

# ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES *of* OREGON

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## *Media Release*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon endorses driver card and GMO labeling ballot measures**

At their September 2014 meeting, the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) Board of Directors voted to support ballot measures providing Oregon resident driver cards (Measure 88) and labeling genetically engineered foods (Measure 92).

Measure 88 directs the Department of Transportation to issue a limited purpose and limited duration driver card to Oregon residents, without requiring proof of legal presence in the United States. The board's recommendation of Measure 88 is based on EMO's social principle of "Family and Community Well-being" that promotes the health, wellness and sense of security for all people in a community and our shared mutual responsibility for one another. Measure 88 supports this principle by requiring that all drivers take tests to ensure their ability to drive safely, understand the rules of the road, and carry insurance in case of accidents. *This measure will make our roads safer* by ensuring that all Oregonians have a responsible and legal way to drive to work, school and church.

The EMO Board also voted to support Measure 92, which requires food manufacturers and retailers in Oregon to label all "genetically engineered" food. Their decision was based on EMO's social principles of "Environmental Stewardship and "Economic Justice." A Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) refers to any food product that has been altered at the gene level. EMO believes that market economies require both ethical and legal regulation to safeguard the environment and public health, including the right for people to choose what to eat and the right to know what is in the food we consume.

Recognizing the need to speak out on other important measures, the EMO Board has produced the *2014 Voters' Guide to Oregon Ballot Measures* with a full listing of recommendations for clergy and lay people on seven statewide measures. In addition to supporting Measures 88 and 92, EMO is recommending a "yes" vote on Measure 86, which creates a fund for Oregonians pursuing post-secondary education, and Measure 89, which guarantees equal rights regardless of sex. EMO is taking no position on Measures 87, 90 and 91.

#### **MEMBER DENOMINATIONS**

African Methodist Episcopal Church ■ American Baptist Churches of Oregon ■ Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) ■ Christian Methodist Episcopal Church ■ Church of the Brethren ■ Community of Christ  
Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon ■ Episcopal Diocese of Oregon ■ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ■ Presbyterian Church (USA)—Presbytery of the Cascades  
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) ■ Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland ■ United Church of Christ ■ United Methodist Church ■ Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches

Copies of the EMO *Voters' Guide* have been sent to churches across the state; the *Voters' Guide* and *Statement of Social Principles* are also available online at [www.emoregon.org](http://www.emoregon.org).

David Leslie, EMO executive director, and Jan Elfers, EMO Public Policy director, will make presentations this fall at churches throughout Oregon on EMO's ballot measure recommendations. If you would like to schedule a presentation, please contact Elfers directly at [jelfers@emoregon.org](mailto:jelfers@emoregon.org) or (503) 221-1054, ext. 204.

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland abstained from EMO's deliberations regarding the November ballot measures. The Roman Catholic Archdiocese releases all public policy statements through the Oregon Catholic Conference.

*Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is a statewide association of Christian denominations, congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners working together to improve the lives of Oregonians through community ministry programs, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, environmental ministry and public policy advocacy.*