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City Club of Portland (Portland, Or.)

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# City Club of Portland Resolution on State of Oregon Ballot Measure 30

(Referendum on House Bill 2152 (Sections 1 to 43a))

*Prepared by City Club's Research Board. Adopted by the Club's Board of Governors on December 22, 2003. Presented to members on Friday, January 16, 2004.*

PREAMBLE: As part of a compromise to balance the state budget, the Oregon State Legislature passed House Bill 2152, a tax package designed to raise state revenue. Using Oregon's initiative and referendum process, citizens opposed to the increased taxes successfully petitioned to refer House Bill 2152 to voters. The referendum, now known as Measure 30, will appear on the February 3 special election ballot as follows:

## **State of Oregon Ballot Measure 30:**

**ENACTS TEMPORARY PERSONAL INCOME TAX SURCHARGE; INCREASES, CHANGES CORPORATE, OTHER TAXES; AVOIDS SPECIFIC BUDGET CUTS.**

RESULT OF "YES" VOTE: "Yes" vote enacts temporary personal income tax surcharge; increases Corporate Minimum Tax, makes other corporate, income, property, cigarette tax increases, changes; avoids specific budget cuts.

RESULT OF "NO" VOTE: "No" vote retains existing personal income, corporate and other tax laws; triggers \$544.6 million in budget cuts to education, healthcare, senior services, public safety.



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Ballot Measure 30 was placed on the February 3, 2004 special election ballot by petitioners seeking to block the tax increases enacted by the legislature.

The tax package, passed by the Legislature in August 2003, does the following:

- changes tax laws to raise revenue for state and local services;
- includes a temporary personal income tax surcharge for the 2003 and 2004 tax years, and possibly the 2005 tax year depending on the projected General Fund ending balance;
- increases the Corporate Minimum Tax and makes other corporate, income, property and cigarette tax increases and changes designed to raise revenue.

Passage of Measure 30 would provide \$544.6 million in funding, including \$298.9 million for education, \$187.6 million for healthcare and human services and \$58.1 million for public safety.

Defeat of Measure 30 would result in mandatory spending cuts to public services stemming from an existing budget deficit of \$544.6 million and an additional projected state budget shortfall of \$258.1 million.

#### **Relevant City Club Positions**

City Club of Portland supported Ballot Measure 28, which was defeated by voters in January 2003. Measure 28 proposed a similar temporary income tax increase intended to balance the state budget and prevent cuts to educational, public safety and human service programs.

City Club supported Multnomah County Ballot Measure 26-48, the temporary county income tax approved in May 2003. Multnomah County officials have stated their intent to reduce the county income tax if the state surcharge is enacted and provides additional funds to Multnomah County.

City Club opposed 1994's Measure 5 which would have amended the Constitution to require voter approval for new and increased taxes, fees and charges at the state and local levels. (The 1994 measure should not be confused with the 1990 Measure 5 which limited property taxes.) City Club's study of Measure 5 concluded that the measure would result in an unwarranted fundamental shift away from a representative form of government. Similarly, defeat of Measure 30 would nullify a spending and revenue compromise arrived at by the legislature after months of work and would result in cuts to vital state-supported services.

Measure 30 sufficiently meets City Club's tax criteria for fairness, sufficiency, certainty, clarity, and efficiency established in the Club's 2002 *Tax Reform in Oregon* report.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Governors of the City Club of Portland recommends a "yes" vote for Ballot Measure 30 on the February 3, 2004 ballot.