

# VOTERS' GUIDE



**TO THE 2024 OREGON  
BALLOT MEASURES**

# VOTERS' GUIDE

## Fall 2024

### COMING TOGETHER ON BALLOT MEASURES

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Director of Public Policy Advocacy

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*Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon does not speak for The Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon; they release all public policy statements through the Oregon Catholic Conference.*

Our core mission at Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) is to bring together diverse communities of faith to learn, serve, and advocate for justice, peace, and the integrity of creation. For 50 years, we have used our voice to advocate for policies and legislation that help create an Oregon that works for everyone, emphasizing those on the margins.

Releasing our “Voters’ Guide to the 2024 Oregon Ballot Measures” is an important part of this work. We’re privileged to provide thoughtful guidance to people of faith and goodwill and help connect current ballot initiatives to deeper values. We hope our discussion of these five ballot measures will provide valuable insights to Oregon voters.

At EMO, we stand for a lively and diverse body politic by encouraging varying perspectives and respectful disagreements. We use these differences to enhance diversity of thought to lead us towards the common good.

In the public square, EMO unapologetically stands alongside Oregonians who—because of their race, economic status or limited access to power—have been neglected by our society at large. We stand for the aspirations and rights of all, no exceptions.

The positions taken in this voters’ guide are endorsed through a democratic process by our board of directors after the careful recommendation of our volunteer

Public Policy Committee. We use our Statement of Social Principles to guide this public policy work and identify which area, or areas, of social concern we base our recommendations on, including:

- Environmental Stewardship
- Economic Justice
- Family and Community Well-being
- Human Rights and Religious Freedom
- Public Witness and the Common Good
- Peace and Global Justice

As our Public Policy Committee engages in a discussion regarding each ballot measure, we consider arguments offered by both supporters and opponents of each measure.

We also rely on the Scriptures, our social principles, past positions on similar measures and rigorous deliberation.

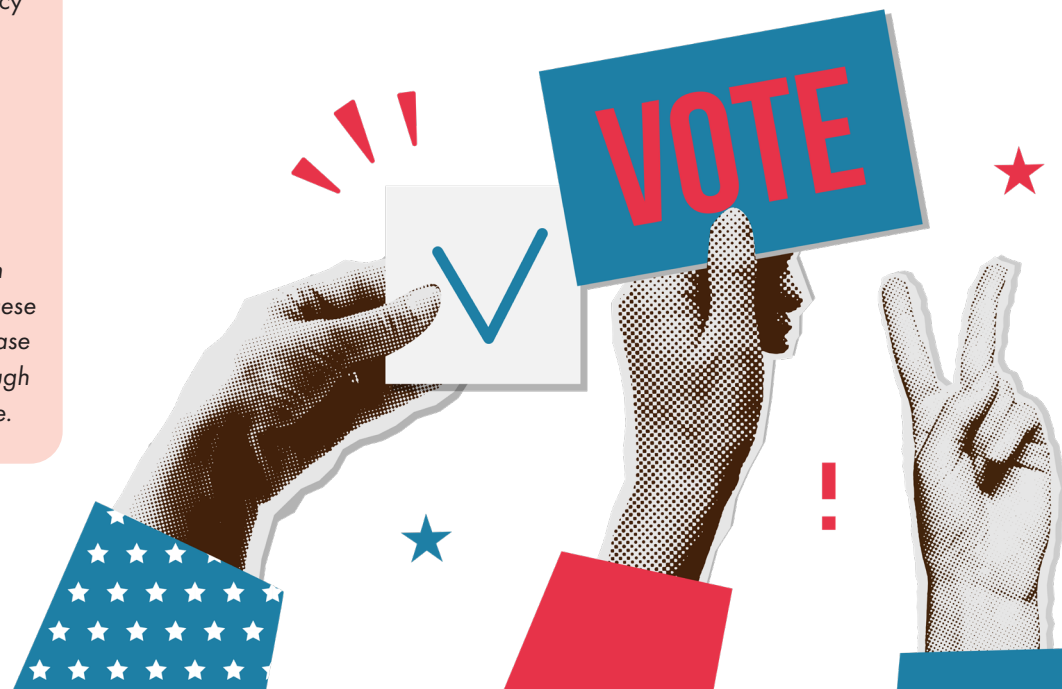
We invite you to prayerfully consider the wisdom of your own tradition and engage in a thoughtful process of discernment in exercising your civic duty to vote.

We are reminded by human rights activist Loung Ung, “Voting is not only our right, it is our power.” ■

**VIEW STATEMENT OF SOCIAL PRINCIPLES AT [emoregon.org/socialprinciples](http://emoregon.org/socialprinciples)**

“Our faith traditions call us to be thoughtful and active advocates for peace, social justice, human dignity and environmental stewardship. ... EMO seeks to empower people of faith and all Oregonians to fulfill their role in the democratic process.

—EMO STATEMENT OF SOCIAL PRINCIPLES



## VOTE AND MAKE YOUR VOICE COUNT!

**The Nov. 5, 2024, election is a statewide general election and will be vote-by-mail.**

Any Oregon resident who is at least 18 years old on Election Day is eligible to vote, but voter registration is required. Register online on the Oregon Secretary of State website (below) or turn in a voter registration card to any county election office within five calendar days after signing the card. The last day to register is Oct. 15. A registered voter who has moved, changed address or changed their name must re-register.

Ballots will begin being mailed to voters on Oct. 16. Voters can use any official ballot drop site in Oregon to return their completed ballot during the 20-day voting period. Locate Oregon ballot drop boxes on the Oregon Secretary of State website (below). Ballots may also be returned in person or by mail to a county election office by 8 p.m. on Nov. 5.

**Oregon Secretary of State website: [sos.oregon.gov/voting](http://sos.oregon.gov/voting)**

# VOTERS' GUIDE

## MEASURE 115

### IMPEACHMENT OF ELECTED STATE EXECUTIVES

*Initiated Constitutional Amendment:* Authorizes impeachment of statewide elected officials by Oregon Legislature with two-thirds vote by each House.

EMO RECOMMENDS  
**VOTE YES ON MEASURE 115**

BASED ON EMO'S SOCIAL PRINCIPLE  
**PUBLIC WITNESS AND THE COMMON GOOD**  
For details, visit [emoregon.org/socialprinciples](http://emoregon.org/socialprinciples)

#### SUMMARY

Measure 115 would allow the Oregon State Legislature to impeach and remove elected state executives, including the governor, secretary of state and attorney general. 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.

Under the current constitution, the Legislature has no ability to remove elected state executives. Notably, Oregon is the only state without the power to impeach the governor.

#### SUPPORTERS

Measure 115 passed with unanimous bipartisan support in both chambers. Supporters of the measure emphasize the importance of a mechanism to remove public officials who abused their power to safeguard against tyranny and corruption. The power of impeachment encourages officials to adhere to a higher standard of conduct and deters them from unethical behavior, ensuring they remain committed to serving the best interests of constituents.

#### OPPONENTS

There is no organized opposition to Measure 115.

#### EMO RECOMMENDATION

**Vote YES on Measure 115.**

A YES vote supports EMO's vision of a "government and social order that is founded on principles of human dignity and political equality." EMO values the "important role of government in maintaining a system of laws, regulations and public services" and believes Measure 115 would ensure the executive branch does not become too powerful or operate without oversight.

We understand how essential public confidence in government is to ensure both a healthy democracy and public support for state programs upon which so many Oregonians depend. 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. It upholds the principles of accountability, checks and balances, and ethical conduct in public office, while protecting the public interest and maintaining the integrity of government. ■

## MEASURE 116

### COMPENSATION FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

Ideally, this commission would minimize barriers to elect legislators who represent Oregon's diversity.

#### OPPONENTS

Opponents of Measure 116 are concerned about the true independence of the commission, given that its members are appointed by political figures. They are also concerned about the costs associated with establishing and maintaining the commission and the cost of likely paying higher salaries for some public officials.

#### 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 116 accomplishes this by creating a compensation structure that allows individuals who are young, low-income and people of color to serve in public office. ■

*Initiated Constitutional Amendment:* Establishes "Independent Public Service Compensation Commission" to determine salaries for specified officials.

EMO RECOMMENDS  
**VOTE YES ON MEASURE 116**

BASED ON EMO'S SOCIAL PRINCIPLES  
**ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND PUBLIC WITNESS AND THE COMMON GOOD**  
For details, visit [emoregon.org/socialprinciples](http://emoregon.org/socialprinciples)

#### SUMMARY

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. Commission members will serve staggered terms to maintain continuity and independence. The commission will gather data, consult with experts, and set compensation based on the cost-of-living index, job responsibilities, and state comparisons. The measure ensures that members cannot be current public officials, employees, lobbyists or any immediate family members of those individuals.

#### SUPPORTERS

Supporters of Measure 116 emphasize the importance of paying public officials a fair and livable wage to attract and ensure retention of qualified officials in public service. Additionally, the measure promotes accountability by requiring the commission to operate transparently and justify its decisions to the public.

Supporters argue appropriate salaries for public officials are also an issue of equity. Low legislative pay has historically hindered candidates who are young, low-income and people of color from serving as public officials.

# VOTERS' GUIDE

## Measure 117

# RANKED-CHOICE VOTING

### Legislative Referral:

Establishes Ranked Choice Voting as the new voting system for federal and state elections; eliminates plurality votings.

EMO TAKES A  
**NEUTRAL  
POSITION ON  
MEASURE 117**

### SUMMARY

Measure 117 would establish ranked choice voting (RCV) for elections to federal and state offices, including the president, U.S. senator, U.S. representative, governor, secretary of state, attorney general, state treasurer, and commissioner of labor and industries. 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.

Oregon currently uses a plurality voting system in which the candidate with the highest number of votes wins.

With RCV, voters rank candidates by preference on their ballots. Voters may also choose to identify only their top choice. 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. A new tally is conducted to determine whether any candidate has won a majority of the adjusted votes. The process is repeated until a candidate wins an outright majority.

### SUPPORTERS

Supporters of Measure 117 state RCV allows voters to vote for their top candidate even if that candidate is not likely to win, thus eliminating the need to vote for the “lesser of two evils.” RCV better determines the candidate with the strongest support across the entire electorate, because they always receive the majority of the votes.

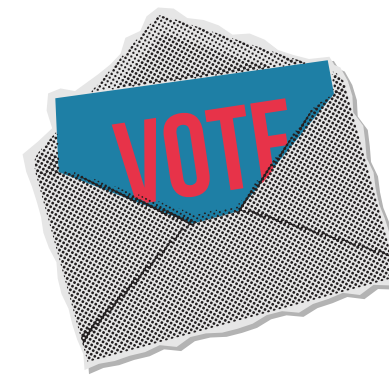
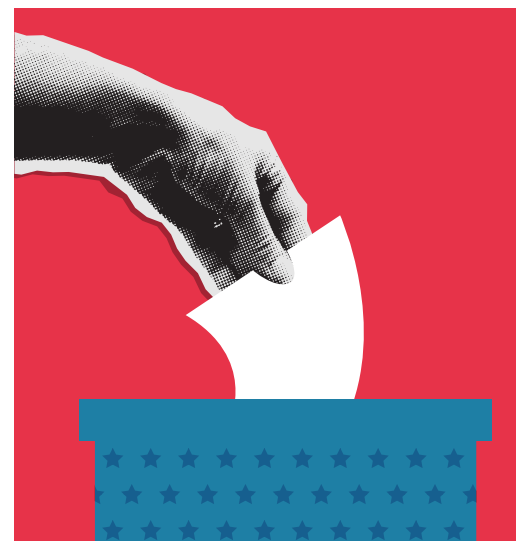
Supporters also emphasize that RCV encourages civil campaigning among candidates and incentivizes candidates to engage with voters across racial, ideological, and other polarizing demographics. This leads to better representation for all Oregonians.

They also argue RCV disincentivizes candidates to air negative political ads that spew fear mongering and half-truths. For example, a candidate who wants to be the second choice of a group of voters may refrain from leveling extreme attacks against those voters' first preference.

### OPPONENTS

Opponents of RCV are concerned this voting system is too complicated and could cause confusion among voters, leading people to give up without voting properly or causing voters' ballots to be thrown out because of a voting error.

Those opposed to RCV also worry



this voting system would cause too many exhausted votes, where a voter's ballot could be discarded before the last round of tallying due to choice elimination.

With RCV, precinct-level results would not be available, since this system would require centralized tabulation—meaning all ballots need to be tallied at one central location. This could also make audits difficult to execute.

### EMO RECOMMENDATION

**EMO takes a neutral position on Measure 117.**

The EMO Board of Directors urges Oregonians of faith to discern the best approach to Measure 117. The board officially takes a neutral stance on the measure.

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. Maine and Alaska are the only two states that have adopted and implemented RCV at the state level, though RCV is used in 60 jurisdictions across 24 states, including some in Oregon.

Recent studies and surveys have shown increased voter satisfaction with RCV and increased voter turnout. Some studies have found that voters in RCV jurisdictions are more likely to be contacted by campaigns. Greater campaign civility and mobilization and increased contact in RCV elections has also been attributed to higher youth turnout in RCV jurisdictions.

In addition, 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 in later rounds of counting.

Other studies suggest RCV may lead to higher rates of ballots being voided due to overvoting, especially in lower income communities and communities with a high concentration of Latino residents. Additional research is required to fully understand demographic makeup of RCV voters and to assess how racial and ethnic bias affects voter turnout.

If passed, we support the secretary of state's creation of a voter education program before the implementation of the new voting system. EMO strongly advocates for an education program that is accessible by all cultures, languages and disabilities. ■

# VOTERS' GUIDE

## Measure 118

# CORPORATE TAX REVENUE REBATE FOR RESIDENTS

### Statutory Initiative:

Increases highest corporate minimum taxes; distributes revenue to eligible individuals.

EMO RECOMMENDS  
**VOTE NO ON  
MEASURE 118**

BASED ON EMO'S  
SOCIAL PRINCIPLES  
**ECONOMIC JUSTICE  
AND  
PUBLIC WITNESS  
AND THE  
COMMON GOOD**

For details, visit  
[emoregon.org/socialprinciples](http://emoregon.org/socialprinciples).

### SUMMARY

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.

### SUPPORTERS

Citing the fact that corporations currently pay the higher of up to 7.6 percent tax on profits or up to a \$100,000 minimum tax for C corporations or a \$150 minimum tax for S corporations, those in favor of the rebate program argue the largest corporations do not pay their fair share of taxes.

Proponents point out that, even if well-off Oregonians also receive a rebate, the measure's biggest winners are low-income Oregonians, with the campaign arguing that Measure 118 will decrease the poverty rate in Oregon by 36 percent.

Supporters believe unrestricted financial support would enable struggling families to address basic needs, support child development, and improve physical and mental health. They argue that the rebates would allow even those households without dire financial situations to simply have a better life.

### OPPONENTS

Opponents worry passing this measure would make it more politically difficult to raise taxes in the future to address needs they see as more critical than those addressed by a universal rebate. Opponents also argue the tax increase would lead to higher operating costs for businesses, potentially driving them to reduce their workforce, cut wages or make them less competitive.

Opponents point to the Legislative Revenue Office's analysis predicting that prices will increase by 1.3 percent. Opponents point out that all of a corporation's sales above \$25 million are taxed, including essentials like food or medicine. For those businesses unable to raise their prices—because those prices are set by commodity markets or by the government, such as a pharmacy that is paid according to set Medicaid reimbursement rates—opponents worry these businesses would shutter. And opponents note that all businesses with sales over \$25 million would pay—even those that are unprofitable.

The LRO's analysis that Measure 118 will, on net, reduce the State General Fund by hundreds of millions of dollars in the 2025-2027 biennium and more than \$2 billion in the 2027-2029 biennium may lead to cuts to education, health care and public safety supports.

In addition, because the federal government would likely consider the Oregon Rebate as income,

low-income Oregonians could see delays or reductions in income-based support received from the federal government, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Finally, opponents point out that the Oregon Legislature can, with a simple majority vote, redirect these funds for other purposes.

### 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.

For decades, EMO's direct service programs and public policy advocacy have focused on economically marginalized and too often politically ignored Oregonians, particularly our neighbors living in deep poverty. In evaluating Measure 118, 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.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is a strong supporter of direct financial assistance: legislation spearheaded

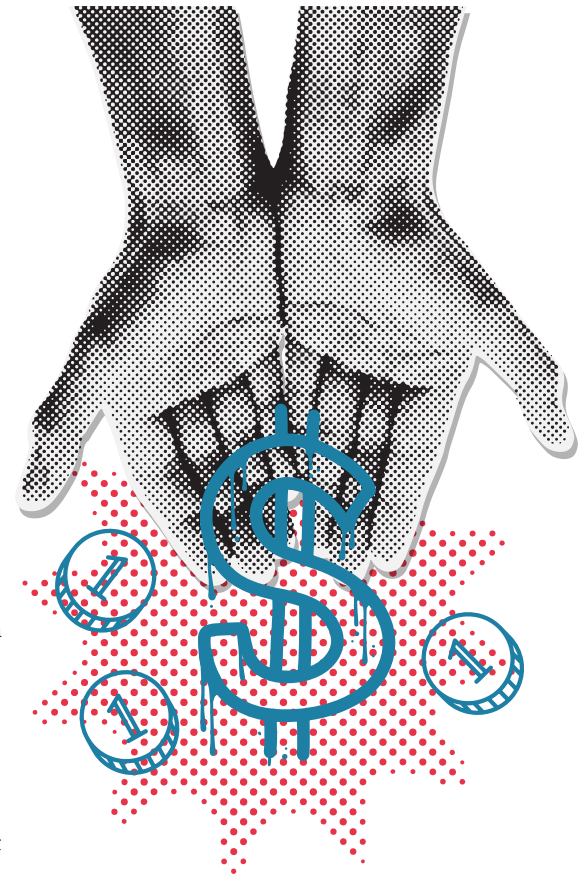
by EMO in 2023 to prevent youth homelessness currently funds prevention efforts in six rural communities, with direct cash payments as one of many tools the program uses to ensure housing stability.

Unfortunately, of the roughly \$7 billion per year in rebate revenue that Measure 118 would raise, just 12 percent would go to those in households at or below the federal poverty level, based on the most recent poverty data.

Measure 118 contradicts our vision, as described in EMO's Statement of Social Principles, to create "an equitable system of taxation that can adequately fund ... core public functions ... for social progress, economic justice and environmental stewardship." This vision focuses on both who pays taxes and whether there is sufficient tax revenue to meet the core needs of our state.

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 proposed tax increase.

We ultimately do not believe a non-targeted rebate program is worth what are very real impacts to our neighbors—both directly and through cuts to programs dependent on the state General Fund. ■



# VOTERS' GUIDE

## Measure 119

# UNIONIZATION OF CANNABIS WORKERS

### Statutory Initiative:

Require cannabis businesses to sign a labor peace agreement between the business and a labor organization.

### EMO RECOMMENDS

**VOTE YES ON MEASURE 119**

### BASED ON EMO'S SOCIAL PRINCIPLE

### ECONOMIC JUSTICE

For details, visit [emoregon.org/socialprinciples](https://emoregon.org/socialprinciples)

### SUMMARY

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. Under the measure, the labor peace agreement would ensure unions have access to employees to discuss union representation. If passed, Oregon would become the seventh state to require a labor peace agreement for licensed cannabis entities.

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.

During the 2023 Legislative Session, UFCW Local 555 championed legislation that mirrors Measure 119, but lawmakers—concerned with legislative counsel's legal opinion that the bill was not legal under federal labor law—chose not to pass the bill. UFCW 555 disagrees with this legal opinion, choosing to take Measure 119 directly to voters.

### SUPPORTERS

Measure proponents argue that too often cannabis employers block union organizing efforts by claiming employees are ineligible for such protections under the NLRA—either because employers define their jobs as agricultural workers or because cannabis is a controlled substance under federal law.

Proponents argue that mandatory labor peace agreements offer an alternative pathway to labor protections because those protections would be enshrined in an enforceable labor contract. While many employers have been amenable to union efforts, Measure 119 would protect cannabis employees of those employers who block union organizing.

In addition, proponents state that cannabis workers are often in contact with hazardous materials and areas where both water systems and high-capacity electrical wiring are present.

### OPPONENTS

Opponents argue that the premise of the measure is unfounded, pointing out that across the country cannabis workers are successfully joining NLRB-approved unions and that, contrary to proponents' statements, the NLRB has offered sufficient clarity on which workers are eligible to do so.

Opponents further argue that the measure: (A) unfairly limits an employer's ability to communicate about unionization with their

employees; (B) would be preempted by the federal NLRA; and (C) puts cannabis employers in an unfair position during negotiations over a labor peace agreement, given that if a labor peace agreement is not finalized, the employer can be required to close.

### 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 recognizes that unionization of some workplaces leads to increased worker pay and higher workplace safety expectations elsewhere, including in other industries.

EMO believes Measure 119 removes barriers that can hinder cannabis employees from forming a union, despite a recent ruling by the NLRB covering some of these workers.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon 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.

Should this measure become law after these legal reviews, EMO urges lawmakers to monitor this measure's impact and consider whether the law should be amended on practical grounds, such as to address opponents' concerns about lopsided leverage in labor peace agreement negotiations between a union and an employer at risk of losing their licensure if an agreement is not reached. ■





**ECUMENICAL  
MINISTRIES**  
— OF OREGON —

**Celebrating 50 years | 1974 – 2024**

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