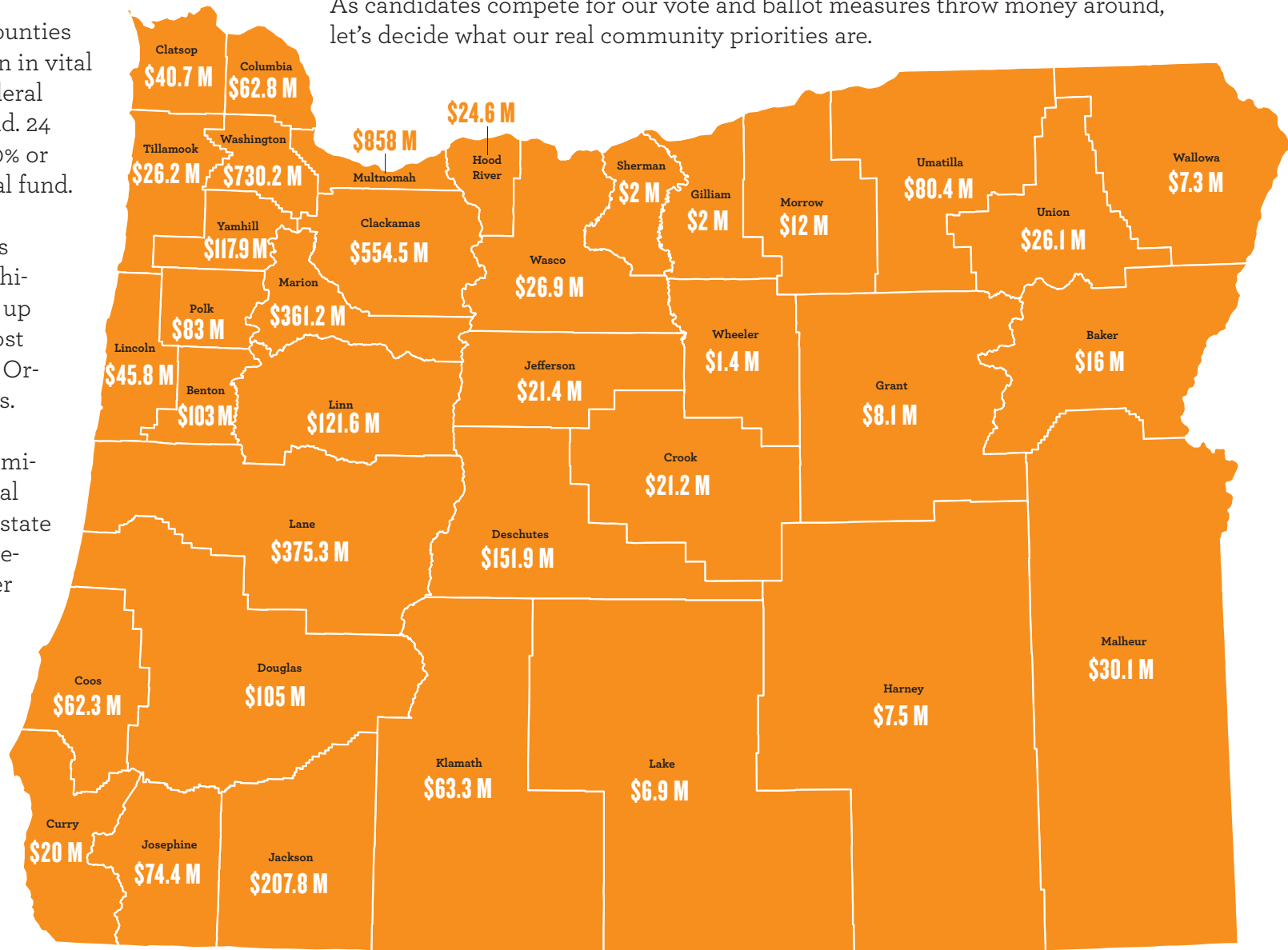


PRICETAG\$ AND PRIORITIES\$:

OREGON'S COST OF WAR PER COUNTY (IN MILLIONS)*

As candidates compete for our vote and ballot measures throw money around, let's decide what our real community priorities are.



\$ 33 of Oregon's 36 counties will lose \$238 million in vital general funds as federal timber payments end. 24 counties will lose 20% or more of their general fund.

\$ Federal capital gains tax cuts to the wealthiest Oregonians add up to more than total lost timber payments to Oregon's rural counties.

\$ More than 20,500 families received financial assistance from the state in May 2008 – a state-wide increase of over 12% since May 2007.

\$ Since the late 80s, yearly income of the top 1% of Oregon households has increased by \$440,000, but the typical household has seen \$115 more per year.

\$4,681: Cost of War per Oregon Household

Instead, this money could provide Oregonians with:

- 1,074,933 People with Health Care for One Year
- 90,145 Elementary School Teachers for One Year

*for more information: www.costofwar.com

STAND

Small Town Actions for a New Democracy

2008 VOTER BALLOT GUIDE INSIDE

WELCOME TO A VOTER GUIDE BY AND FOR SMALL TOWN OREGONIANS

It's that time again! Time to dig your ballot out and take up your pen to weigh in on the decisions that face us this election. There has been a lot of talk about hope and change this year. We could all use some of that considering the bills, debts, and headlines we will sort through to find our ballots.

As small town and rural Oregonians, we know how to stand together and take care of one another. The health



We face difficult times—long, vague, expensive wars, skyrocketing gas, food and interest rates, the loss of timber payments to our counties, all on top of declining employment, wages, benefits, and property values. As we struggle together in Oregon, we don't need an election that turns us against each other over false solutions to our very real problems.

of our democracy depends on it. We can make change if we demand that the people we send to Salem and DC have the same backbone that it takes us to survive these tough times across our state. We can hold them to our real priorities. And in our unity and clarity, we can send the message that we want the handful of initiative sponsors who buy their way to the ballot to stop wasting our time and money on repetitive measures that offer no workable solutions to our actual problems.

This guide is designed to cut through the jargon and campaign spin and get to the heart of what the people of Oregon need. Our practical approach to the ballot asks "what problems are we facing as small town and rural Oregonians" and "which of this year's ballot measures and candidates really work to solve these problems?"

There is a lot to vote 'no' on. Luckily, there seems to be at least one gem. Ballot Measure 56, a legislative referral, actually give us a chance to dump the double majority that has kept small town Oregon from making the best decisions to build our communities. Now that would allow some change!

Democracy needs our vote. This guide walks us through what we need to know to fill out our ballot. Voting is just one step. Democracy is about 'we, the people' having control over the decisions that impact our lives. We start by using our people power to join together in the face of hard times and demand solutions that work to the real problems that we face.

Share this guide. Encourage everyone you know to be informed and vote. Then stay active by signing the Freedom Pledge and getting every school board member and city councilor to sign on as well. (More on page 3 and at www.FreedomVoters.com)

Let's do more than hope for change. Let's start making it now.

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A NEIGHBOR TO
NEIGHBOR VOTER
GUIDE

RURAL ORGANIZING PROJECT
P.O. BOX 1350
SCAPPOOSE
OR 97056



SMALL TOWN...
BIG VOTE!

READ MORE INSIDE!

ELECTION NUTS AND BOLTS

Every Oregonian is represented in the federal government in Washington DC by two US Senators and one US Congressperson. Currently, our US Senators are Sen. Gordon Smith and Sen. Ron Wyden.

Every Oregonian is also represented in the state government in Salem by one State Representative and one State Senator. Your US Congressperson, State Senator, and State Representative depend on where you live.

You can call your county elections office to find out who represents you in DC and in Salem or look online at: www.leg.state.or.us/findlegsltr/

A measure can get on the ballot in two ways. It can be a Citizen Initiative, which requires 82,769 signatures to change the law, or 110,358 signatures to change the constitution. Or, it can be a Referendum which is brought to the voters by order of the Oregon Legislature.



NOT REGISTERED TO VOTE?

You may register to vote in Oregon if:

- You are a resident of Oregon.
- You are a United States citizen.
- You will be 18 years old by Election Day, Nov. 4th, 2008.

To register to vote or update your current registration complete the form at: www.sos.state.or.us/elections/votreg/sel500.pdf

You can also check out your local library, post office, DMV, and most public buildings for blank voter registration cards—or call your County Clerk.

Oregon requires a Driver's License, DMV ID, or Social Security number to register to vote. If you are registering by mail, include a copy of either a valid photo ID, paycheck stub, utility bill, bank statement, or government document.

WANT TO DO MORE THAN VOTE?

Join with others in your community by volunteering with your local human dignity group.

Consider the voter education you can do with your family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. Can you motivate them to vote? Can you pass them a copy of this voter's guide?

Contact Rural Organizing Project at www.rop.org to get more involved!

WHAT IS ROP?

The Rural Organizing Project is a non-profit organization working to advance democracy in all 36 of Oregon's counties. ROP's mission is to "strengthen the skills, resources, and vision of primary leadership in local autonomous human dignity groups with the goal of keeping such groups a vibrant source for a just democracy."

If you want to stay in contact with ROP, email us your contact information at office@rop.org or call 503-543-8417.

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REGISTER TO VOTE BY OCTOBER 14TH!

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

For large print and Spanish language versions of this guide, contact ROP.

Rural Organizing Project • P.O. Box 1350 • Scappoose, OR 97056 • 503-543-8417 • www.rop.org

TAKING THE BALLOT BY THE REIGNS: CRITERIA FOR OUR VOTERS GUIDE

We need government to help solve the problems facing us today. When looking at this year's ballot measures, we asked two questions: Does this measure provide a workable solution to our problems? And does it preserve democracy? We took our definition of democracy from the World Book Encyclopedia that says democracy requires inclusion of all, majority rule and minority rights, an informed and educated public, and

a reasonable standard of living. To assess workable solutions, we asked: What is the problem, and does the measure help solve it? Does it help working Oregonians or does it do more harm than good? Is it a wise use of our scarce resources or does it cost even more than the original problem? All proposals are initiatives unless noted with an "R" to signify that they have been referred to the voters by the Legislature.

WHOA THERE!

Beware of friendly sounding ballot titles! The State does not approve citizen initiatives in advance. According to Oregon's Secretary of State, Bill Bradbury, "most all of the initiatives Oregon voters will decide this fall got there through practices that are now illegal" under new laws that did not apply this year.

*WHO'S BEHIND THESE MEASURES?

Bill Sizemore is the longtime anti-tax, anti-government, anti-union activist, head of Oregon Taxpayers United, found liable for racketeering in a ballot measure case in 2002.

Kevin Mannix is a long time backer of anti-tax, anti-government, anti-union, and discriminatory initiatives and frequent failed candidate for state and federal office.

Russ Walker heads Oregon Citizens for a Sound Economy, AKA Oregon Freedomworks, a hard right anti-tax, anti-government, anti-union, anti-immigrant group.

Loren Parks from Nevada is the main backer of Sizemore, Mannix, and Walker; contributing more than \$870,000 this year to 6 initiatives and more than \$8 million total.



TAKING A CLOSER LOOK: WHY YES ON 57 AND NO ON 61 MAKES SENSE

This November, Oregonians face two crime-related measures. Each attempts to address drug and property crimes, but with dramatically different approaches - and huge differences in their impacts on Oregon.

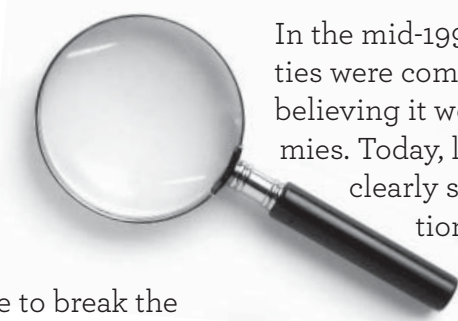
Measure 57 increases some sentences, while also expanding access to drug addiction treatment for offenders. The measure's sponsors realize it will be impossible to break the cycle of addiction-driven crime without offering treatment to addicts.

Measure 61 only creates a new set of mandatory minimum sentences for drug and property-related crimes, taking away any discretion in sentencing for non-violent and first-time offenders. It would swell our prison population with thousands of new inmates - while actually providing them less access to drug treatment, guaranteeing that many of them would return to a life of addiction and crime after their release. Measure 61 will cost more than TWICE what Measure 57 would. The

state estimates that Measure 61 would cost the state more than \$200 million a year. And, that's not all. The state would also have to borrow more than \$1 BILLION to build three new prisons to hold that flood of new inmates!

In the mid-1990s, Oregon's rural counties were competing for new prisons, believing it would boost local economies. Today, local and national research clearly shows that prison construction is a failed economic strategy. In April 2008, the Oregon Business Magazine's cover story, "The Economic Promise that Never Came True: Prisons: Myth" revealed that Oregon counties that "lost" the competition for prison construction in the 1990s are actually doing better economically than those that "won".

The article quoted Max Williams, the Director of the Oregon Department of Corrections, who explained that prisons are not an economic driver. "We are not a profit center. We are a cost center. We're taking tax dollars that could be spent on a whole variety of things, and we're spending them on prisons."



WORKING SOLUTIONS FOR WORKING PEOPLE: NO ON 58

Do you remember your high school French or German class? How many of you could learn chemistry, algebra, or history using only the foreign language that you studied for 1 or 2 years? This is what Bill Sizemore proposes with Ballot Measure 58 - to limit English as a Second Language instruction to 2 years or less. Offering education in multiple languages doesn't prevent learning English; just the opposite, it enables a student to more quickly learn English and gain the educational and job skills that will make them valuable to our economy and engaged citizens. The impact of Measure 58 is that it will cost Oregon over half a billion dollars in the first two years.

Gaining real proficiency in a new language takes even the strongest student more than two years. When you think about it this way, it looks as though the real impact of this initiative might be to keep an entire group of people from ever learning enough to finish their educations, get more than minimum-wage jobs, or be treated with the fairness and respect we all deserve.

When it comes to immigration issues, it is always wise to keep a sharp eye on "smooth talkers" and "easy fixes." Voters in rural Columbia County, in the NW corner of the state, will face two local initiatives that claim to "help" small businesses, but instead would require all businesses to register with Homeland Security's problem-plagued E-Verify database - and whether the database is accurate or not, they will be hit with \$10,000 fines if they are found to employ undocumented workers. Times are tough enough for rural economies. Columbia County measures 5-190 and 5-191 will make things much worse by punishing local businesses for the federal government's failures on immigration. This doesn't sound like the kind of "help" working people need.

Fixing our broken immigration system is going to be tough because it is a symptom of a problem that goes far beyond our own borders. To create workable solutions, we need leaders in Oregon and DC with backbone who will push for comprehensive immigration reform in a way that works for families and working people, not against them.

TAKE THE FREEDOM PLEDGE

The candidates that we elect will take an oath to uphold the laws of our state and country, including the cornerstone of our democracy, the Constitution and Bill of Rights. But, lately, it seems that has been up for debate.

We want to start 2009 off by recommitting to the founding promises that our country is built on. We can start now by voting for democracy and freedom in 2008 and calling upon all candidates running for office to join the public in taking this pledge. Ask candidates in your community to join you and the 100s of other constituents who have already signed on.

"We are Americans, and in our America we do not torture; we do not imprison people without charge, due process or legal recourse; we do not allow our phones and emails to be tapped without a court order; and above all we do not give any President unchecked power. I pledge to fight to protect and defend the Constitution & the Bill of Rights with my name and my vote."

—Go to www.freedomvoters.com to take the Freedom Pledge today.