

# Issues & Actions

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## Get out and Vote November 3rd!

By Susan C. Remmers, Executive Director

Welcome to Oregon Action's special election newsletter! With Election Day just around the corner, we want our members to cast an informed vote on November 3rd. With that in mind, we've put together some basic facts about two initiatives we've endorsed: The Open and Fair elections Act, measure 62, and the Defense of Democracy Act, measure 63.

We think it is equally important to clear up the confusion about Bill Sizemore's so-called Paycheck Protection Act, measure 59, which is nothing short of an attack on public employee's unions disguised as an effort to keep public funds out of the political arena. When will Sizemore ever learn Oregonians are sick of misleading initiatives and tired of the abuses of our ballot initiative process?

Oregon Action has also cast its first candidate endorsements lending our support to Martin Gonzalez of House District 18 in Portland, and Elli Work running for the House District 54 seat out of Bend. Check out the back page for more details on these candidates.

We hope you find this election edition helpful in guiding your decision-making process as you cast your vote on November 3rd. Ultimately, democracy depends on each and every one of us taking the time to voice our opinion, to get involved and tackle the hard economic issues that impact our families and communities each and every day. Thanks you for your continued support!

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## Vote yes for Open and Fair elections!

The Open and Fair Elections Act, Measure #62, includes important disclosure steps that are stepping-stones to more comprehensive Clean Money Campaign Reform. It also sheds the light on the out-of-state big money interests bankrolling measures and candidates that leave a lasting impact on Oregon long after the money trail runs dry. Open and Fair #62 is also about cleaning up Oregon's signature gathering effort by cracking down on out-of-state signature gathering firms that bring in outsiders to gather signatures on behalf of special interest groups. Let's keep our elections open and fair, vote yes on Measure 62!



## Protect our Democracy, vote yes on 63!

The Defense of Democracy Act, Measure 63, preserves the democratic principle of simple majority rule. In recent years Oregon's elections have been plagued by measures crafted to mislead and confuse voters. Measure 63 would block those seeking to take the fast lane with our election system. Measure 63 would require that any new measure imposing a super majority requirement must pass by the same requirement. A simple majority vote of 50% plus one vote on Election Day has served Oregonians well: let's not tinker with a the basic democratic principles. Vote yes to defend our democracy, vote yes on Measure 63!

## Vote against Deception



**Sizemore is at it again! Misleading voters, creating convoluted language that has unintended consequences for all Oregonians.** Vote no on his Paycheck "protection" Act, Measure 59! It guts Oregon's Voter Pamphlet, and targets Public Employees Union member's right to choose contribution methods for issues they support or oppose.

Measure 59 is an extreme measure that has no place in Oregon's Constitution. The Oregon Supreme Court has already said Measure 59 would make it illegal to have any statements supporting or opposing candidates and ballot measures in the voters' pamphlet, making it useless to voters. The intent of Measure 59 is to eliminate the voluntary right to choose a payroll deduction for teachers, police, nurses, firefighters and a host of other public employees. Corporate interests already out-spend unions 11 to 1 on campaign contributions: that leaves only one reason Sizemore would put Measure 59 to voters- to silence working families trying to participate in the political process. It is unfair, mean-spirited, and deceptive. Oregon Action asks that you send a strong message to those who seek to silence working families in the political debate: Vote no on Sizemore's Paycheck "Deception", Measure 59.

# WITH ONE VOICE: STOP BRACERO BILL

## *Hey Wyden on Capitol Hill! We Don't Want Your Slavery Bill!*

The sound was huge. It echoed off the Justice Building in Hillsboro and filled the sunny skies surrounding the crowd listening to Vice President Gore and Oregon political elite dedicate the Westside Light Rail. With one voice Oregon Action, farmworkers and a spirited group of leaders from across the state told Senator Ron Wyden that his efforts to please agri-business and pass a "Guest Worker" bill in the Senate must be stopped. With the leadership and coordination of Portland Oregon Action that September Saturday the message was delivered with force. Oregon would not tolerate a Senator, regardless of party affiliation, who puts the interests of money-abled contributors above the good of our community.

Agri-business has long sought to pass anti-worker legislation that would bring workers from poor countries to provide cheap and docile workers in agriculture. Even with the long standing opposition of farmworkers and human rights groups Rep. Bob Smith, the chair of the House Agriculture Committee from Medford, sponsored this year a major revision of the Guest Worker program that clearly benefited growers at the expense of domestic farmworkers.

Oregon Action leaders including Dagoberto Morales and farmworkers in the Rogue Valley immediately began actions to oppose the Smith Bracero bill. Just as it seemed that the efforts of farmworker groups across the country were succeeding Senator Wyden stepped in with his version of a "bi-partisan" guestworker bill and with co-sponsorship of Sen. Gordon Smith they passed it through the Senate as an amendment to an appropriation bill - without the usual process of hearings or public comment.

A strong and growing coalition of groups in Oregon is building opposition to Wyden's sellout. PCUN, the farmworker Union in Oregon, Oregon Action, Unete (UMCP) a farmworker group in the Rogue Valley and scores of unions, human rights, Latino, and community based organization have all pulled together to confront Sen. Wyden wherever he has made public appearances." Here is what at stake," said Dagoberto Morales, OA state council member, "the growers have money and political power to drive their interests. Agri-business put \$165,00 into Rep Bob Smith's 1996 campaign and will continue to bankroll legislators that vote their way. We need to build solidarity, to bring unity in groups that will support fairness in the political process and living wages for all workers. As long as growers are allowed to legitimize institutions such as the Guest Worker Program that exploits and victimizes workers both here in our community and in other countries we will be here speaking with one voice in opposition. No Wyden/Guest worker bill."

Oregon Action has played an important role in our state in opposition to the Guest worker bills. By fighting for the simple principle that all workers should have living wage jobs Oregon Action's living wage campaign is an important positive solution that provides a vehicle to include a broadbased support for better wages. By focusing on the role of money in politics and supporting the clean money alternative, Oregon Action is developing the political power that will make it possible for future political leaders to choose farmworkers and fairness over campaign contributions. Senator Wyden will hear that voice.

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OREGON ACTION IS A STATEWIDE, NON-PARTISAN NETWORK OF PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS DEDICATED TO ECONOMIC JUSTICE FOR ALL THROUGH INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP EMPOWERMENT.

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## **Action Response Teams**

### **TURNING ISSUES INTO ACTION ALL THAT'S MISSING IS YOU!**

These are exciting times for Oregon Action as our campaigns move forward on Living Wages and Clean Money Campaign Reform. Your great ideas and energy are needed. Without you Oregon Action does not move forward. Here's how you can get involved:

### **Join an Action Response Team**

**ROGUE VALLEY LIVING WAGE CAMPAIGN**  
Bringing low-income families and working people together fighting for Living Wage jobs in Southern Oregon. Contact Rich Rohde at 541-772-4029 or richrohde@aol.com

**PORTLAND MONEY IN POLITICS CAMPAIGN**  
Building support for a "Clean Money" initiative effort in the year 2000. Contact Janice Thompson at 503-282-6588 or oajt@aol.com.

**PORTLAND LIVING WAGE CAMPAIGN**  
Building a Living Wage Agenda for the '99 Legislature to raise wages of non-profit social service workers excluded from Portland living wage ordinances. Contact Harvey Daniel at 503-282-6588 or oahdaniel@aol.com.

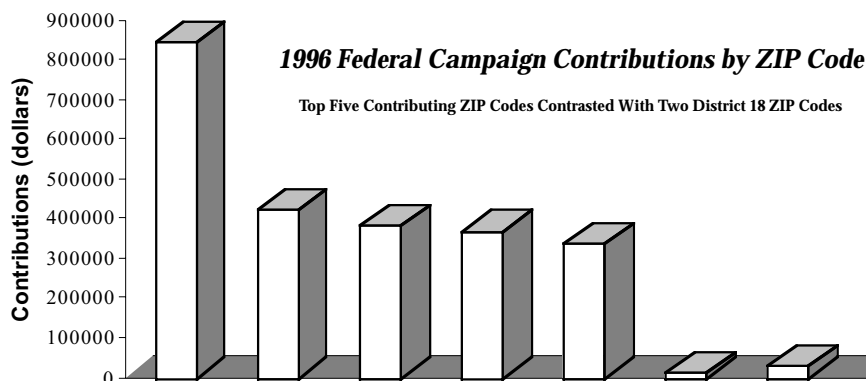
### **ACTION ALERTS**

Building a movement of Oregon Action committed to one action step per quarter in a year. Writing letters to the editor, phone calling selected representatives, e-mailing corporate CEO's, attending actions demanding answers, etc. Contact Brian Hoop at 503-282-6588 or aobhoop@aol.com.

# Money in Politics, the Color of Money, Clean Money Campaign Reform

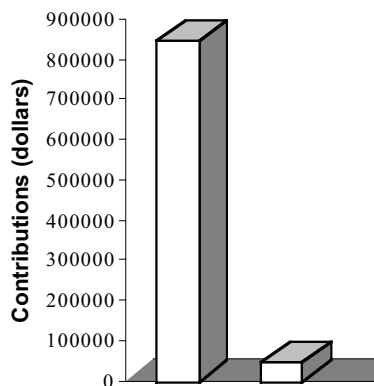
What does all of this mean? It is a simple, but groundbreaking solution to the neverending cycle of campaign finance frustration. Through research, Oregon Action documented the need for radical change in how political campaigns are funded.

Oregon Action is leading money in politics research in Oregon. Our first publication is titled *Color of Money in Oregon Politics: Money in Politics and Campaign Finance Reform as Civil Rights Issues* illustrates the shocking disparity between the 1996 federal election contributions from Oregon's top five highest contributing zip code areas, as compared to contributions from two zip code areas with the highest percentages of people in color. This confirms our worst suspicions about who controls the campaign finance system. The following chart puts it in stark relief.



Location	97201 West Hills Portland	97210 NW Portland	97221 West Hills Portland	97219 SW Portland	97034 Lake Oswego	97217 NE Portland	97211 NE Portland
aggregate contributions	\$847,310	\$425,880	\$384,568	\$369,456	\$339,435	\$13,130	\$31,050
per capita contributions	\$37.44	\$47.40	\$35.14	\$10.54	\$18.89	\$4.13	\$1.08
% people of color	9.6%	7.10%	4.61%	6.86%	3.3%	56%	50%
per capita income	\$27,246	\$26,891	\$29,742	\$20,142	\$28,398	\$9,134	\$9,893

Similar differences can be seen in Medford where race may not play as much of a role but the differences between the "haves and the have-nots" still comes through loud and clear.



location	97201 West Hills	97501 Medford
aggregate contributions	\$847,310	\$47,712
per capita contributions	\$37.44	\$1.66
% people of color	9.6%	9.3%
per capita income	\$27,246	\$10,284

The old saying, "he who pays the piper, calls the tune" might fit with these findings. It's likely that those who give the most money will have more influence over politicians and policies. Why else would they pour so much money into candidate contributions? This report confirms what we already suspected and points to one reason why people are turned off by politics and don't vote. Worse yet, big money in politics violates the principle of one person, one vote.

On September 26, Oregon Action held a rally to release the *Color of Money in Oregon Politics* report. We hung towels on a line to represent the top 5 contributing zip codes and the two district 18 zips with low incomes and high percentages of people of color. This huge disparity represents a campaign finance system that needs cleaning. So we had a washing machine with a "people power" energy source. Young people in the crowd took down each towel, put them in the washing machine, and put them back up to show the slogan, "**Stop big money. Communities and voters first!!**"

Voter power is essential to create real change. The solution that will bring real reform to the campaign finance system is Clean Money Campaign Reform. Oregon Action is a leader on advancing this reform as a member of the Oregon Working Group for Campaign Finance Reform. Clean Money Campaign Reform radically changes the way candidates get their money. Instead of chasing big money and making legislative decisions that unfairly benefit big money contributors, a Clean Money candidate would seek out community support to qualify for public financing. Clean Money candidates agree to spending limits, forgo private contributions and receive fixed and equal campaign funding from a publicly funded election fund. Clean Money candidates could then focus on constituents and issues. Grassroots, progressive candidates would be able to compete on the basis of ideas and leadership ability, not money. Best of all, an elected official who ran Clean Money campaigns would not be beholden to big money interests, but to their constituents and to the broader public good.

Imagine who your local legislative candidate could be if people could run under the Clean Money System. Imagine what you could expect from a legislature that wasn't dominated by big money interests but rather had people elected on the basis of community support rather than contributor support. Imagine a return to one person, one vote. Free elections are not for sale.

Join us at Oregon Action to get involved!!!

Special thanks to two Oregon Action volunteers. Erin Lamb produced the graphs in the *Color of Money in Oregon Politics* report. Ellen Osoniach has been working hard on our second publication concerning voluntary spending limits and how they don't bring about real reform.

# Candidate Endorsements Wish List

**18-54-98-VOTE!** Members in House Districts 18 and 54 get ready to cast your votes for two outstanding candidates for the Oregon Legislature! Oregon Action is proud to endorse Martin Gonzalez for District 18 and Elli Work for District 54. We are so picky that we are only endorsing two candidates: Martin Gonzalez of the All People Count! party and Elli Work, a Democrat are both strong advocates for tax justice, clean money campaign finance reform and living wages.

Martin is a veteran activist in NE Portland who has worked to bring small business and community interests together to support a progressive agenda including support for education, fair taxation and living wages. Folks ages 15 to 68 of all colors have been out on the streets all year

registering voters and activating community partnerships in a long-term strategy to move issues we care about at the state level. He is committed to continuing these long-term partnerships beyond election day so that the name of his party becomes a reality in the Legislature, so that all people really DO count. Vote for Martin Gonzalez!

Elli Work is a small business owner in Bend, OR and chief petitioner on a measure to equalize corporate and individual income tax rates. She is an outspoken supporter of health care for all, tax fairness and living-wage jobs. Elli's base of support comes from a broad coalition of progressive activists and moderate Republicans, spanning small business and community organizations. She un-

## **PDX**

Video camera  
TV/VCR  
Volunteers!

## **RV**

IBM compatible printer (new only)  
Portable TV/VCR combo  
Easel  
Volunteers!

derstands that Oregonians want a government committed to spending tax dollars on the public services we all depend on and need in our daily lives, not subsidies in the form of tax breaks to big corporations. As a small-business owner, she also understands the inherent unfairness of the system for those who are generating the greatest number of jobs in the state, small-business! If you want someone working for you, vote for Elli Work!



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I want to be a member of Oregon Action! Suggested contribution is \$15 -50 per year.  
(Additional donations gladly accepted!)

I want to volunteer with Oregon Action!

Send contribution & correspondence to:  
**Oregon Action 3009 NE Emerson Portland, Oregon 97211**

Because Oregon Action does grassroots lobbying, contributions are not tax-deductible. Tax-deductible contributions can be made to Fair Share Research & Education Fund, the 501(c)(3) affiliate of Oregon Action.