

VOTERS' GUIDE TO 2024 OREGON BALLOT MEASURES

MEASURE 115: IMPEACHMENT OF ELECTED STATE EXECUTIVES

SUMMARY (Initiated Constitutional Amendment)

Measure 115 would allow the Oregon State Legislature to impeach and remove elected state executives. The House of Representatives could impeach an elected official for “malfeasance or corrupt conduct in office, willful neglect of statutory or constitutional duty, or other felony or high crime,” with a two-thirds vote. The Senate must then reach a two-thirds vote to convict and remove the official from office and disqualify them from holding any other public office.

EMO RECOMMENDATION: VOTE YES ON MEASURE 115

A YES vote supports EMO’s value of the “important role of government in maintaining a system of laws, regulations and public services.” EMO believes Measure 115 would ensure the executive branch does not become too powerful or operate without oversight. If an elected official engages in corruption, abuse of power, or neglect and faces no consequences, the public trust in the entire political system erodes. The power of impeachment entrusted in the Legislature is fundamental to Oregon’s democratic governance.

MEASURE 116: COMPENSATION FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

SUMMARY (Initiated Constitutional Amendment)

Measure 116 aims to create the Independent Public Service Compensation Commission to set salaries of public officials. The need arises from a desire to eliminate conflicts of interest and ensure that compensation decisions are based on objective criteria. The commission will gather data, consult with experts, and set compensation based on the cost-of-living index, job responsibilities, and state comparisons.

EMO RECOMMENDATION: VOTE “YES” ON MEASURE 116

EMO supports Measure 116’s comprehensive solution to better the public service compensation structure. This measure aims to promote economic fairness, attract talent, enhance transparency, and create a more effective and accountable government in Oregon. Most importantly, we believe it would further EMO’s mission to be “in solidarity with those on the margins” and “establish social and economic systems that encourage, enable, and empower all people to develop and use their capabilities to meet their needs and to contribute to the social welfare.

MEASURE 117: RANKED-CHOICE VOTING

SUMMARY (Legislative Referral)

Measure 117 would establish ranked choice voting (RCV) for elections to federal and state offices; however, the measure would not affect state legislative elections. If passed, RCV would take effect on Jan. 1, 2028, and would require the secretary of state to establish a program to educate voters. With RCV, voters rank candidates by preference on their ballots. If a candidate wins a majority of first-preference votes, they are declared the winner. If no candidate wins a majority of first-preference votes, the candidate with the fewest first-preference votes is eliminated and the voter’s next-preference choice is allocated to the remaining candidates. The process is repeated until a candidate wins an outright majority. *(Continued on next page.)*

EMO TAKES A NEUTRAL POSITION ON MEASURE 117

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon officially takes a neutral stance on measure 117. While EMO envisions a democratic government that “furthers social justice and the common good,” there is not enough research data about RCV to make a qualified recommendation. RCV is a fairly new concept, and much of its effectiveness and impacts are not yet fully known. Recent studies and surveys have shown increased voter satisfaction with RCV and increased voter turnout. Greater campaign civility and mobilization and increased contact in RCV elections has also been attributed to higher youth turnout in RCV jurisdictions. While some studies have shown that voters’ reported understanding of RCV is generally high across race and ethnic groups, additional research has found that people of color may be less likely to rank multiple candidates. This is concerning as it may lead to ballot exhaustion that weakens the influence of these voters. If passed, we strongly advocate for an education program that is accessible by all cultures, languages and disabilities.

MEASURE 118: CORP. TAX REVENUE REBATE FOR RESIDENTS

SUMMARY (Statutory Initiative)

Measure 118, also known as the Oregon Rebate, would levy an annual 3 percent tax on a corporation’s Oregon sales above \$25 million. The roughly \$7 billion in annual revenue raised would be distributed equally among Oregon residents, with the Oregon Legislative Revenue Office (LRO) estimating that every Oregonian, regardless of age, would receive a \$1,600 rebate in 2026.

EMO RECOMMENDATION: VOTE “NO” ON MEASURE 118

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon agrees that corporations do not pay their fair share of taxes and that the lives of many financially struggling Oregonians would be improved through a rebate program. However, we also believe Measure 118’s impact on General Fund-supported services, employment and the state’s ability to raise funds for more pressing needs outweighs the benefits of this large, non-targeted rebate program. EMO’s direct service programs and public policy advocacy have historically focused on economically marginalized and too often politically ignored Oregonians, particularly our neighbors living in deep poverty. We applaud the proponents’ intent to make the rebate available to those excluded from other models of government support, including children, those unemployed, incarcerated and undocumented. Unfortunately, of the roughly \$7 billion per year in rebate revenue, just 12 percent would go to those in households at or below the federal poverty level.

Measure 118 contradicts our vision to create “an equitable system of taxation that can adequately fund ... core public functions ... for social progress, economic justice and environmental stewardship.” In 2016, EMO supported Measure 97, which proposed a similar corporate tax to fund education, healthcare and senior services. Such prioritized and needed investments justified the minimal economic and employment impact of the measure. We ultimately do not believe a non-targeted rebate program is worth what are very real impacts on programs dependent on the state General Fund.

MEASURE 119: UNIONIZATION OF CANNABIS WORKERS

SUMMARY (Statutory Initiative)

With the goal of increasing workplace safety and reducing wage theft by employers, Measure 119 would require that a cannabis dispensary, processor or other cannabis entity licensed by the Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission (OLCC) enter into a labor peace agreement as a condition to hold an OLCC license. Measure 119 seeks to secure labor protections for cannabis workers, whose status under federal labor law is uncertain. Under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), most employees are protected when seeking to join a union, with agricultural workers being a key exception. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has not taken a position on whether cannabis workers are covered by the NLRA.

EMO RECOMMENDATION: VOTE “YES” ON MEASURE 119

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon affirms the rights of workers, consumers, and communities to organize and to engage in dialogue or collective bargaining with employers. EMO appreciates that there are competing legal opinions about whether this measure violates the U.S. Constitution and whether it would be preempted by federal labor law. For example, attorneys for Measure 119 proponents argue that the measure does not prevent employers from sharing with employees their opinions about a potential labor peace agreement, as claimed by measure opponents. Instead, it requires employers to remain neutral regarding a union’s ability to communicate to employees about their rights to organize. In urging a “Yes” vote, EMO prioritizes removing barriers to union organizing efforts and thereby increasing the likelihood of adequate worker protections, while leaving legal disagreements to the courts.