

RESOLUTION for Central Pacific Conference Annual Assembly - Spring 2008 OPPOSE OREGON ANTI-IMMIGRATION BALLOT INITIATIVES.

Signed by: Catherine Rolling, Ainsworth; Rev. Susan Leo, Bridgeport; Rev. Chuck Currie, Parkrose

Our immigration system is broken and needs comprehensive reform. We, as people of faith, want an opportunity to support proposals that include legalization with a path to citizenship and family unification. However, legislative proposals making their way to the November 2008 ballot in Oregon will further divide our communities and increase hate, fear, and racism, thus contributing to anti-immigrant sentiment by attacking an already vulnerable people, known by people of faith as children of the Creator.

Whereas: Oregon ballot initiative petition (IP) #19 proposes to add a section to the Oregon Revised Statutes requiring English immersion in public schools as proposed by Bill Sizemore and Alan Grosso and filed in the Secretary of State's office on April 18, 2006:

- prohibits teaching public school students in languages other than English for more than two years.
- would have a severe impact on immigrant children's opportunities for quality education.
- would take away local control and classroom decisions about individual learning levels and special needs of students, thereby punishing immigrant and refugee children, regardless of their legal status, and

Whereas: Oregon ballot initiative petition (IP) #112 named "Respect for Law Act" proposed by Mehran Smith and Shahriyar Smith of Oregonians for Immigration Reform and filed in the Secretary of State's office on July 10, 2007:

- effectively forces undocumented immigrants further into the shadows.
- diverts local government resources away from community safety, health and education needs.
- moves police, fire fighters, teachers, social workers, and health care workers to act as immigration officers.
- encourages racial profiling, unreported crime, school dropouts, and public health and safety calamities.
- imperils public safety by restricting driver's licenses forcing immigrants who must drive to maintain their employment and care for their households to continue driving as unlicensed motorists.
- offers new voter registration restrictions which are unnecessary since there is no evidence that non-citizens are voting - and discourages registration by other marginalized populations, such as low-income, elderly and people of color, and

Whereas: These measures are an affront to the dignity, safety, livelihoods, and opportunities of our immigrant neighbors, and

Whereas: Jesus instructs us to welcome strangers - not mistreat them, and

Whereas: As Christians, our actions should reflect Jesus' teachings, and

Whereas: As a nation of immigrants, our laws should reflect compassionate action toward those who come into our country for safety and opportunity;

Be it resolved: that the Central Pacific Conference of the United Church of Christ declares its opposition to Oregon ballot initiative petitions #19 and #112 and calls on local UCC affiliates and other faith communities to do the same.

Adopted on May 17, 2008 by vote of the delegates at the Central Pacific Conference Spring Assembly Annual Meeting. Supplemental information presented at Spring Assembly is provided on the following pages.

#19: Prohibits Teaching Public School Students In Language Other Than English For More Than Two Years

Summary of Initiative:

- Non-English speaking students who enter the public school system will be limited to not more than two years of English Immersion classes.
- The amount of time for ESL [English as a Second Language] classes depends on the grade of non-English speaking students entering the public school system.

“Yes” Statement: “Yes” vote prohibits teaching public school students in a language other than English for more than two years (exception for teaching foreign languages to English speakers).

“No” Statement: “No” vote retains requiring English courses for students unable to profit from classes taught in English, permitting Multilanguage instruction to assist in transition to English.

Significant Impact/Concerns:

- This initiative does not consider individual learning levels or students with special needs.
- What are the consequences for non-English speaking students who are prematurely forced into English only classes?
- How will this affect refugee children who have come directly from refugee camps with little formal education?
- How will this affect ESL [English as a Second Language] funding, school funding, and curriculum?

#112: Allows state cooperation with Immigration Enforcement; Requires “Legal Presence”/Citizenship for Specified States Rights/Privileges

Summary of Initiative:

- No Statute, regulation, or agency/instrumentality of the state can prohibit public employees from cooperating with federal agencies in the enforcement of federal immigration law.
- First time Oregon voters must provide proof of citizenship when registering to vote.
- Proof of legal residence is required for driver license applicants.

“Yes” Statement: “Yes” vote allows state/local cooperation and resources for immigration enforcement; requires certain documentation of citizenship for voter registration, “legal presence” for driver/identification documents.

“No” Statement: “No” vote retains current state/local limits on cooperation and resources to enforce immigration laws, current requirements for voter registration, and grant of driver/identification documents.

Significant Concerns/Impacts:

- Would state and local police have the ability to arrest undocumented immigrants on a regular basis?
- Would state and local police receive proper training, funding and support to carry out federal immigration enforcement?
- Would this initiative require all government workers (hospitals, schools, etc.) to report undocumented immigrants?
- Would this initiative promote racial profiling?
- Would this eliminate the ability to hold street-side voter registration drives?
- How long will it take to verify a voter’s status under the new system?

Overview by Kayse Jama, Director of [Center for Intercultural Organizing](#)

Initiative Petition 19 Fact Sheet

What is Initiative Petition 19?

Initiative Petition (IP) 19 is an initiative likely to appear on the November 2008 Oregon ballot. It imposes a drastic one-size-fits-all mandate on how teachers, parents and schools may educate students whose first language is not English. The measure effectively bans all programs that would seek to preserve or support bilingualism for English language learners. It mandates such students enroll in (undefined) “English immersion classes” for one or two years. After this time, the student would be prohibited by law from receiving instruction in any other language, regardless of the student parent or teacher’s choice. The initiative exempts classes which “teach English speaking students a foreign language,” creating an alarming inequality in state education policy by permitting some students to pursue bilingualism while banning others from doing the same.

Who is behind IP 19?

The initiative’s sponsor is the conservative activist Bill Sizemore. IP 19 is one of 10 ballot measures Sizemore is currently attempting to qualify for the November 2008 election in Oregon. These include a measure to end job security and negotiated pay increases for teachers (IP 20), a measure to restrict unions’ political activity (IP 25), a measure to further starve the state budget (IP 3) and several others.

IP 19 was bought and paid for almost entirely through a \$123,000 donation from Loren Parks, a wealthy Nevada-based sponsor of conservative causes. The initiative’s bizarre and confusing language reveals Sizemore’s utter indifference towards effective teaching and learning. Yet if the measure passes, educators, students and parents will be forced to sort out the enormous mess created by Sizemore’s latest political folly.

What impact will IP 19 have if adopted?

Current law already requires instruction in all school subjects (except foreign languages) to be done in English. Schools retain the discretion, however, to provide instruction in more than one language in order to assist students who are learning English. While often lumped under the singular category “bilingual education,” these approaches can vary significantly, including various dual language immersion programs, “English as a Second Language” programs, “sheltered immersion” programs, and other approaches. IP 19 eliminates all of this discretion, replacing all of these options, regardless of their effectiveness or the choice of parents, teachers or students with a one-size fits all mandate.

What is the current status of IP 19?

Using paid signature gatherers hired by Loren Parks, Sizemore submitted nearly 125,000 raw signatures almost a year before the July 3, 2008 qualification deadline. As of early this year, the measure was right at the threshold for qualification (82,769 valid signatures are required). The Oregon Secretary of State has temporarily suspended the signature review process until Sizemore provides an additional mandated report, but all indications are that the initiative will qualify for the November 2008 ballot.

[Read the complete text of IP 19 at the Oregon Secretary of State website.](#)

Initiative Petition 112 Fact Sheet

What is Initiative Petition 112?

Initiative Petition (IP) 112 is an initiative currently in circulation that seeks to increase cooperation between local law enforcement and federal immigration authorities, require new voters to demonstrate proof of citizenship, and require the same proof when applying for an Oregon state driver's license. It has not yet qualified for the November 2008 Oregon ballot. Proponents have titled the initiative the "Respect for Law Act." IP 112 has three operative sections. The first section prevents any state, county or local government agency from prohibiting cooperation between a public employee (for example, a local police officer) and federal immigration agencies or officials. (It does not, however, mandate such cooperation, as an earlier version of the initiative did). The second section mandates "satisfactory evidence of United States citizenship" when registering to vote for the first time, and details acceptable documents. The third section requires legal proof of residence and a valid social security number for anyone applying for or renewing an Oregon driver's license, permit or identification card. It also implements additional restrictions on those seeking temporary driver's licenses.

Who is behind IP 112?

The initiative's principal sponsor is Jim Ludwick, president of Oregonians for Immigration Reform (OFIR). OFIR is a seven-year-old volunteer driven group that played a leading role in pressuring the Governor to issue the recent executive order mandating new requirements for Oregon state driver's licenses. The three main components of IP 112 previously existed as separate initiative petitions. These were withdrawn and resubmitted as a single initiative. Signature collection began in early January 2008. As of late February, public filings suggest that the IP 112 campaign has not attracted any meaningful financial contributions. All of the reported contributions have been listed as in-kind.

What impact will IP 112 have if adopted?

The provision permitting collaboration between public employees and federal immigration authorities would increase the reach and power of federal immigration agents into local communities. It would also heighten the risk of racial profiling by law enforcement, and weaken trust between immigrant communities and local law enforcement officers. The provision imposing new documentation requirements for new voters would likely decrease new voter registration. As there is little evidence of fraudulent voting by non-citizens, this provision would primarily affect those legally entitled to vote but who cannot produce the required documentation, especially low-income voters and senior citizens. In addition, the provision could increase racial profiling on the part of county registrars, encouraging them to scrutinize some applicants' documents more than others. Finally, while the driver's license provisions of IP 112 are nearly identical to the requirements instituted under the Governor's recent Executive Order and passed in the State House, their ratification at the ballot would make the new law much more immune from future appeal.

What is the current status of IP 112?

Proponents have until July 3, 2008 to submit 82,769 valid signatures. As of early March, it appears that no paid signature gatherers have been retained and the campaign continues to be entirely a volunteer effort. This could quickly change if the campaign received an influx of cash from a wealthy backer. (California's Proposition 187, which banned public education and benefits to all undocumented immigrants, similarly languished in 1994 until it was embraced by some leading Republicans).

[Read the complete text of IP 112 at the Oregon Secretary of State website.](#)