

OpEd on Measure 88

Oct. 9, 2014

Religious voices throughout the state last year spoke in favor of Senate Bill 833, which created a short term driver card for people living in Oregon. Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) joined with a diverse group including law enforcement, businesses, DMV and faith communities to write this the bill. It gained bi-partisan support and was passed by both houses before it was signed by Governor Kitzhaber.

Now SB 833 is going before the voters as Measure 88, and EMO urges voters to support it. Our endorsement is guided by a shared religious belief in the need for health, wellness and sense of security for all people in a community.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon members represent denominations, churches and interfaith partners in Oregon who believe in our shared mutual responsibility for one another. We are part of a broad-based coalition of small business owners, farmers and law enforcement officials who agree in the absolute necessity for every driver in Oregon to take tests to ensure their ability to drive safely and understand the rules of the road and to carry insurance. Measure 88 has at its center this fundamental principle, ensuring an increase in the number of licensed and insured drivers, as well as the decrease in the damage and fiscal costs associated with accidents caused by uninsured motorists. Measure 88 also ensures that Oregonians who drive do so responsibly and legally, improving safety for all Oregon residents—drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists.

We all know people in our congregations and social ministries who want to drive safely and legally but are unable to do so under current state law. Many Oregonians are not eligible for a traditional driver's license, including seniors who were born without or have lost their birth certificate, veterans with only a military ID, and undocumented workers. These Oregonians will benefit from a limited purpose driver card. They are our neighbors who need to drive to get to work, school, and church and religious activities in a safe and legal manner. Measure 88 will improve their ability to participate fully in the economy and their communities, thereby contributing to the overall safety for everyone in Oregon.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon urges Oregon voters to vote “yes” on Measure 88.

David Leslie

Executive Director

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

0245 SW Bancroft St., Suite B

Portland, OR 97239

(503) 221-1054

dleslie@emoregon.org