

# Citizens panel endorses corporate sales tax measure

Findings will be published in voters' guide

By **PARIS ACHEN**  
Capital Bureau

A citizens' panel that reviews Oregon ballot initiatives for the voters' pamphlet has endorsed a controversial corporate sales tax measure on the November ballot.

Measure 97 would levy a 2.5 percent tax on certain corporations' Oregon sales exceeding \$25 million.

The Citizens Initiative Review Commission heard

from both sides of the measure before voting 11-to-9 on Sunday to endorse the measure. Key findings will be published in the state voters' guide.

The tax would raise an estimated \$6 billion every two years in additional revenue at a time when the state faces an estimated \$1.4 billion shortfall to maintain existing services.

Supporters cited the shortfall and a study by Ernst & Young ranking Oregon 50th in the lowest rate of corporate taxation as reasons for the endorsement.

"We are currently in a crisis of underfunded public education, healthcare and senior services," the supporters wrote

in a statement. "The passage of Measure 97 would quickly fix this."

Commissioners who voted against the endorsement cited a study by the Legislative Revenue Office that shows the tax would hike up the prices of daily items such as food and fuel for the typical family by \$600 a year.

That study also showed job growth would slow significantly in the private sector while boosting public sector jobs.

"A regressive tax takes a larger percentage of income from low income earners creating an unnecessary burden on many Oregon fami-

lies," commissioners wrote in a statement of opposition.

## Another victory

The endorsement marks another victory for the union-backed campaign for Measure 97. Earlier this month, the measure won an endorsement from Gov. Kate Brown. Another research committee recommended last week that the City Club of Portland endorse the measure.

"It's clear that when Oregonians get the facts about Measure 97, they agree it's time to hold large and out-of-state corporations accountable," said Katherine Driessen, a spokeswoman for Our Oregon, the

nonprofit backing the measure. "Oregon ranks 50th in the country in corporate taxes, leaving our schools and critical services badly underfunded."

The campaign against the measure said panelists ignored research that showed consumers would bear most of the burden from the tax.

"We disagree with the conclusions of the panelists who voted to support Measure 97 despite the fact that most of the \$6 billion measure will be paid by Oregon consumers through higher prices for the services and goods they buy every day — clothing, groceries, electricity, medicine, insurance, even medical care,"

said Rebecca Tweed, Defeat the Tax on Oregon Sales campaign coordinator.

## Healthy Democracy

Lawmakers approved the Citizens Initiative Review Commission in 2011 based on a concept developed by Health Democracy Oregon. The creation of the commission "marked the first time a legislature has made voter deliberation a formalized part of the election process," according to the Healthy Democracy Oregon website.

The Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group and Pamplin Media Group.

# Oregon counts a pot of money

State collects \$25.5 million in marijuana taxes

Associated Press

SALEM — Oregon has processed \$25.5 million in tax payments from recreational marijuana from January through the end of July.

The state's Department of Revenue says medical marijuana dispensaries were required to file their second-quarter returns for recreational marijuana by Aug. 1.

Oregonians legalized recreational marijuana in late 2014.

But it can only be sold by medical marijuana dispensaries until the Oregon Liquor Control Commission finalizes rules for the new industry. That's expected to happen by next year.

Medical marijuana dispensaries started collecting a 25 percent tax on their recreational marijuana sales in January. Anticipated state revenue from recreational marijuana through June 2017 was recently quadrupled by Oregon's Legislative Revenue Office.



AP Photo/Gillian Flaccus

Marijuana plants await judging at a competition to select nine specimens for display at the Oregon State Fair in Salem. The exhibit of live marijuana plants will run from Friday to Sept. 5 and will mark the first time real pot plants have been open for public viewing at the annual agricultural showcase. Oregonians voted to legalize recreational marijuana in November 2014.

The expected amount rose from \$8.4 million to \$35 million.

Recreational marijuana is illegal in 46 states and under federal law.

## WANTED

Alder and Maple Saw Logs & Standing Timber

Northwest Hardwoods • Longview, WA

Contact: Steve Axtell • 360-430-0885 or John Anderson • 360-269-2500

# Traffic fatalities surged in first half of this year

By **JOAN LOWY**  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Traffic fatalities were up 9 percent in the first six months of this year compared with the same period last year, continuing a surge in deaths that began two years ago as the economy improved and travel picked up, according to preliminary estimates released Tuesday by the National Safety Council.

An estimated 19,100 people were killed on U.S. roads from January through June, said the council, a congressionally chartered nonprofit that gets its data from state authorities. That's 18 percent more than two years ago at the six-

month mark. About 2.2 million people also were seriously injured in the first half of this year.

The council estimates the cost of these deaths and injuries at about \$205 billion.

At that rate, annual deaths could exceed 40,000 fatalities this year for the first time in nine years, the council said. More than 35,000 people were killed on U.S. roads last year, making it the deadliest driving year since 2008, when more than 37,000 were killed.

"Our complacency is killing us," said Deborah A.P. Hersman, the safety council's president and CEO. "Americans should demand change to prioritize safety actions and

protect ourselves from one of the leading causes of preventable death."

U.S. drivers have also put in a record 1.58 trillion miles on the road in the first half of this year, a 3.3 percent increase over the same period in 2015, the Federal Highway Administration said this week.

States with the biggest increases since the upward trend began in late 2014 include Vermont, up 82 percent; Oregon, 70 percent; New Hampshire, 61 percent; Idaho, 46 percent; Florida, 43 percent; Iowa, 37 percent; Georgia, 34 percent; Indiana, 33 percent; California, 31 percent and Wisconsin, 29 percent.

**SATURDAY**  
AUGUST  
**27**

**Astoria Fire Open House**  
**555 30TH STREET 11-4PM**

**Food, Fun, Firefighters!**

- ★ Free hot dogs, chips, coffee and soda compliments of the members of the IAFF Local 696
- ★ Fire safety and tsunami/disaster information available
- ★ All AFD Apparatus will be on display
- ★ SPARKY and SMOKEY will be on hand!
- ★ Jr. Firefighter Challenge Course

Like us on Facebook  
[www.facebook.com/astoria696](http://www.facebook.com/astoria696)

# ATTENTION

**SW WASHINGTON PAPER MILL WORKERS**

## HAVE YOU BEEN EXPOSED?

**Mesothelioma? Lung Cancer? Laryngeal Cancer?**

Our successful team of local and national lawyers with a combined 40 years of experience in Asbestos and other workplace injuries can help you understand your rights and choices. If you or a family member worked in the paper mills, call us.

**Contact us today.**

Jeffrey S. Mutnick, Licensed in Oregon | Devin Robinson, Licensed in Oregon/Washington

# 1.800.714.2949

**SUNSET EMPIRE  
TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**NOTICE OF BOARD MEETING  
AND PUBLIC HEARING  
TO RECEIVE INPUT ON THE  
LONG RANGE COMPREHENSIVE  
TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

**AUGUST 25<sup>TH</sup>**  
**9AM**  
ASTORIA TRANSIT CENTER  
CONFERENCE ROOM  
900 MARINE DRIVE | ASTORIA

A copy of the SETD Long Range Comprehensive Transportation Plan is available at the Astoria Transit Center or the Seaside Transit Kiosk and may be viewed on the SETD website at  
[www.ridethebus.org](http://www.ridethebus.org)  
For more information please call  
**503-861-7433 #1**

Sunset Empire Transportation District operates its programs without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, age or disability in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, ORS Chapter 659A or other applicable law. Alternative formats of this information is available upon request. Please contact Mary Parker at 503-861-5370 or mary@ridethebus.org.

# KENNELL'S ELECTRONICS

Seaside Radio Shack

## GOING OUT OF BUSINESS LIQUIDATION SALE!

# 50% OFF

## EVERYTHING IN THE STORE!

### AUGUST 22<sup>ND</sup> THRU 27<sup>TH</sup>

1219 S. Roosevelt Dr., Seaside, OR  
**503-738-8836**