



From Multnomah County

By Donald Clark
County Executive

During the past few months, we've been hearing a lot about President Reagan's federal budget cuts, as well as cutbacks in Governor Atiyeh's state budget, and have grown concerned about the devastating impact those cuts will have on citizens in this country.

At the same time, the County has prepared its budget for the fiscal year, and we, too, are cutting back.

The 1981-82 County budget imposes cuts and reductions in some of the services provided by Multnomah County, not only due to decreasing federal and state revenues, but also increasing costs and a shortfall of local resources. To attempt to minimize some of these cutbacks, a three-year, \$5.1 million serial levy has been put before the voters on June 30th, which will in part restore some of the County's basic services - if measures 3 and 4 pass.

You are probably aware of how the proposed cuts and reductions will affect Multnomah County residents in general, but you may not be aware of how those cuts and reductions will affect the North and Northeast districts in particular.

Of utmost importance are the reductions in Community Health Services. At present, children from birth to age 13 whose parents are unable to provide any source of

medical care, are able to receive health screening, maintenance and immunization services through clinic and home visits. There is a supplemental food referral program also known as WIC, for women, infants and children who have special nutritional needs. Some of the citizens in need of this very necessary service are treated at the Woodlawn Community Health Center at 17th and Dekum. If measures 3 and 4 do not pass on June 30th, the Woodlawn Center will be scheduled for closure by November 30, 1981, and approximately 300 children in the community will be without those services.

Dental services such as those provided through the Buckman Dental Clinic on Northeast Everett also are at stake if the serial levy doesn't pass. Approximately 95% of the population under 18 will be affected by dental disease at one time or another, and about 40% of people over 55 have lost all their teeth. Some 500 low-income men, women and children in the North/Northeast community alone will be without subsidized dental treatment if measure 3 is defeated. With the percentages of people badly needing dental treatment already high, can we afford to put another 500 people in jeopardy?

Family planning services offered

through the Albina Multiservice Center and the health clinic in the Columbia Villa Housing District will be forced to cut back on operating hours and close their doors to about 500 low-income residents. An additional 300 people would no longer be eligible for general medical care offered through these same clinics.

The elderly and the poor desperately in need of services provided through the County's Project Health Division also will be affected if the serial levy is rejected by the voters. In fact, several hundred of those enrolled from the North/Northeast District will be without Project Health services. Community mental health clinics such as the North/Northeast Clinic will also have to make both staff and patient reductions if the levy fails.

Library services will be substantially reduced, closing seven branches -- one of which is the Albina Branch on NE 15th -- and operating hours will be reduced at the central library and existing branches.

The cuts and reductions I just outlined are of course applicable only to the North/Northeast districts, however the overall cuts and reductions will affect all districts within Multnomah County.

Measure 4 cannot pass if Measure 3 is rejected, and Measure 3 alone

will not restore county services to their present capacity. Passage of both measures 3 and 4 will however, create additional revenues which will enable the County to substantially retain most of our basic programs and services. The cost of this tax levy to the average homeowner with a home assessed at \$50,000 would be only \$15.50 per year.

The cost of living continues to rise at a rapid rate. The unemployment rate is steadily rising and Reagan's axe seems to cut deeper into the have-nots than the haves.

We have little control over what the Reagan Administration or the state do, and certainly no power over reversing those cuts once they're adopted.

We do however, have the power to minimize the impact of those cuts once they reach the local level in Multnomah County. By getting out to vote on Tuesday, June 30th, and voting yes for Measure 3 and Measure 4, we can help restore some of the basic services provided by Multnomah County to those who need it most.

On election day June 30th, if there is any doubt in your mind as to how to vote, ask yourself some basic questions: If not here -- where? If not now -- when? If not us -- who?



From the Capitol

Congressman Ron Wyden

Q. Congressman Wyden, the House Budget Committee now has before it proposals which could reduce by more than 25 percent the federal government's contribution to health care programs. What does this mean for Oregonians?

A. Plain and simple, it means that some Oregonians are going to suffer. No matter what kind of a Houdini you are, you can't take a 25 percent cut and still offer the same level of services.

For example, if the 25 percent cut is approved, Medicaid to Oregon will be cut by \$10 million. Health services will be cut \$3.6 million. Preventive services, \$1 million.

That's almost \$15 million less to be spent on health care in Oregon. You can't tell me that won't tear a hole in the safety net for crippled children, hemophiliacs, the mentally ill, the mentally retarded, alch-

holics, drug addicts -- and many, many more Oregonians.

I think it is a sad commentary on our national priorities that in the name of balancing the budget we are cutting health care programs while we continue to subsidize the tobacco and synthetic fuel industries.

I think it is equally tragic that we are concentrating our efforts on thinking of ways to squeeze all our health programs into underfunded block grants when we should be brainstorming about ways to cut health care costs -- for consumers and for taxpayers.

Although I don't pretend to have all the answers, a good place to begin to cut costs is through implementation of prospective reimbursement programs that require health providers to negotiate reasonable medical care packages in advance of treatment -- rather than just handing them a blank check to

fill in afterwards.

If we want a healthy America, we need healthy Americans. It is incumbent on Congress to help ensure that good health.

Q. Congressman Wyden, you have been quoted as opposing the Kemp-Roth Tax Plan supported by the Administration. Why? What would this tax cut mean for Oregonians?

A. In terms of money, very little. As a matter of fact, based on the latest Oregon tax return data, only slightly more than 3 percent of Oregon's taxpayers would benefit from the Administration's tax plan.

That leaves 97 percent who would not benefit -- and if that's not unfair, I don't know what is.

What Oregon and America need to get our economy back on track is a targeted tax cut that benefits all of our workers -- regardless of their in-

come. What we need is a tax cut that includes such things as reducing the marriage tax penalty for two wage-earner families, protecting middle income taxpayers from tax bracket creep, lowering of inheritance taxes, removing the tax on interest earnings, and lowering taxes for small business -- which employs 80 percent of America's workers.

Through such a targeted approach, a very high percentage of Oregonians could share in the tax relief -- rather than the small segment that would win out under Kemp-Roth.

County committee appointments available

Multnomah County Executive Don Clark announced Monday, that vacancies exist on the following citizen boards and commissions:

Child Care Coordinating Council; Community Corrections Advisory Committee; Economic

Development Advisory Committee; Emergency Medical Services Advisory Committee; Employees Retirement Board; Juvenile Services Commission; Merit System Civil Service Council; and the Planning Commission.

Citizens are encouraged to apply or to recommend appointments to the County Executive. Interested persons should write or call Maggie Pendleton, Office of the County Executive, 1021 S.W. 4th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97204. Phone: 248-3308.



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Oddly enough, part of the east coast of Canada is closer to Rome, Italy, than it is to the west coast of Canada.

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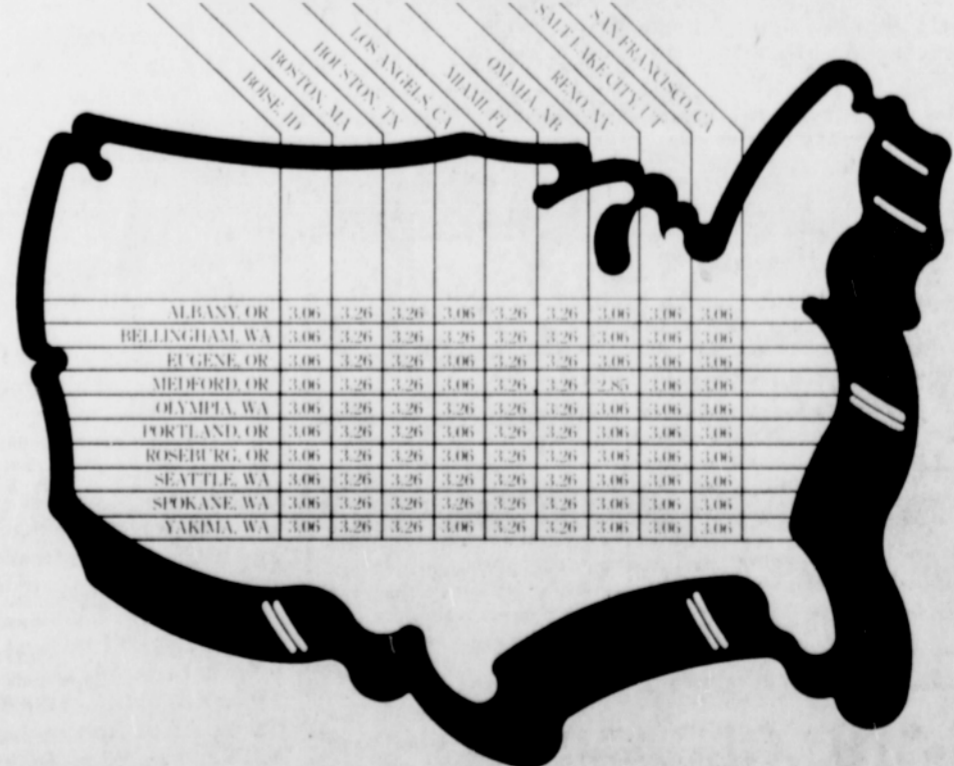
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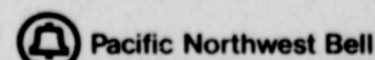
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