clout one can build by organizing, by limiting the amount of money that political action committees, like OPEU's Citizen Action by Public Employees (CAPE), can give to candidates. Wealthy individual would be able to give proportionately more money to candidates.



Ballot Measure 6 amends the Constitution; Ballot Measure 9 is a statutory amendment. *Vote No and No!*

• **Measure 8: The Tiernan/Sizemore initiative on public employee pensions.** It amends the Constitution. (See Pages 8 & 9.) *Vote No!*

• **Measure 12: Repeal of Little Davis-Bacon.** Repealing Oregon's prevailing wage statute would undercut community wage standards for working people and small businesses that contract with state or local government. It is a statutory amendment. *Vote No!*

• **Measures 10, 11, 17: Crime Initiatives.** Everyone wants to do something about crime, but these initiatives don't do the trick: Measure 10 requires everyone to serve full sentences, no matter how crowded the prisons are and no matter whether the prisoner is reforming or not. Measure 11 sets mandatory sentences for a long list of felonies and requires that persons 15 years old and older be treated as adults for certain crimes. Measure 17 requires a system of forced prison labor with the danger that prisoners become a pool of cheap labor which undercuts wages in the real job market and provides an unfair competitive advantage to law-abiding workers and businesses. Taken together, these anti-crime initiatives take up so much of the public's resources, that no money

will be left for crime prevention or early intervention — we'll only be housing criminals, not preventing their creation. Measure 10 amends the Constitution; Measure 11 is a statutory amendment; Measure 17 is a Constitutional amendment. *Vote No, No, and No!*

• **Measure 13: Requires Discrimination Against Some Oregonians.** This initiative would make it legal to discriminate against workers simply because they are gay or lesbian, even if they are good at their jobs. It amends the Constitution. *Vote No!*

• **Measure 15: Education First.** This measure is a wrong-headed attempt to solve the school funding crisis in Oregon by "Robbing Peter to Pay Paul." While funding elementary, secondary, and community college education, it would cut funding for all other services funded by the General Fund such as home care for seniors, prisons and courts, and higher education by 24% to 29%. It amends the Constitution. (See story, Page 11.) *Vote No!*

All but 2 of the 18 initiatives this year — including Measure 8, the retirement initiative — bought their way onto the ballot. Sponsors of two of the initiatives listed above spent \$190,000 (Measure 6) and \$153,000 (Measure 15) just to buy signatures to get on the ballot. The initiative is intended as a way to get proposals on the ballot that have tremendous grass roots support. Nowadays, all you need is a big bundle of cash that you can throw into paid signature gathering. In many cases, signature gatherers were paid \$1 per signature, and at that price they would say whatever it would take to get a signature.

Initiative campaigns give the Portland metropolitan area all the clout. Few signature gathering efforts try to collect signatures in rural Oregon, or in other parts of the state outside of Portland. They can collect all the signatures they need in the metro area alone. That disenfranchises the rest of the state. Just as with the passage of 1990's Measure 5, which was opposed by the majority of voters in eastern Oregon, Portland could be forcing new policies on the rest of the state that turn out to be bad news.