

2008 OREGON BALLOT MEASURE GUIDE

BALLOT INITIATIVE	WHAT IT DOES	WORKABLE SOLUTION?	PRESERVES DEMOCRACY?	WHO'S BEHIND IT?*
56(R)	Allows property tax elections to be decided by the majority of voters who turn out to vote	YES Eliminates "double majority" and removes a huge roadblock to funding schools, transportation, and local fire and police. It returns power to voters to decide local funding.	YES Encourages and rewards voting by allowing the majority of those who vote to decide elections.	Legislature
57(R)	Increases sentences for drug and repeat property and identity theft crimes; Requires addiction treatment for some offenders	YES Measure 57 and 61 are competing. If both pass, the one with the most votes will win. We need criminal justice solutions that allow judges the flexibility to get to the root of the problem - in many cases, drug abuse. While this measure is harsher than we would like, it is far better than measure 61's one-size-fits-all approach.	YES Includes drug treatment that helps offenders re-enter society and contribute as members of our democracy. Includes funding plan unlike the extreme and costly measure 61 which would take millions from the Oregon budget.	Legislature
58	Limits teaching children in languages other than English to two years (as little as one year for younger children)	NO Children learn better and quicker when taught in English and their first language. This measure would forbid schools and parents from considering the unique circumstances of their community and deprive all children of productive learning environments. This measure would cost Oregon \$253 million/year in federal funding without a plan to replace it.	NO This measure harms democracy by interfering with education and singling out certain children for unfair treatment. Parents and teachers know what's best for their kids and this one-size-fits-all approach would undermine that local control.	Sizemore, Walker & Parks
59	Creates unlimited deduction for federal income taxes on state tax returns (current limit is \$5,500)	NO Would crush the state budget by over \$1 billion/year to save the richest 1% of Oregonians \$15,000/person and the middle 20% only \$1/person. We need fair taxation, not more tax cuts for the wealthy.	NO A healthy democracy requires a working government, thriving middle class, and fair distribution of wealth—all of which measure 59 hurts.	Sizemore, Walker & Parks
60	Teacher pay raises and retention must be based only on "Classroom Performance"	NO This is another attempt to weaken public education by linking teacher pay with classroom performance, leading to more standardized testing. Would hurt low-income schools and reduce the local autonomy of school boards to hire and retain teachers.	NO This measure would hurt Oregon's public schools, a core institution of our democracy. Voters already defeated a similar measure in 2000.	Walker, Sizemore & Parks
61	Creates mandatory minimum sentences for certain non-violent crimes	NO Locking up 6000 more non-violent people in already overcrowded prisons won't work; we need drug and alcohol treatment that prevents crime and rehabilitates minor criminals. The measure's estimated \$450 million, plus the cost of building new prisons to house non-violent and first-time offenders, will rob crucial funds from education and public services, resulting in even more crime.	NO It may cost \$60,000 to lock up one prisoner for one year. Programs to rehabilitate minor criminals into contributing citizens are much cheaper, and much more effective in preserving a democracy. Mandatory sentencing is a one size fits all approach that undermines the wisdom of judges and juries.	Mannix & Parks
62	Allocates 15% Of Lottery Proceeds To Crime Prevention, Investigation, and Prosecution	NO % of lottery funds now go to education. This measure would take \$159 million from an educational system already teetering on the edge; resulting in cuts to other needs and more cuts to teachers, books, and school repairs.	NO This measure limits our flexibility to use lottery funds as needed and seriously undermines public education. An educated and informed public is necessary for a healthy democracy.	Mannix & Parks
63	Exempts most property improvements under \$35,000 from most building permit requirements	YOU DECIDE Building codes can be burdensome and costly, but they also keep houses safe and structurally sound for current and future occupants and in case of fires. Codes include watershed protections and flood control plans. Insurance rates could rise as a result of this measure.	NO Restricts state and local control over building codes and environmental protection. We are also skeptical of any proposal from Sizemore given his history.	Sizemore
64	Outlaws using funds collected with "public resource" for "political purpose"	NO Another measure similar to the ones defeated in 1998 and 2000 that takes choice away from public employees by preventing voluntary paycheck deductions to charities or to pay union dues.	NO Eliminates workers choice and does nothing to get big money out of politics. May violate free speech rights.	Sizemore & Parks
65	Creates one primary open to all parties and independents from which the top 2, regardless of party, would proceed to General Election	YOU DECIDE We need election reform that stops money from dominating politics. This measure opens up the primary to all voters and all candidates. But it makes this primary the only road to the general election and would allow only 2 candidates on the general election ballot. Would allow multiple parties to endorse the same candidate.	YOU DECIDE Is one primary for all voters more democratic? Will 3rd parties be helped by access to May primaries or hurt by having to win "top two" to run in November? Will endorsements by multiple parties hold major parties more accountable?	Keisling

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