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## **Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon urges NO vote on Measures 82 & 83**

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) joins with citizens and groups across the state in recommending a NO vote on Measures 82 and 83 on the Oregon ballot. **Measure 82** would amend the constitution and authorize the establishment of private non-reservation casinos under certain circumstances, and **Measure 83** would authorize a specific casino on the former Multnomah County Kennel Club property in Wood Village.

“Our state already allows more gambling than most other states,” says EMO Executive Director David Leslie. “We have a wide variety of lottery games, video poker, and line games in local taverns and restaurants, card rooms and tribal casinos. We’ve got more than enough gambling opportunities in Oregon. Do we really need to start adding Las Vegas or Atlantic City-size casinos to our communities?”

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon presents the following arguments against the measures:

**Casinos hurt individuals, families and communities.** There are 70,000 adult problem gamblers in Oregon already (*Oregon Problem Gambling Services Data Book*). Research has consistently found that casino gambling, like state lotteries, depends on the high levels of gambling among problem gamblers to provide a significant share of their revenue. The damage caused to families and communities by an activity that is inherently addicting for some individuals outweighs whatever limited benefits promised by casino investors.

**Casinos never deliver the promised economic benefits.** Economists who have studied the impact of casinos on economic development in surrounding communities find that the jobs provided by a casino are usually offset by a loss of jobs at nearby restaurants and other local businesses. Studies have also found that crime rates, rates of gambling addiction and personal bankruptcy filings increase within 50 miles of a new casino.

**Voters already soundly defeated this Casino proposal in 2010, and it establishes a bad precedent for more non-tribal casinos throughout Oregon.** These two measures are a slightly repackaged version of a 2010 measure that voters overwhelmingly rejected. Since these measures would, if passed together, amend the constitution and authorize the first non-tribal casino in Oregon, their passage would establish a dangerous precedent and would open the door to subsequent proposals to authorize additional casinos in other Oregon communities.

*Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is a statewide association of Christian denominations—including Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox bodies—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.*