

Ballot Measure 8

It cuts pay, pensions for frontline workers from cops on the beat to clericals in the office

Ballot Measure 8, the initiative to require public employees to pay an additional 6% of their salary toward their pensions, violates the spirit of the constitution, it's too confusing and complicated, and it is unfair to the police officers, social workers, mental health workers, librarians, and teachers in the front line of providing needed public services to Oregonians.

To the extent that the public begins to hear these messages — both from OPEU members in the neighbor-to-neighbor campaign and from the COPS (Citizens for Oregon Pension Security) Campaign — the measure can be defeated.

• **HURTS PUBLIC EMPLOYEES ON THE FRONT LINES** — This amendment affects all (nonfederal) public employees and our families. It affects police officers. It affects firefighters. It affects public school teachers, whether they teach in elementary school, high school, community college, or a four-year college or university. It affects public health nurses. (See story about the video on Page 9.)

• **UNFAIR** — If this measure passes, the state will be reneging on a deal that public employees have already agreed to. In exchange for accepting a wage freeze, we received promised pension benefits. Now politicians want to take those away. It's inherently unfair.

• **TOO CONFUSING AND TOO COMPLICATED** — This amendment is too confusing because it tries to do too many things at once. It is too much to vote on in one ballot. Even its proponents are confused about what the measure does. Belatedly, the proponents are saying that the provision in the measure that prohibits adding 50% of accrued sick leave to our final average salary when we retire doesn't apply to sick leave earned prior to January 1, 1995, the day the amendment would go into force.

But there is nothing in the

measure itself that says that — and that's what the courts will rely on in the likely event this matters goes to litigation.

A Portland attorney and expert in labor law and pension issues said he would take "zero" comfort from the statements made by the proponents that sick leave earned prior to next January is safe and noted that the wording of the initiative would prevent employees from using sick leave in the pension calculations.

"It's a mess, frankly," said lawyer Jim Coon, another Portland attorney and advisor to OPEU/SEIU Local 503.

"It's frustrating," PERS deputy director Dave Bailey told *The Oregonian* recently. "We'd like to give our people clear counseling, but we just can't. All we can tell them about sick leave is that it may or may not go away."

Additionally, taking away sick leave accumulation is the single thing about the initiative the public dislikes the most.

• **VIOLATES THE SPIRIT OF THE OREGON CONSTITUTION** — The purpose of the Constitution is to protect the rights of all Oregonians, not to set pay and benefits scales for public employees throughout the state. Pay and benefits should be dealt with through local contract negotiations. This amendment doesn't belong in Oregon's Constitution.

Finally, there is nothing in the measure to guarantee that any of the savings — that come out of our paychecks — will be spent helping our clients. There is nothing in the measure that says the savings, if any, will put another cop on the beat, purchase another fire truck, or books for the library — or even reduce anyone's taxes. The savings, if any, will come out of our pockets and be turned over to politicians in the Legislature who will be free to spend however they want.

It affects all of us and every-

Effect of losing the 6% employer pickup

BALLOT TITLE (Excerpt)

AMENDS CONSTITUTION: PUBLIC EMPLOYEES PAY PART OF SALARY FOR PENSION
On and after January 1, 1995, the state and political subdivisions of the state shall not thereafter contract or otherwise agree to increase any salary, benefit, or other compensation payable to an employee for the purpose of offsetting or compensating an employee for the obligation imposed by subsection (1) of this section.

It's a pay cut. That's the effect of losing the 6% pickup. What's more, as one section of the measure reproduced above shows, we would be prohibited — by the state constitution — from negotiating a pay increase that would offset the effect of the pay cut the measure imposes.

Also, below are listed a number of salary ranges and the first, middle, and top step of those ranges. In the right hand columns are the monthly dollar losses employees in those salary ranges would see if the measure is approved by the voters in November 1994.

At the bottom are a few representative classifications and their salary ranges. The important point is that this measure would affect all state and local government employees — those in PERS or any other public retirement system.

Step 1	Step 4	Step 7	SR	Step 1 Loss	Step 4 Loss	Step 7 Loss
\$1210	\$1381	\$1568	9	\$72.60	\$82.86	\$94.08
\$1259	\$1437	\$1643	10	\$75.54	\$86.22	\$98.58
\$1320	\$1501	\$1704	11	\$79.20	\$90.06	\$102.24
\$1381	\$1568	\$1789	12	\$82.86	\$94.08	\$107.34
\$1437	\$1643	\$1869	13	\$86.22	\$98.58	\$112.14
\$1501	\$1704	\$1965	14	\$90.06	\$102.24	\$117.90
\$1568	\$1789	\$2060	15	\$94.08	\$107.34	\$123.60
\$1643	\$1869	\$2160	16	\$98.58	\$112.14	\$129.60
\$1704	\$1965	\$2261	17	\$102.24	\$117.90	\$135.66
\$1789	\$2060	\$2372	18	\$107.34	\$123.60	\$142.32
\$1869	\$2160	\$2486	19	\$112.14	\$129.60	\$149.16
\$1965	\$2261	\$2605	20	\$117.90	\$135.66	\$156.30
\$2060	\$2372	\$2732	21	\$123.60	\$142.32	\$163.92
\$2160	\$2486	\$2871	22	\$129.60	\$149.15	\$172.26
\$2261	\$2605	\$3008	23	\$135.66	\$156.30	\$180.48
\$2372	\$2732	\$3154	24	\$142.32	\$163.92	\$189.24
\$2486	\$2871	\$3307	25	\$149.16	\$172.26	\$198.42
\$2605	\$3008	\$3471	26	\$156.30	\$180.48	\$208.26
\$2732	\$3154	\$3643	27	\$163.92	\$189.24	\$218.58

Representative classifications and their salary ranges

Office Specialist 1	12	Motor Vehicle Rep 2	17
Human Services Assistant 1	12	Child Support Agent	18
Public Service Rep 2	12	Public Service Rep 4	19
Office Specialist 2	15	Human Resource Spec 3	19
Human Services Assistant 2	15	Human Resource Spec 4	21
Public Service Rep 3	15	Social Service Specialist	24
Motor Vehicle Rep 1	15	Voc Rehab Specialist	24
Highway Maintenance Specialist	16	Occ. Safety Specialist 3	25
Human Resource Spec 2	17	Industrial Hygienist 4	27

one we work with.

The first thing it will do is reduce our take-home pay by 6%. (See chart on this page.) If you currently make \$1568, the initiative would cut your take-home pay \$94.08. If you make \$1965, your take-home pay cut would be \$117.90.

If you make \$2732, your take-home pay would be \$163.93 less.

When you retire — in the near-future or many years from now — your pension will be cut by as much as 21%.

That's a financial bath most of us are ill-prepared to take.