

kptv.com**Tax Hikes Focus Of Jan. 26 Vote**

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PORTLAND, Ore. -- Oregonians sounded off Friday on two ballot measures that, if approved, could hike taxes for businesses and people in certain income groups.

Measures 66 and 67 propose tax increases to balance the budget and fund education, health care, public safety and other state services.

Law makers passed the bills last year to address the state's financial crisis. Voters will decide upon the measures in the Jan. 26 special election.

If passed, Measure 66 would raise taxes on households with an income above \$250,000 and individuals making more than \$125,000. The hikes are estimated to raise \$472 million.

Measure 67, if approved, would raise the corporate minimum tax from \$10 to \$150. This proposal is estimated to raise \$255 million.

People on both sides of the issue spoke Friday at a Portland City Club luncheon at the Governor Hotel.

Pat McCormick, an attorney, argued against the measures.

"The reason we have a state finance problem is because we're a state that depends heavily on personal income taxes," McCormick said. "And the loss of jobs means we're not collecting the taxes we were in November 2007. The way to fix the problem is to get more people back to work, not to add more taxes to the people who are still working."

Steve Novik is an attorney and a political analyst who is in favor of the new taxes.

"This is precisely the time we need to protect our most vulnerable people. And we're doing it by asking big corporations and people who are making a lot of money -- even in these tough economic times -- to pay a little bit more. And voters will pass it," Novik said.

Ballots must be received by Jan. 26 to count in the special election.

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