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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 107, 108 and 110. EMO makes no recommendation on Measure 109.**

Recognizing the need to speak out on these important measures, EMO has produced the [2020 Voters' Guide to Oregon Ballot Measures](#), with a full listing of recommendations for clergy and lay people on the five 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 [emoregon.org/advocacy-action](http://emoregon.org/advocacy-action).

A virtual Oregon Faith Voters Forum will be led by EMO's Public Policy Advocacy team on Oct. 20 from 7 to 8 p.m. In addition to talking about the strategic work being done to support the most vulnerable among us, they will outline EMO's position on the 2020 Oregon ballot measures. The forum is free. Registration is required at [emoregon.org/event/2020-forum](http://emoregon.org/event/2020-forum).

**Measure 107** amends the Oregon State Constitution to allow for the creation of laws regulating campaign contributions, expenditures, disclosure of campaign finances and disclaimers about advertisements' funding sources. EMO's board finds Measure 107 in agreement with EMO's social principles of *Public Witness & the Common Good* and *Environmental Stewardship*. EMO views campaign finance reform as an ethical imperative to ensure fairness and equal representation of all people in our governing bodies. EMO also acknowledges that a lack of state-level campaign finance regulation has had a detrimental impact on the natural world and hopes that campaign finance laws will encourage lawmakers to enact environmental regulations that prioritize protecting people over profit.

**Measure 108** raises taxes on cigarette and cigar products and imposes a tax on vaping products to generate revenue for Oregon Medicaid and healthcare programs. Measure 108 would raise existing taxes on cigarettes from \$1.33 a pack to \$3.33 a pack, raise the tax cap on individual cigars from \$0.50 to \$1 per cigar, and impose a 65 percent tax on the wholesale price of vaping products. Ten percent of the revenue generated by this tax will fund public health programs to deter tobacco usage. The remaining 90 percent of revenue raised by this tax would go to Oregon's Medicaid program, Oregon Health Plan (OHP). Even

before COVID-19, OHP was projecting a \$320 million funding gap for the upcoming biennium, which the tax would help to alleviate.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon endorses Measure 108 based on its social principles of *Human Rights & Religious Freedom, Family & Community Well-being, and Public Witness & Common Good*. EMO acknowledges that the funding mechanism employed in Measure 108 is neither perfect nor equitable, as there is a credible concern that taxes will disproportionately be paid by low-income Oregonians. However, EMO believes that it is more important than ever to ensure healthcare for all Oregonians; this measure represents the only immediate option for ensuring the stability of OHP through these unprecedented times. EMO also believes that the culturally specific providers who are among those set to receive the remaining 10 percent of tax revenue will help mitigate the disproportionate harm that tobacco causes to communities of color, low-income Oregonians and youth.

**Measure 110** removes criminal penalties for low-level possession of most drugs in Oregon and increases access to addiction treatment services. The measure expands existing treatment services and established a network of Addiction Recovery Centers (ARC) to connect individuals all across Oregon to treatment services. If passed, Measure 110 would make Oregon the first state to decriminalize personal, non-commercial possession of drugs listed as schedule I, II, III and IV, those deemed most likely to be abused. Measure 110 would decriminalize possession, but would not legalize the drugs themselves. Possession would be reclassified as a Class E violation and result in a \$100 fine. If the violator utilizes their local ARC for a consultation to seek services, the fine is waived.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon supports Measure 110 based on its social principles of *Human Rights & Religious Freedom, Family & Community Well-being, and Public Witness and the Common Good*. EMO affirms the rights of all people to health care, including services that promote the overall health and economic stability of families and communities, including those suffering from addiction. Our country has a moral imperative to reform our criminal justice system and reduce the trauma it inflicts on communities of color. EMO affirms that Measure 110 represents an important step towards a more just system that respects the inherent dignity of all people and treats all Oregonians equally and fairly.

*Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is a statewide association of faith partners working together to improve the lives of Oregonians through direct service programs, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, creation justice and public policy advocacy.*

*Please note the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon releases all public policy statements through the Oregon Catholic Conference.*