

LANE COUNTY BALLOT MEASURES GENERAL ELECTION NOVEMBER 2018

Local Lane County Ballot Issues

Ballot Measure 20-290

Question: Shall Lane County amend its Charter to adopt “Score Then Automatic Runoff” method for counting candidate votes in local office races?

Summary: Passage of the measure will amend the Lane County Charter to implement Score Then Automatic Runoff (STAR) method of tallying votes for all candidates for county office and maintain the nonpartisan nature of local elections. The amendment eliminates primary elections for county officers and requires STAR voting at the November general election. The STAR method directs the voter to score each candidate appearing on the ballot using a scale of zero to five, with zero the lowest score and five the highest score. For each office the total score for each candidate is tallied. For the two candidates with the highest scores, ballots are tallied again as follows: Each elector’s ballot is counted as a vote for the final candidate that the elector scored the highest. If an elector gave each of the two final candidates the same score, the ballot does not count as a vote for either candidate. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes is the winner. The amendment includes Board authority to establish rules for administration of the STAR system and rules for a tie-vote.

Arguments for 20-290:

- Tends to produce a winner with broad support and more accurately reflects will of voters. Provides for more expressive voting—voters are able to express level of support for any or all candidates.
- Should result in greater voter participation in selection of final candidate(s) because of generally increased voter turnout for the General Election.
- Reduces “wasted” votes, because voters have opportunity to score all candidates.
- Encourages sincere, rather than strategic, voting—again, because voters can score all candidates and because it is in the interest of candidates to appeal to a broad range of voters to earn reasonable scores.
- Elimination of the primary election also could prove easier for candidates, more convenient for voters, and less expensive overall.

Arguments against 20-290:

- Requires an amendment to the Lane County Charter, and any future change likewise must be modified or repealed by voters.
- May be confusing to a large number of voters who will have to change how they evaluate candidates.
- An education plan to assure voter understanding is unspecified.
- Though used in commercial applications, as an electoral method STAR voting is untested.

The LWVOR Election Methods Study Update 2016, Appendix 2, provides evaluation criteria for election methods.

Ballot Measure 20-291

Question: Shall Siuslaw School District issue \$108,700,000 general obligation bonds to construct, expand and remodel facilities, improve safety, and enhance curriculum? If the bonds are approved, they will be payable from taxes on property or property ownership that are not subject to the limits of sections 11 and 11b, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.

Summary: If approved, bonds are expected to fund a new replacement high school, including improved career and technical education instructional spaces; middle school building improvements; south end elementary building replacement; and other upgrades. Bonds would mature no later than 31 years from issuance. The estimated tax rate is \$2.72 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. Actual levy rate may differ due to changes in interest rates and/or assessed value.

Arguments for 20-291: The League of Women Voters of Lane County believes the condition of elementary and secondary education school facilities is important to the efficiency and effectiveness of the educational program, the quality of the students' experience, and the security of students, staff and teachers. (Local Advocacy Positions)

Arguments against 20-291: This measure in combination with other taxes may be burdensome for some community residents and contribute to higher housing costs.

Ballot Measure 20-292

Question: Shall the District renew a tax of \$0.47 per \$1,000 of assessed value for operations for five years beginning 2019-2020? This measure renews current local option taxes.

Summary: River Road Park & Recreation District would use the tax revenue from this measure to maintain current programming and staffing levels. In 2008, the City of Eugene eliminated all reimbursement revenues of annexed properties. In addition, collected tax revenue has declined, while utilities and other expenses have continued to increase. Without additional tax revenue, the District would be forced to reduce and/or eliminate program offerings, reduce operating hours, reduce maintenance of the park, and eliminate both part-time and full-time staff. The local option tax would be \$0.47 per \$1,000 of assessed value per year. Based on an assessed value of \$150,000, a homeowner would pay approximately \$5.58 per month for the first year of the levy and approximately \$6.63 per month for the final year of the levy. These are estimates only.

Arguments for 20-292: The League of Women Voters of Lane County believes that every county resident should have access to public parks and open space. Lane County and its local communities should acquire and maintain park and recreational facilities and open spaces to protect natural and cultural resources and to provide economic, social, and recreational benefits that respond to the needs of the community. Regarding Parklands funding: Basic financial support for parks is a public responsibility. Funding for parks may come from a variety of sources, including but not limited to, property taxes, user fees, system development charges, special taxes, contracts, partnerships, grants and private gifts. (Local Advocacy Positions)

Arguments against 20-292: This measure in combination with other taxes may be burdensome for some community residents and contribute to higher housing costs. The long-term strategy for achieving operational and financial sustainability for River Road Park & Recreation District is unclear, given declining tax revenues with migration of properties to the City of Eugene.

Ballot Measure 20-296

Question: Shall City of Springfield issue \$10 million in general obligation bonds to fix deteriorating city streets? If the bonds are approved, they will be payable on property or property ownership that are not subject to the limits of sections 11 and 11b, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.

Summary: If this measure is approved, the City will use the bond proceeds to fix Springfield streets. Bond proceeds will only be used to fix existing streets and pay bond issuance costs. The listed streets are the City's highest priority for fixing with bond proceeds. See Springfield Resolution 2018-23 for a full list of streets that could be fixed using bond proceeds. Streets include: Olympic Street, Mohawk Boulevard to 28th Street; Centennial Boulevard, Aspen Street to Prescott Lane; 42nd Street, Main Street to IP Entrance; Thurston Road, 58th Street to 69th Street; and Mohawk Boulevard, G Street to OR126. The City will publish periodic reports to document completed bond projects. Bonds would be repaid from property taxes for a period not to exceed six years. The estimated rate is \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value, or about \$79 per year (\$6.58 per month) for the average Springfield homeowner.

Arguments for 20-296: The League of Women Voters of Lane County believes that improved transportation in Lane County is dependent upon comprehensive long-range planning. Local governments should strongly emphasize the maintenance of capital improvements. Ballot measures proposing new or additional taxes are most likely to succeed when providing for specific services and scheduled for general elections. (Local Advocacy Positions)

Arguments against 20-296: This measure in combination with other taxes may be burdensome for some community residents. The measure's effectiveness might benefit from oversight by a dedicated advisory committee.

Ballot Measure 20-297

Question: Shall Eugene School District improve school facilities, safety, career education, curriculum, technology, and address overcrowding by issuing \$319.3 million in bonds? If the bonds are approved, they will be payable from taxes on property or property ownership that are not subject to the limits of sections 11 and 11b, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.

Summary: The Eugene School Board has found that this measure is needed to construct and improve school facilities, address safety and security, and support school learning. Eugene School District 4J has been awarded \$8 million in state grants which will be available only if the bonds are approved. If approved, this measure would finance capital costs, including projects that:

- Construct, furnish, replace, renovate, improve, repair and remodel school facilities and other property used for district purposes.
- Improve student safety and security across the district.
- Acquire textbooks and instructional materials.
- Acquire technology to support classroom instruction and improve infrastructure.
- Acquire vehicles for transporting students and enhance access routes to schools.
- Acquire equipment and real property.
- Pay bond issuance costs.

The bonds may be issued in one or more series, and each series will mature no more than 21 years from the date of issuance. If approved, the increase over the 2019 projected levy rate is estimated

to be \$0.66 per \$1,000 of assessed value. Actual rates may vary based upon interest rates incurred and changes in assessed value.

What are 4J homeowners already paying in property taxes for school? According to the district:

- The current base rate for 4J property taxes is \$4.75 per \$1,000 of assessed value, or approximately \$970 annually for a median-priced home (\$204,147 in 2017).
- For a 2013 20-year school improvement bond, district residents also pay \$1.59 per \$1,000 of assessed value, or approximately \$325 annually for a median-priced home.
- There is a local option levy of 98 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value, or approximately \$200 annually for the owner of a median-priced home. The five-year levy was renewed in November 2014, and first adopted by voters in 2000.
- The current total is approximately \$1,495 annually for a “median homeowner.”
- The newly proposed bond is estimated at 66 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value, or approximately \$135, for a median-priced home. This would bring total, annual property taxes to \$1,630 for the owner of a median-priced home.

At the time of the 2013 bond measure election, 4J said this: The bond measure is part of a long-range facilities plan that guides the district in replacing and renovating outdated school buildings. The plan calls for another bond measure in 2017 or 2018 to replace or renovate four more aging schools

Arguments for 20-297: The League of Women Voters of Lane County believes the condition of elementary and secondary education school facilities is important to the efficiency and effectiveness of the educational program, the quality of the students’ experience, and the security of students, staff and teachers. (Local Advocacy Positions) The district has undertaken an extensive public process, has weighed renovation versus new construction, will use funds for needed curriculum and equipment, and has demonstrated good stewardship in meeting objectives for previous voter-approved measures.

Arguments against 20-297: This is a significant measure and in combination with other taxes may be burdensome for some community residents and contribute to higher housing costs.

Oregon State Ballot Measures

Oregon Measure 102, Allow Municipal Bond Revenue to Fund Privately Owned Affordable Housing Amendment (2018)

Oregon Measure 102 is a legislatively referred constitutional amendment.

A "yes" vote supports amending the state constitution to allow counties, cities, and towns to—with voter approval and certain restrictions—use bond revenue to fund the construction of affordable housing without necessarily retaining complete ownership of the constructed housing.

A "no" vote opposes amending the state constitution to allow counties, cities, and towns to—with voter approval and certain restrictions—use bond revenue to fund the construction of affordable housing without necessarily retaining complete ownership of the constructed housing.

Supporters: Defend Oregon, Oregon Governor Kate Brown, Oregon state representative and gubernatorial candidate Knute Buehler, Oregon League of Conservation Voters

Arguments For:

- In a letter to the chair of the House Committee On Human Services and Housing—which requested Measure 102—Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler and the city commissioners wrote, "Allowing local governments to leverage general obligation bond will increase the financing available for affordable housing and maximize overall resources."
- The Metro regional government of the Portland metropolitan area, supported HJR 201 at the recent legislative session," and said that more housing could be created if the amendment passes.

Arguments Against: No arguments opposing the measure were submitted.

Oregon Measure 103, the Ban Tax on Groceries Initiative, an initiated constitutional amendment.

Result of "Yes" Vote: "Yes" vote amends Constitution; prohibits state/local taxes/fees based on transactions for "groceries" (defined), including those on sellers/distributors, enacted/amended after September 2017.

Result of "No" Vote: "No" vote retains state/local government authority to enact/amend taxes (includes corporate minimum tax), fees, on transactions for "groceries" (defined), including on sellers/distributors.

Arguments For:

- On their website, the support campaign argues, "A tax on groceries is unfair and regressive and hits those who can least afford it, like seniors, low-income households and military families. We need to permanently protect groceries from being taxed."
- A spokesperson for Knute Buehler said "State government is already collecting record tax revenues from Oregonians. Taxing groceries will hit lower- and middle-income families and people on fixed incomes especially hard."
- Joe Gilliam, president of the Northwest Grocery Association, said, "Since statehood, Oregon has never taxed groceries, yet politicians in Oregon continue to push for a tax on grocery sales. This initiative will end these efforts and other future efforts by proactively prohibiting the taxing of groceries from farm-to-fork."

Arguments Against:

- Measure 103 is completely unnecessary. Oregon doesn't have a sales tax on groceries and no one is proposing one.
- This measure defines "groceries" in a misleading way, exempting items such as e-cigarettes and restaurant meals but failing to include the items families rely on: medicine, diapers, and toilet paper.
- Measure 103 amends Oregon's Constitution, making big tax loopholes for specific businesses permanent. We need to be careful before voting to amend our Constitution because it can never be fixed without another amendment.
- Lobbyists included an unusual provision that makes Measure 103 retroactive to September 2017. This means it would repeal part of the Medicaid funding Oregon voters overwhelmingly approved this year to protect families from losing their healthcare.
- Measure 103 imposes a one-size-fits-all statewide amendment that strips local control and power from local voters.

Oregon Measure 104, the Definition of Raising Revenue for Three-Fifths Vote Requirement Initiative, an initiated constitutional amendment.

A “yes” vote supports this constitutional amendment to apply a three-fifths supermajority vote requirement to any legislation that increases revenue through changes in tax exemptions, credits, and deductions.

A “no” vote opposes this amendment to apply the three-fifths supermajority vote requirement to changes to tax exemptions, credits, and deductions, thereby leaving the requirement to not apply to bills reducing tax breaks according to a 2015 Supreme Court ruling.

Arguments For:

Yes On 104 featured the following arguments on its website:

- Over 20 years ago Oregon voters passed a constitutional amendment requiring a supermajority vote on all revenue raising legislation. In recent years, legislators and their lawyers have found creative loopholes and made several attempts at raising taxes and eliminating exemptions, deductions and credits without a supermajority vote.
- Dozens of bills were introduced in the past two legislative sessions that circumvented the three-fifths requirement. Many of these proposals would have impacted middle-class families and small businesses.
- Ballot Measure 104 ensures that any legislation that raises revenue requires a three-fifths majority vote. This includes fees or the elimination of tax exemptions, deductions or credits.

Arguments Against:

- Our Oregon stated, "[The measure attempts] to permanently etch into the state constitution that large and out-of-state corporations will never pay their fair share and instead, as usual, big business will use public servants as their scapegoat. This is bad policy, and it's insulting to the students, seniors, and Oregon families who have been waiting decades for real investment."
- Defend Oregon stated, "Constitutional Amendment 104 is unnecessary and dangerous. It greatly increases partisan gridlock by expanding “super majority” requirements to pass Oregon legislation. It jeopardizes funding for schools, Medicaid, affordable housing and other essential services, while also making it nearly impossible to eliminate special interest perks and loopholes."
- The Oregon League of Conservation Voters said, "Currently, only bills that propose a raise in taxes must be approved by a three-fifths legislative majority (aka a supermajority). If Measure 104 passes, a supermajority vote would be required for a wider range of bills, including environmental bills that make polluters pay -- such as the Clean Energy Jobs bill -- making them harder to pass."
- Oregon Center for Public Policy Communications Director Juan Carlos Ordóñez said, "Measure 104 should be called the Protection Act for Corporate Tax Subsidies and Loopholes, because that's what it really is. It allows a minority of lawmakers to block reforms that are needed. It's a situation where you have the tyranny of the minority. And the realtors and those funding Measure 104 want to keep it that way."

Oregon Measure 105, the Repeal Sanctuary State Law Initiative, an initiated state statute.

A “yes” vote supports this ballot initiative to repeal the state's sanctuary state law that limits the cooperation of local law enforcement with federal immigration enforcement.

A “no” vote opposes this ballot initiative, thereby keeping the state’s sanctuary law that limits the cooperation of local law enforcement with federal immigration enforcement.

Arguments For:

- Rep. Sal Esquivel (R-6) said, "It's time that Oregon complies with federal law like it should have in the first place. If you want to become an American become an American. If you want to come here for economic advantages and do it illegally then I don't think you should belong here."
- Oregonians for Immigration Reform argues that "Since 1987, Oregon Revised Statute 181A.820 has kept Oregon's state and local law-enforcement agencies from offering their fullest cooperation to the U.S. authorities charged with identifying and detaining illegal aliens.
- Stop Oregon Sanctuaries argues that "Illegal aliens can and do harm the American citizens to whom Oregon owes its foremost responsibility. For this reason, enforcement of U.S. immigration law is central to the duties of Oregon's police departments and sheriff's offices.

Arguments Against:

- Local police personnel, funds, equipment and facilities are not used to pursue and detain people suspected only of violating federal immigration law.
- Oregonians cannot be stopped, detained or interrogated just because someone thinks they might be an undocumented immigrant.
- Local police can continue to hold people accountable, including both immigrants and non-immigrants, if they commit crimes and harm our community. Oregon taxpayer money will be kept in our communities and won't be diverted to do the job of federal law enforcement.

Oregon Measure 106, the Public Funds for Oregon Ban Abortions Initiative, an initiated constitutional amendment.

A “yes” vote supports the ballot initiative to prohibit public funds from being spent on abortions in Oregon, except when medically necessary or required by federal law.

A “no” vote opposes the ballot initiative to prohibit public funds from being spent on abortions in Oregon, except when medically necessary or required by federal law.

Arguments For:

Stop the Funding, also known as Yes on Measure 106 is leading the campaign in support of the measure. No arguments in support of Measure 106 are on their website.

Arguments Against:

- No Cuts to Care argued, "Oregonians overwhelmingly believe that abortion should be legal and available for everyone – not just those who can afford it."
- Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon spokesman Jimmy Rodasta said, "Extremists are collecting signatures for a dangerous ballot measure that would amend the Oregon Constitution to restrict abortion for women who receive their health care through the state."
- Defend Oregon stated, "Constitutional Amendment 106 takes away access to safe, legal abortion. By targeting public employees and Medicaid recipients, this measure would hurt the women and families that need access to reproductive healthcare the most."

Sources

1. Material on Oregon ballot measures drawn from LWVOR speakers kit and https://ballotpedia.org/Oregon_2018_ballot_measures (9/5/18)
2. Material on local ballot measures from http://www.lanecounty.org/government/county_departments/county_administration/operations/county_clerk/elections/historical_election_details/november_6__2018_general_election

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