



Advocacy Alert

OREGON FOOD BANK
OREGON HUNGER RELIEF TASK FORCE

September 2006
Volume 12 Issue 8



take five

(actions that take five minutes or less)

Action:

- To register to vote, complete a voter registration card and submit by mail or in person to your County Elections Office, the Secretary of State's Office, or other designated locations. You can also download and print a registration card from www.oregonvotes.org.
- Encourage others to register to vote.

Message:

Make sure your voice is heard in Oregon's election on November 7, 2006. Along with a gubernatorial election, there are a number of important measures on the ballot (see accompanying article, Measure 48).

First time Oregon voters must have their registration forms postmarked by October 17, 2006 to vote in the November election. For more information, please visit http://www.uhavavote.org/elect_q_a/main.html.

Legislative Yellow Pages

State Legislative Information
1-800-332-2313 (outside Salem)
(503) 986-1000 (in Salem)
www.leg.state.or.us/citizenguide

Federal Legislative Contacts
Rep. Wu (District 1)
(503) 326-2901
Rep. Walden (District 2)
(541) 776-4646
Rep. Blumenauer (District 3)
(503) 231-2300
Rep. DeFazio (District 4)
(541) 465-6732
Rep. Hooley (District 5)
(503) 588-9100
Senator Smith
(503) 326-3386
Senator Wyden
(503) 326-7525

Measure 48 — Flawed cap on state spending

As expected, supporters have collected enough signatures to put Ballot Initiative #6 on the November ballot. Now called Measure 48, the proposal would place a cap on state spending, limiting increases in spending to a formula based on inflation plus population growth.

The basic premise of Measure 48 is to set an arbitrary limit on state spending increases. However, basing these increases on the rate of inflation plus population growth does not allow state government to meet needs of special populations that may arise. For example, the projected population growth for seniors over the next ten years is 33% while general population growth is only 13%. Funding for senior services which is more

expensive than the general population would not be able to keep up with the need. Also, spending could not meet the needs demanded by a natural disaster, such as forest fires or an earthquake. Spending over the limit temporarily would require a two-thirds majority in the Oregon House and Senate, as well as a majority of voters in a costly state ballot initiative campaign.

The formula's rate of inflation is based on the Consumer Price Index, which takes into account the goods and services that families typically purchase. But state government has different costs. For example, state government spends more money on health care—something that is increasing in price at a much higher rate than

typical goods and services.

Supports of the measure are referring to Measure 48 as a "Rainy Day Amendment," yet the proposal does not require the creation of a fund that could be accessed to fund vital services during a recession. In fact, if the Oregon legislature creates a rainy-day fund in the future, its effectiveness would be hampered by Measure 48.

Measure 48 also requires that unemployment spending be included under the cap. So in times of recession, when the demand for unemployment benefits goes up, even less could be spent on the social service programs relied upon by those who are unemployed.

While Measure 48 does not require cuts in state programs, (continued on page 2)

Advocacy efforts are critically important

Senator Frank Shields on the future of Oregon.

Senator Frank Shields spoke recently at the Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force (OHRTF) meeting on the importance of advocacy efforts to address critical issues in Oregon. Senator Shields represents Mid-Multnomah County in Senate District 24 and has been a member of the OHRTF for over ten years. He will soon be retiring from the legislature. His parting speech emphasized

the important role of advocacy in facilitating the political will necessary to create systemic change.

A former United Methodist Minister, Sen. Shields has been an advocate of human service issues for many years. Twenty years ago he started a family shelter for the homeless in his church and a Wednesday night "hard times supper." At the Task Force meeting he discussed the crisis management approach versus examining systemic prob-

lems. He acknowledged that it's hard to "drain the swamp when you're up to your elbows in alligators," but this is the only way to create lasting change.

As an example, Sen. Shields emphasized the dire housing situation in Oregon by contrasting three areas in the United States (see page 2). Housing costs are higher in the Pacific Northwest compared to other areas and incomes are lower. Consequently, (continued on page 2)

Measure 48

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it does limit the state's ability to adequately raise spending levels to meet increased need. Colorado passed similar legislation in the early '90's. After seeing the disastrous consequences, voters in that state, with the support of Republican Governor Bill Owens, the business community, and civic leaders, approved a referendum to suspend the legislation for five years in order for the state's universities, health care system, and other public services to recover. In 2005, many states had

similar measures on their ballots. All were defeated. Oregon voters should do the same.

Oregon Food Bank and the *Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force* both find Measure 48 deeply flawed and encourage anti-hunger advocates to vote "No" on the measure for several reasons.

For more information, see *Oregon Center for Public Policy* at www.ocpp.org and *Defend Oregon Coalition* at www.defendoregon.org.

Serve meals after school

With students heading back to school, it's time to consider how they will receive all the nourishment they need. The federally reimbursed After School Snack and Meal Program is one way to ensure youth through age 18 are well fed during the afternoons, weekends and school holidays. If you are involved in an after-school program and are interested in serving free meals, the next mandatory training is October 18th. Contact Darcy Miller at the Oregon Department of Education, 503-947-5899 to determine if your program qualifies and to register for training.



If you would like to help spread the word about this program, an outreach brochure will be ready for use by late September. Contact Brandi Tuck with OHRTF, 503-595-5503 to help us promote this important and under utilized resource!

Advocacy efforts are critically important


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affordable housing is out of reach for most Oregonians. He spoke of the dominance of housing in Oregon's economy. "We are in an incredible situation that impacts all advocacy organizations."

Sen. Shields emphasized the need to examine social issues with a broadened per-

spective. "Everyone needs to break out of their silos and form a more holistic approach to looking at issues," he said. After reading Mark Twain's book, "Life on the Mississippi," he thought of the often laborious and treacherous job of being a river boat captain. It "requires never-ending diligence, concen-

tration and creative thinking to adjust to constantly changing conditions," he said. Our challenge is to be good river boat captains for the future of Oregon.

	Median Home Prices	Median Family Income	Income needed to purchase a home
Mid West	152,000	61,662	38,000
North East	282,000	65,000	67,000
North West	342,000	59,582	83,808

June Revenue Forecast Chart, Department of Revenue.

Source: Taken from the:

The Advocacy Alert is published jointly by Oregon Food Bank (OFB) and the Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force (OHRTF).

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A Fond Farewell to Cassandra Garrison

Oregon Food Bank's Public Policy Manager, Cassandra Garrison, spent most of August 11th preparing advocacy staff for the completion of September's *Advocacy Alert* and conducting planning for the Advocacy Department's role in the upcoming 2007 Oregon Legislative session. Even though August 11th was Cassandra's final day at OFB, she had plenty of work to do to make certain the torch she ignited years ago is carried forward. Cassandra's departure marks the end of an exceptional, 9-year body of work within the Advocacy Department. She was recently appointed as the Administrator for the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office. We wish her the best of luck!

Welcome, Jeff Kleen: The Motivator

Oregon Food Bank Advocacy Department would like to extend a warm welcome to our new Public Policy Advocate, Jeff Kleen. Jeff previously worked coordinating special events in OFB's Development Department. Mr. Kleen is the recent recipient of OFB's 2006 Motivator Award for his exceptional work within OFB and the Work Culture Committee. We are lucky to have such a positive, motivational advocate on our team.

