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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon announces ballot measure recommendations**

The Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) board of directors voted to support Measures 97 to increase the corporate minimum tax and invest in opportunity, community well-being and dignity for the people of our state. EMO calls on our elected officials to use Measure 97 revenues to increase opportunity for Oregon school children, make health care more affordable and provide witness to the dignity of each and every person through crucial anti-poverty, hunger and senior service programs. EMO has a commitment to an equitable system of taxation that can adequately fund core public functions. This new corporate minimum tax represents this commitment by exempting every business' first \$25 million in Oregon sales and by generating game-changing revenue to invest in our communities.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is also recommending a “yes” vote on Measure 98, to fund dropout-prevention and career and college readiness programs in Oregon high schools, and Measure 100, to prohibit the sale of parts or products from 12 species of endangered animals.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is recommending a “no” vote on Measure 96, to devote 1.5 percent of Oregon Lottery net proceeds toward veterans' services, and Measure 99, to create an Outdoor School Education Fund continuously funded through the Lottery. While EMO strongly supports funding programs and services for veterans and outdoor education for students, we have consistently opposed the existence of the Oregon Lottery. Reporting by *The Oregonian* in 2013 further revealed how the Oregon Lottery's offerings undermine family and community well-being. Accounting for 86 percent of 2013 Oregon Lottery revenues, the state lottery is driven by addictive video slot and poker—products played by those whose average annual losses exceed \$2,500. Some of those suffering such massive losses are undoubtedly “problem gamblers” —those whose lives are severely disrupted by their gambling habits—who on average carry nearly as much gambling debt as their households earn in a year, and one in 20 of whom attempted suicide in 2013. EMO believes the state should not rely on the potentially financially and socially ruinous addictions of some of its most impoverished residents to fund government services.

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#### **MEMBER DENOMINATIONS**

African Methodist Episcopal Church ■ American Baptist Churches of Oregon ■ Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) ■ Christian Methodist Episcopal Church ■ Church of the Brethren ■ Community of Christ  
Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon ■ Episcopal Diocese of Oregon ■ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ■ Presbyterian Church (USA)—Presbytery of the Cascades  
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) ■ Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland ■ United Church of Christ ■ United Methodist Church ■ Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches

**Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is taking no position on Measure 94**, to repeal the judicial retirement age, **and Measure 95**, to allow public universities to invest in equities, as neither of these measures directly relate to the primary social and moral concerns of our faith traditions.

Recognizing the need to speak out on these important measures, EMO has produced the [2016 Voters' Guide to Oregon Ballot Measures](#), with a full listing of recommendations for clergy and lay people on the seven statewide measures. Copies of the EMO Voters' Guide have been sent to faith communities across the state; the [Voters' Guide](#) and [Statement of Social Principles](#) are also available online at [www.emoregon.org](http://www.emoregon.org).

Britt Conroy, EMO Public Policy director, will make presentations this fall at congregations on EMO's ballot measure recommendations. If you would like to schedule a presentation, please contact Mr. Conroy at [bconroy@emoregon.org](mailto:bconroy@emoregon.org) or (503) 221-1054, ext. 207.

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland abstained from EMO's deliberations regarding the November ballot measures. The Roman Catholic Archdiocese releases all public policy statements through the Oregon Catholic Conference.

*Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is a statewide association of Christian denominations, congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners working together to improve the lives of Oregonians through community ministry programs, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, environmental ministry and public policy advocacy. Please note, the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon releases all public policy statements through the Oregon Catholic Conference.*