

Tax Failure Cuts Deep



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Dora Asana, program director for the African American Health Coalition, said the failure of Measure 30, makes minority populations more vulnerable to losing health care coverage.

Health care disparities expected to grow

BY JAYMEE R. CUTI
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Nonprofit organizations, city leaders and politicians are addressing the fallout after voters' defeated Measure 30, a proposed income tax.

More than 200,000 of Multnomah County voters joined citizens throughout Oregon to vote down the measure, which will result in \$545 million in cuts to education, health care and public safety.

Many city leaders are concerned about the root causes of racism, poverty and other problems in the community, and say they believe Measure 30 plays a role.

"Economics has always historically had a correlation to crime in a community," said Dr. LeRoy Haynes, pastor for the Allen Temple Church, regarding the measure's effect on the community. "Over the years, we have left a class of people that have become an underclass.

We need to address that."

Cuts to public safety begin with a loss of 114 beds in a Multnomah County corrections facility and pushes back plans to open the new Wapato Jail, with a 525-inmate capacity.

Education will bear more than half of the cuts, along with \$188 million from health and human services and \$58 million from public safety.

Anyone who thinks this is all going to be absorbed in efficiencies and administrative costs is not telling you the truth.

— Gov. Ted Kulongowski

Gov. Ted Kulongowski says he does not plan to call the Legislature back in session, but cuts will be addressed at a Legislative Emergency Board meeting in June, one month after cuts take affect. The board has the authority to release \$40 million in emergency funds.

The governor said he would work to minimize the impact of state budget cuts on programs for kids, seniors and people with disabilities,

but said, "Anyone who thinks this is all going to be absorbed in efficiencies and administrative costs is not telling you the truth."

Social programs supported by the state budget will suffer, according to Dora Asana, program director for the African American Health Coalition in northeast Portland.

The coalition won't lose funding based on the vote because the program is supported by federal dollars. But many of the coalition's partners, including programs addressing substance abuse recovery, breast and cervical cancer, HIV education and youth and elderly services are at risk.

"Many of the clients we work with are on the Oregon Health Plan," Asana said.

With the cut, about 50,000 of Oregon's working poor could lose all Oregon Health Plan coverage and more than 100,000 on the plan may retain basic services, but lose mental health, substance abuse, dental and vision benefits.

"When we talk about health disparities during a funding crisis, it's brought up about people who are already vulnerable: children, the elderly, people with mental illness and people of color, especially African Americans, who already have the poorest health outcomes of any population," she said.



Ida B. Wells

Passion For Justice

Celebrate the history of activism by African-American women with the film "Passion for Justice," an in-depth look at Ida B. Wells, a black feminist and investigative journalist of the post-Civil War era.

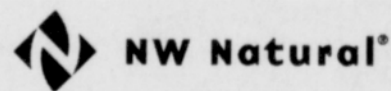
The viewing will be open to the public on Wednesday, Feb. 25 at 7 p.m. at the Bread and Roses Center, 819 N. Killingsworth St. Snacks will be available before the documentary at 6:30 p.m. for a \$3 donation.

The Bread and Roses Center is located a half block west of North Albina on North Killingsworth on bus lines #4 and #72. To arrange childcare, rides, work exchanges or for more information call 503-240-4462.

"We must accept finite disappointment, but we must never lose infinite hope."

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968)

Though he suffered through disappointments, Dr. Martin Luther King's legacy to us all is the invaluable gift of hope. NW Natural proudly stands with our African American community in celebrating Black History Month.



Achieving Women Honored

In recognition of women's accomplishments throughout history, Mt. Hood Community College is proud to announce more than a dozen commemorative events scheduled during winter term with the theme "Women Inspiring Hope and Possibility."

Events this week include "Women in Literature: Off Broadway," on Wednesday, Feb. 11, featuring women from the college's literature department performing some of their favorite pieces of literature written by women.

On Friday, Feb. 13, "Women in Film," brings Bushra Azzuoz, an Arab-American filmmaker who grew up in Mosel, Iraq and Beirut, Lebanon. Her latest film project is a reflection on the cycles of violence, terrorism and war that have ravaged both the U.S. and the Middle East.

Each of the events will be held in Town and Gown Room 2057 from noon to 1 p.m. and are free and open to the community. For more information call 503-491-7260.

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