

Oregon sanctuary repeal qualifies for ballot

State law was passed in 1987

By **PARIS ACHEN**
Capital Bureau

An initiative petition to repeal Oregon's sanctuary law has qualified for the November ballot.

More than 86 percent — 97,762 — of the 111,039 signatures submitted in favor of Initiative Petition 22 were validated. Only 88,184 were needed to land the measure on the ballot.

Meanwhile, the Oregon Department of Justice continues to investigate allegations from voters that they were tricked into signing "Stop Oregon Sanctuaries." The Oregon



Pamplin Media Group

An initiative petition that would repeal Oregon's sanctuary law has qualified for the November ballot.

Secretary of State's Office received 39 complaints with similar allegations.

The statewide sanctuary

law prohibits the use of state and local resources to enforce federal immigration law, when a person's only crime is being

in the country illegally.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Justice threatened to yank federal law enforcement grants from sanctuary states, including Oregon. Gov. Kate Brown's office said last week that officials have not received any recent communication from the justice department on that matter.

IP 22 was sponsored by Oregonians for Immigration Reform and three Republican state lawmakers — Greg Barreto of Cove, Sal Esquivel of Medford and Mike Nearman of Independence.

Last week, Oregonians United Against Profiling, launched an official opposition campaign against the measure. More than 80 businesses, labor organizations,

faith and civil rights groups and law enforcement leaders have joined the coalition against IP 22.

Oregon lawmakers passed the sanctuary law in 1987 in response to a spate of racial profiling of immigrants by police.

In one high-profile case in 1977, Delmiro Trevino, a U.S. citizen of Mexican descent, was arrested at a restaurant in Independence because police suspected that he was undoc-

umented. He later filed a class-action lawsuit. His lawyer, Rocky Barilla, won election as a state representative in 1986, marking the first time a Latino was elected to that position in the state's history. He introduced the legislation that enacted the sanctuary law, which passed with bipartisan support.

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

Initiative petition would connect public worker pay to private sector

By **CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Supporters of a new initiative petition want to amend the state's constitution to require that public employees receive roughly the same pay and benefits as private-sector workers in similar jobs.

They claim public employees receive greater total compensation — including retirement, health benefits and leave — than many private sector workers.

The chief petitioners on the measure are Kim Sordyl, an education activist, and Erica Hetfeld, the executive director of Priority Oregon, a self-styled government watchdog group.

Priority Oregon, a nonprofit formed in early 2017, has been in the headlines before for producing ads critical of Gov. Kate Brown, a Democrat up for re-election this year.

The group contended Tuesday, in announcing an initiative petition that could put the issue before voters in 2020, that current compensation packages prevent limited state resources from going to "classrooms and other essential services."

The petition would change the state's constitution to require public employee compensation to be between 95 to 105 percent of compensation for comparable jobs in the private sector.

In cases where a job — such as a police officer — doesn't have a suitable equivalent in the private sector, the amendment would direct the state to set compensation based on similar jobs in neighboring states.

'If Gov. Brown isn't going to take the appropriate steps to make government employee compensation equal to that of similar jobs in the private sector, the people should decide that issue.'

Erica Hetfeld,

executive director of Priority Oregon

The initiative petition comes weeks after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that public employee unions couldn't require nonmembers to pay fees to cover collective bargaining costs.

The outcome of the case, Janus v. AFSCME, is likely to diminish the financial and political power of public-sector unions.

Hetfeld said the petition was not influenced by the Janus decision.

"If Gov. Brown isn't going to take the appropriate steps to make government employee compensation equal to that of similar jobs in the private sector, the people should decide that issue," Hetfeld said.

Detractors, including some of the state's largest public-employee unions, expressed skepticism about the petition Tuesday.

"This does not appear to be well thought out," said John Larson, a Hermiston teacher and president of the Oregon Education Association, in a prepared statement. "When considering education and

experience, professional educators already earn 20 percent less than the private sector ... if you followed (Priority) Oregon's logic, you would actually see dramatic increases in pay for educators across the state."

Priority Oregon, as Larson acknowledged elsewhere in his statement, is targeting not only wages, but benefits and other compensation such as paid leave.

Melissa Unger, executive director of SEIU 503, dismissed Priority Oregon's efforts Tuesday as an attempt to stir up publicity ahead of this year's election.

Brown's main rival in her re-election bid is state Rep. Knute Buehler, R-Bend, whose platform includes pension and spending reforms.

"This is not about 2020," Unger said. "This is about 2018, and making teachers and firefighters and so many other people the enemy during the election cycle."

The state, cities, counties and school districts continue to struggle with escalating public pension costs, a dilemma

that prompted Brown to convene a task force to find ways to reduce the unfunded liability of the pension system last year.

Petition supporters touched on that problem as well.

"The average Oregon government employee receives benefits that most people can only dream about and it's draining money from our schools," Sordyl said in a prepared statement.

Meanwhile, state government is facing a wave of impending retirements, which are poised to create succession planning and recruiting challenges, particularly in a strong economy with a historically low unemployment rate, top officials say.

That's all the more reason to offer competitive benefits packages, union supporters contend.

"Any further reductions in educator compensation and benefits at the current salary levels would make it extremely difficult to attract and retain the most talented teachers and other educators at a time when school districts across Oregon are already struggling to fill a variety of important positions," Larson said in a written response to questions. "If that were the case, it would cause significant harm to the classroom learning of students across Oregon."

In April 2017, as part of a package of cost-containment measures, Brown signed an executive order requiring the state Department of Administrative Services conduct a market study of the state's employees every even-numbered year and to use that information in collective bargaining.

Merkley, Wyden protest judicial nominations

Senators object to Bounds

By **ANNA GRIFFIN**
Oregon Public Broadcasting

Oregon U.S. Sens. Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden and other Senate Democrats spent three hours Tuesday night protesting the Republican Party's approach to confirming federal judges — and one Oregon lawyer's nomination in particular.

They were objecting to the nomination of Ryan Bounds to serve on the influential 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals

and, more broadly, to what they describe as GOP efforts to pack federal courts with extremist jurists.

The Senate has traditionally not proceeded with judicial nominations without the support of a potential judge's home state senators. But Senate Republicans have pushed ahead with Bounds' nomination despite Wyden and Merkley's concerns.

"This deed of putting forward this nomination on this floor tonight changes 100-year tradition of comity in the U.S. Senate, and a recognition that the home state senators have something important

to say about the integrity of the individual being put forward," Merkley said as the unusually long session kicked off.

The Oregon senators say they weren't adequately consulted about the Bounds nomination and that the White House pushed the nomination through quickly despite their requests to slow down. And they have raised questions about inflammatory writing Bounds, an assistant U.S. attorney, did while in college

at Stanford University and whether Bounds was upfront about those writings later.

Other senators objected to how Senate Republicans have handled other nominations and to the role groups such as the Federalist Society have played in coming up with lists of potential nominees for the Trump administration.

It's unlikely Senate Democrats can block Bounds' nomination, but they hope to slow it as a form of protest.

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A: Remember baby's teeth are not only important but part of their health and development. Cleaning baby's teeth can be done by gauze, a finger swipe, or a small brush. Make it quick and fun!! Remember that a night-time bottle with milk has lactose (milk sugar) and juice has fructose or sucrose (sugar) and if it sits on teeth day after day problems are going to develop. Baby teeth are small with thin enamel so they are important to keep clean.

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DMD, FAGD
LEINASSAR
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Q: What is the Oregon Birthday Rule?
A: In brief the Oregon Birthday Rule allows folks with Medicare Supplement Policies to switch Medicare Supplement Companies within a specific time frame around their birthday without going through health underwriting.

Steve Putman
Medicare Products
503-440-1076
Licensed in Oregon and Washington
putmanagency@gmail.com

Q: When does a death involve the Medical Examiner?
A: Deaths requiring investigation by the Medical Examiner involve apparent homicide, suicide, suspicious circumstances or where the cause is unknown or resulting from use/abuse of controlled substances, chemicals or toxic agents or disease that may constitute a threat to public health. Any death resulting from injury, while on the job or while in police custody or if the person was not under the care of a doctor for a specified period of time. The complete reference can be found by looking up ORS 146.090.

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