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Tax election primer

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LAST WEEK - Secretary of State Bill Bradbury announced that enough valid petition signatures were gathered from registered voters to force a public vote on House Bill 2152. The petition had 118,273 valid signatures - more than twice the required 50,420 signatures.

THE VOTE - **Measure 30** will be the subject of a special statewide vote Feb. 3. Ballots will be mailed next month.

AT ISSUE - Oregonians will decide the fate of House Bill 2152, the state Legislature's plan to increase taxes to fund state programs and services.

ABOUT THE TAX PLAN - **HB 2152** would impose a three-year personal income tax surcharge of 1 percent to 9 percent depending on the taxpayer's income; increase the \$10 corporate minimum income tax to \$250 or more; change other tax provisions; restrict the elderly medical expense deduction based on age and income; reduce or eliminate the discount for early payment of property taxes; extend the 10-cent-per-pack cigarette tax through 2005; and avoid \$544.6 million in budget cuts to education, health care, senior services and public safety.

BALLOT TITLE - Enacts temporary personal income tax surcharge; increases, changes corporate, other taxes; avoids specific budget cuts.

A 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.

A NO VOTE - Retains existing personal income, corporate and other tax laws; triggers \$544.6 million in budget cuts to education, health care, senior services, public safety.

TAX FOES - Russ Walker, the Northwest director of Citizens for a Sound Economy, was the chief petitioner for the referendum. He also is the spokesman for the Taxpayer Defense Fund, the opposition campaign group. The tax plan also is opposed by the Taxpayer Association of Oregon, the Oregon Taxpayers Union, leaders of the Libertarian and Republican parties and many Republican legislators.

TAX BACKERS - Our Oregon Coalition, a coalition which includes labor unions, educators, social service advocates and their clients and some religious leaders. The tax plan also is backed by the governor, many Democratic legislators and some Republican legislators.

WHAT'S NEXT - The deadline to submit voters' pamphlet arguments is Friday. Pamphlets will be mailed Jan. 7-9. The voter registration deadline for the election is Jan. 13.

IN THE MAIL - Ballots will be mailed Dec. 20 to long-term absent electors (overseas and military) and Jan. 5 to out-of-state electors. Ballots for most Oregonians will be mailed Jan. 16-20.

VOTING DEADLINE - Ballots for **Measure 30** must be returned by 8 p.m. on Feb. 3.

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