

# BENTON COUNTY VOTERS' PAMPHLET



**SPECIAL ELECTION  
SEPTEMBER 19, 2006**

PUBLISHED BY THE  
BENTON COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Please RECYCLE this pamphlet with your newspapers



**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

408 SW Monroe Ave., Suite 111  
P.O. Box 3020  
Corvallis, OR 97339-3020  
(541) 766-6800  
FAX (541) 766-6893

Dear Benton County Voter:

September 19 is Special Election Day in Oregon. As a voter, you will be given the opportunity to decide on a measure relating to a City of Corvallis telecommunications service tax.

This Benton County Voters' Pamphlet inserted with your ballot will be delivered to every voter in the City of Corvallis before Election Day. The purpose of this pamphlet is to provide important information on the measure so voters can best determine how they wish to vote.

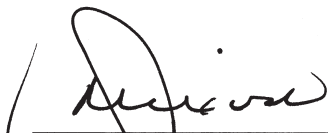
Please remember that the Benton County Elections Office must receive all ballots no later than 8:00 PM Election Day!

It is recommended you do not mail a ballot any later than the fourth day before Election Day. Ballots delivered by the post office after Election Day cannot be counted.

Official ballot boxes are located throughout the city. A list of ballot box locations is included on Page 3 of this pamphlet.

We are pleased to provide you with this pamphlet so that you may review the information before casting your vote.

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jay Dixon  
Commissioner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Linda Modrell  
Commissioner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Annabelle Jaramillo  
Commissioner

**VOTE**

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Letter from the Board of Commissioners .....2  
 Official Dropsites.....3  
 Voter Registration and Ballots .....4  
 Contacts.....4

**Measure**

**Measure 02-54**  
 City of Corvallis Referendum - Telecommunications Service Tax.....5

**Arguments**

Argument For - Cliff and Jo Anne Trow .....6  
 Argument For - Doug VanPelt (retired) Fire Chief .....6  
 Argument For - Lois Malango .....7  
 Argument For - Mayor Helen M. Berg.....7  
 Argument For - Vote Yes for Our Firefighters.....8  
 Argument For - Hal Brauner .....8  
 Argument For - Robert Wilson.....9  
 Argument For - Kent Daniels .....9  
 Argument Against - Roger F. Evans.....10  
 Argument Against - Oregon Telecommunications Association .....10  
 Argument Against - Eric Blackledge .....11  
 Argument Against - Corvallis Citizens Against Telephone  
     Sales Tax.....11  
 Argument Against - Taxpayer Association of Oregon.....12  
 Argument Against - Willamette Association of Realtors -  
     Nancy Hamby .....12

Frequently Asked Questions.....13  
 Casting a Ballot.....13  
 Voter Registration Card .....14  
 Absentee Ballot Application .....15

## **Benton County - Official Ballot Dropsites September 19, 2006 Special Election**

**Please Note:** Ballot dropsites will be open until 8:00 PM on Election Day. Ballots must be in an Oregon Elections office or an official ballot dropsite by 8:00 PM on Election Day in order to be counted. Postmarks do not count.

### **24-HOUR BALLOT DROP BOXES Fifth Street**

Across the street from the Benton County Courthouse  
 180 NW 5th St - Corvallis

### **Wells Fargo Bank**

Next to Pizza Hut, in the Timberhill Shopping Center  
 2543 NW Kings Blvd - Corvallis

### **OTHER BALLOT DROPSITES Corvallis Public Library**

645 NW Monroe Ave - Corvallis  
 Mon - Fri 10:00 AM to 9:00 PM  
 Sat 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM  
 Sun 12:00 NOON to 6:00 PM

### **LBCC - Benton Center**

757 NW Polk Ave - Corvallis  
 When college is in session  
 Mon - Thur 7:30 AM to 9:30 PM  
 Fri 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM  
 When college is not in session  
 Mon - Thur 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM

### **OSU Valley Library**

When college is in session  
 Mon - Thur 7:30 AM to 1:00 AM  
 Fri 7:30 AM to 10:00 PM  
 Sat 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM  
 Sun 10:00 AM to 1:00 AM

### **Senior Citizens Center of Corvallis**

2601 NW Tyler Ave - Corvallis  
 Mon - Fri 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

### **Benton County Courthouse**

120 NW 4th St - Corvallis  
 Front Entrance, Top of Stairs, Inside &  
 Basement, Elections Office, Rm 13  
 Mon - Fri 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM  
 Office Phone: (541) 766-6756  
 Handicapped Phone: TTY (541) 766-6080  
 Email: [bcelections@co.benton.or.us](mailto:bcelections@co.benton.or.us)

## Voter Registration and Ballots

In order to receive a ballot, voters must be registered to vote in their county of residence no later than 21 days prior to the election. If a registered voter moves within the State of Oregon, prior to voting, the voter can update his/her registration and receive a ballot for the current election up until **8:00 PM on Election Day, September 19, 2006.**

If your ballot is lost, destroyed, damaged, or you made a mistake in marking your ballot, you may contact the Benton County Elections Office to request a replacement ballot. The replacement ballot will be mailed to you, as long as your request is received no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> day before Election Day. After the 5<sup>th</sup> day before the election, you may pick up a ballot by coming to the Benton County Elections Office.

If you have already mailed your original ballot before you realize you made a mistake, your ballot has been cast, and you are not eligible for a replacement ballot.

**In order for your ballot to be counted** it must be returned to any elections office or official ballot dropsite in the State of Oregon, **no later than 8:00 PM** Election Day, September 19, 2006.

Postmarks **DO NOT** count!

Ballots must be returned in the official ballot return envelope **and signed by the voter** in order to be accepted for counting.

Use a **PENCIL** to vote your ballot.

If you have any questions about voter registration, your ballot, and/or voting in Benton County:

Call: (541) 766-6756  
Email: [bcelections@co.benton.or.us](mailto:bcelections@co.benton.or.us)  
Fax: (541) 766-6757  
TTY: (541) 766-6080

## Benton County Elections Website

The website is an excellent source of information concerning voter registration, absentee voting, and frequently asked questions; and links to other local, state, and federal election officials. You will also find election specific information such as election filings, results, voter turnout and this voters' pamphlet on our website [www.co.benton.or.us/elections](http://www.co.benton.or.us/elections).

## Voters with Disabilities

If you need help voting because of a disability, contact the Benton County Elections Office. Deputized elections staff is available to assist you in casting a ballot; or ask about alternate voting formats.

## Contact Information

### Benton County Elections Office

Phone: (541) 766-6756  
TTY: (541) 766-6080  
Fax: (541) 766-6757  
Website: [www.co.benton.or.us/elections](http://www.co.benton.or.us/elections)  
Email: [bcelections@co.benton.or.us](mailto:bcelections@co.benton.or.us)

### State of Oregon

Phone: 1 866 673-8683  
Website: [www.oregonvotes.org](http://www.oregonvotes.org)  
Se Habla Español

## Información en Español

Para mas información sobre las elecciones en el condado de Benton

llame al: (541) 766-6756  
TTY: (541) 766-6080  
limitaciones auditivas  
o al numero gratis: 1 866 673-8683

Condado: [www.co.benton.or.us/elections](http://www.co.benton.or.us/elections)  
Estado: [www.oregonvotes.org](http://www.oregonvotes.org)

Se Habla Español

# CITY OF CORVALLIS

## Measure No. 02-54

### BALLOT TITLE

A MEASURE RELATING TO A TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE TAX

**QUESTION:** Shall the City adopt a 5% telecommunications service tax upon telecommunication businesses operating within the City of Corvallis?

**SUMMARY:** This measure creates a new telecommunications service tax upon telecommunication businesses providing telecommunication services within the City of Corvallis. The tax imposed is 5% of the gross revenues earned within the corporate boundaries of the City. This tax would be in addition to all taxes or fees imposed by City under existing law. This measure creates exemptions and credits to be allowed under certain circumstances. Telecommunication businesses would be permitted, and in some cases required, to pass some of the tax through to customers of the telecommunications business. The revenues received by the City shall be used for general governmental purposes. The measure provides definitions, and requires the tax to be paid on the basis of a calendar year. It requires those businesses subject to the tax to file quarterly statements with the City, and to pay the amount owed on a quarterly basis. The measure creates penalties for non-payment or late payment of the tax, and makes it a misdemeanor for willful violation of the measure.

# CITY OF CORVALLIS

## Measure No. 02-54

### ARGUMENT FOR

We write as former Advisory Board members of the Corvallis-Benton County Library and of the Corvallis Parks and Recreation Department. We write in support Measure 02-54. We urge you to "Vote Yes for Our Firefighters."

We are Cliff Trow and Jo Anne Trow, citizens of Corvallis. We are also cell phone users. We agree with the City Council's decision to extend its franchise fee on land-line telephones to the cell phone companies who may pass on some or all of the costs to their rate payers.

We are willing to pay more because we believe that we have an investment in Corvallis' livability. Ranked by those who evaluate cities, Corvallis is one of the most livable cities in the country.

Corvallis ranks highly because it can provide the security of good fire and police protection and the educational and cultural advantages of outstanding schools and higher education. We also have city services of the highest quality despite difficult budget problems that necessitated over two million dollars of reductions four years ago.

From our position on advisory boards for the library and for parks and recreation, we have seen the effects of budget cuts. The library had to reduce its hours of operation and cut its materials budget and its outreach programs to youth services, especially to the disadvantaged.

Parks and recreation had to reduce support for sports facility maintenance, urban forestry, the aquatic center and some youth programs.

Without adequate funding, even more serious cuts in services could occur in the near future should the cell phone companies prevail in the September referendum. For strong Corvallis services, Vote Yes for Our Firefighters, Vote Yes in the September special election.

Cliff and Jo Anne Trow  
Vote Yes for Our Firefighters

*(This information furnished by Cliff and Jo Anne Trow,  
Vote Yes for Our Firefighters Committee)*

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Benton County, nor does the County warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in this argument.

### ARGUMENT FOR

This is a fair tax. It applies the same tax rate to all utilities that rely on City property and rights of way. It lowers the existing franchise taxes by 2%, leveling the playing field.

This is a reasonable tax. It taxes the companies, not the citizen. Is it a wonder that corporations spent approximately \$100,000 to try to prevent the City from proposing it? Other options, such as a general business tax or property tax increase are not popular with citizens. This tax funds a portion of City services received by the University and other State owned properties that pay no property taxes.

This is a needed tax. The fire department needs good equipment and a proper training facility in order to be capable of delivering first-rate service. A replacement ladder truck is needed now. The cost is about \$1M. This is not a frivolity in a City that has over 80 buildings four or more stories high, many of which are residential. This is only one of many specialized and expensive tools required by the fire department. Furthermore, a training facility is a critical need, as the existing one will be taken for wastewater treatment plant expansion. Currently there is no funding for a site or construction of a replacement facility. Using private property is neither reasonable nor effective.

Decisions that have been made to redirect funding for these needs to other necessary services such as library, parks, swim center, and transit were wise choices, given the circumstances at the time. The city ought not to have to choose between livability and safety.

Please inform yourself of the details of this tax, who is funding the opposition, and the consequences of failure to approve it.

Who do you think has the best interests of the entire community at heart – your elected representatives, working in public meetings, or out-of-state corporations?

I urge your yes vote.

*(This information furnished by Doug VanPelt, Retired Fire Chief)*

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Benton County, nor does the County warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in this argument.

# CITY OF CORVALLIS

## Measure No. 02-54

### ARGUMENT FOR

**Why Vote Yes for Our Firefighters?**

**VOTE YES FOR YOUR ECONOMY**

-Keep our homeowners and rental insurance rates among the lowest in the state and country.  
 -The tax is on the corporations, not on the individual.

**VOTE YES FOR PRIORITIES**

-The City's highest priority is the protection of lives and property. Help provide firefighters with the equipment and training to accomplish this.

**VOTE YES FOR LIFESTYLE AND MAINTENANCE OF SERVICE**

-Maintain our safety and livability as a safe and desirable community.  
 -The City's highest priority is the protection of lives and property. Without additional funds, current programs across the city (including the Library!) will most likely see a cut in services, programs and hours.

**VOTE YES FOR FAIRNESS**

-Create equity in taxes among all our utilities, so they all pay the same rate.

**VOTE YES FOR PERSONAL AND PROPERTY SAFETY**

-Give our firefighters the best possible equipment so they can safeguard our homes and families.  
 -When our home is in danger, we want firefighters with the best possible equipment and training to come to our rescue. It's worth \$2.00 to \$3.00 a month.

**VOTE YES TO CREATE A FUND FOR EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT**

-Measures 47 and 50 dismantled the fire levies that dedicated funding for the Fire and Rescue Departments; they put the funding in competition with other General Fund departments. A Yes vote will provide a fund for fire and ambulance replacement and the development of training facilities.

- |                  |                 |                   |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| G. Douglas Barbe | Ann Brodie      | Doug Brodie       |
| Ann E. Evans     | Lois Malango    | Joe Malango       |
| Cheryl Maze      | Nancy Schary    | Jacquelyn Schreck |
| Mary Lee Seward  | Norm Seward     | Dennis Staats     |
| Molly Staats     | Emily Steele    | Robert Steele, MD |
| Kathy Vohland    | Melvina Walters |                   |

*(This information furnished by Lois Malango)*

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Benton County, nor does the County warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in this argument.

### ARGUMENT FOR

Sixteen years ago in 1990, Corvallis like all Oregon cities, had a tax base. It was the amount of property tax money voters decided they collectively wanted to spend annually on city government. The City Council could raise this tax base by 6 percent a year. Voters could raise it further. Corvallis's City Charter specified annual property taxes for fire protection and for public recreation.

In November 1990, Measure 5 passed statewide. The sum of City and County and Special District property taxes for operations has since been restricted to \$10 per \$1,000 assessed value.

In 1996 Measure 47 passed statewide, and in 1997 the State Legislature tried to make it workable in Measure 50. The concept of a tax base was abolished. The Corvallis property tax rate for operations was permanently fixed at \$5.11 per \$1,000 assessed value. The assessed value of each property was divorced from its real market value. The assessed value is allowed to grow no more than 3 percent a year. Newly built property is assessed at the average of these artificially low values assigned to existing property.

The result is that now the real market value of all Corvallis taxable property is about \$4 billion, but the assessed value is only about \$3 billion. Combine that with diminishing land line telephone franchise fees because many people are switching to cell phones, and you see why the City Council found the Telecommunications Services Tax to be imperative.

Let us start to get back on solid ground by voting for enough taxes to fund our firefighters without further diminishing other services that help make Corvallis one of the 10 best cities in North America.

Times change. We must adapt. Vote YES for Measure 02-54.

- Mayor Helen M. Berg  
 Councilor Robert A. Gandara  
 Councilor Charles C. Tomlinson

*(This information furnished by Mayor Helen M. Berg)*

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Benton County, nor does the County warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in this argument.

# CITY OF CORVALLIS

## Measure No. 02-54

### ARGUMENT FOR

After many public meetings, your City Council voted to extend a longstanding phone company franchise fee to cell phone companies. The telecommunications industry from outside Corvallis hired signature gatherers to place this decision before you.

Your city representatives voted to extend the fee to cell phone companies for several reasons. Those include: need for increased community safety, basic tax fairness, and consistency with other private utilities. The revenue will fund essential ambulance and fire equipment, training and facilities.

We believe they made the right choice for our community. You can uphold that choice by voting **YES** for this important local decision.

**Vote YES for your firefighters.** The proceeds will pay for critical fire and ambulance equipment, training and facilities. Aging equipment means rising maintenance costs and decreased reliability. It costs over \$900,000 to replace one 24-year-old ladder truck, now many years past its life expectancy.

**Vote YES for community health and safety.** Corvallis Fire and Rescue responded to over 2,000 calls last year. Ambulances transported over 3,000 patients needing emergency medical care, many of them elderly. Fire prevention education and fire safety inspections keep all of us safe in our homes and workplaces 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Vote YES for your pocketbook.** Invest in our continued status as a Safe and Protected Fire Area. This keeps your local fire insurance premiums among the state's lowest.

**Vote YES for stable city budgets.** Cell phone tax proceeds will offset the annual loss of over \$180,000 that has occurred as landline services have declined. It will also reduce pressure on the city's limited property tax dollars, which fund most city services.

**Vote YES for equal taxation.** Right now, traditional landline phone companies (local exchange services) pay a 7% fee, while cell phone companies pay nothing. The city's action will charge both types of companies the same 5% rate.

[www.yes4firefighters.com](http://www.yes4firefighters.com)

Cliff Trow

Jack Davis

*(This information furnished by Vote Yes for Our Firefighters)*

### ARGUMENT FOR

#### **VOTE YES ON BALLOT MEASURE 02-54 FOR YOUR SAFETY AND SECURITY AT HOME, SCHOOL AND WORK**

**The City Council voted unanimously to institute a 5% tax on cell phone companies. We urge you to uphold that decision: Mike Beilstein, Hal Brauner, Patricia Daniels, Jerry Davis, George Grosch, Betty Griffiths, Emily Hagen, David Hamby, Stewart Wer-show**

#### **NEEDED**

This money is for critical fire services to protect you and your family at home, school and work

Fire and rescue equipment to be purchased include two replacement ambulances, two replacement fire trucks, and training facilities.

This will help keep all other services funded with property taxes such as; library, parks and recreation, the aquatic center, and police at the current level of service.

#### **FAIR**

Landline phone companies pay a significant amount in state, local and federal taxes while wireless companies pay very little. Landline companies are paying 7% on local exchange services. **Wireless companies pay no local taxes at all!**

#### **DOESN'T HAVE TO COST YOU ANYTHING**

The wireless companies are being taxed. They don't have to pass the tax on to you; that is their decision. If the charge is passed on to you, a couple of dollars per month may be added to your bill.

#### **IT IS WORTH IT**

It is absolutely worth the small price you may pay. What other service do you pay for and know that the service is there for you when you need it 24/7? A few dollars a month (\$2.50 on a \$50.00 charge) is a small price to pay for City services that maintain our quality of life.

#### **DON'T LET LARGE OUT-OF-STATE CORPORATIONS TELL YOU WHAT IS RIGHT FOR CORVALLIS VOTE YES ON MEASURE 02-54**

*(This information furnished by Hal Brauner)*

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Benton County, nor does the County warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in this argument.

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Benton County, nor does the County warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in this argument.



CITY OF CORVALLIS

**Measure No. 02-54**

**ARGUMENT FOR**

**WHY WE NEED MORE REVENUE**

Property taxes currently provide half of the funds needed for 5 of our basic services - Library, Parks, Transit, Police and Fire. Other revenue comes from franchise fees, motel tax, county tax transfers for fire and the library, and state revenue sharing. Since 1997, our property tax revenue has increased 23% while costs have increased 51%.

The City Council has taken a number of actions to keep costs in line with income such as:

- Cut more than \$2.8 million in services
- Implemented employee cost sharing for medical/dental expenses
- Purchased used vehicles for wildland fire fighting

The City Council has pursued other income sources such as:

- Attempted a vehicle registration fee in March, 2002
- Attempted a tax levy in November, 2002
- Implemented a franchise fee on the city's utilities in 2002
- Obtained federal energy tax credits for transit in 2005
- Implemented a Transportation Maintenance fee in 2006

The City will have major funding problems in the next few years because:

- Property tax revenue continues to grow at a rate less than inflation
- Land line franchise fee income has decreased due to increased cell phone use
- Federal energy tax credits are expected to be phased out
- The city has no reserves or funding source for replacing fire vehicles
- State revenue sharing funds are not keeping up with growth & inflation
- We have entered a period of significant inflation

**Your city needs your support to maintain current services**  
**Vote YES!!**

*(This information furnished by Robert Wilson)*

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Benton County, nor does the County warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in this argument.

**ARGUMENT FOR**

Please vote **yes** on Corvallis Measure 02-54. The top priority for revenues from this franchise fee will be fire engines and ambulances for Corvallis Fire & Rescue.

**Our firefighters are there when you need them, 24/7.** Their brush trucks and water tenders provide crucial quick response to protect our open spaces and natural areas from wildfires. Popular city sports and recreation programs, from swimming to softball and soccer, attract thousands of active city residents of all ages—activities always carrying some risk of mishap. Participants and their families enjoy these programs knowing that if accidents happen, emergency medical service (EMS) and transport will be on the spot within minutes.

**Over half of our Fire Department's calls for service originate on cell phones.** Most wireless calls are routed through landline facilities located in the city's rights of way. The city's extension of the traditional phone companies' franchise fee to cell phone companies is a reasonable action. **The fee is fair:** cell phone companies will go from paying **nothing** to paying a 5% fee, while traditional phone companies' (local exchange services) fee, which they have paid for many years, will be reduced from 7% to 5%.

The fee does not tax people. It taxes companies that sell services.

**The fee will not have any effect on your current property taxes.** That's important, because most city departments—parks and recreation, the library, public safety, transit—are funded mainly with property taxes. The fee will help sustain a healthy city budget, postponing a need to either cut services or raise property taxes.

As supporters of our community's parks, open spaces, pools, recreation programs, riverfront, and urban forest, we ask that you **please vote YES for firefighters, and YES to keep the healthy programs that make Corvallis such a great place to live.**

- Kent Daniels
- Tracy Noel
- Jeanie Eidemiller
- Cary Stephens
- Margie Powell
- Phil Schary
- Michael Riddle
- Sue Riddle
- Jeff Katz
- David Livingston

*(This information furnished by Kent Daniels)*

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Benton County, nor does the County warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in this argument.

# CITY OF CORVALLIS

## Measure No. 02-54

### ARGUMENT AGAINST

Vote in opposition to this tax.

1. •The subject tax is a targeted tax on gross revenue of telephone services, including wireless, which will be passed on to the consumer. It does not bear a relationship to what the city provides and has little, if anything, to do with the Fire Department.
2. •The council's subcommittee did not recommend this to the council. Estimated revenue was poorly defined. The proposal involved double taxation under some conditions, and structurally was not sound for auditing & other complications.
3. •In my judgment, the council showed indifference to public testimony. The city council wanted more money for the city regardless of how it was raised.
4. •This will not tax many OSU students as their service is billed to an address outside of Corvallis. This is a way to avoid the tax as a consumer.
5. •The unfortunate condition is this tax may drive new communication service companies out of Corvallis, which are the desirable tech companies that we would like to attract.

*(This information furnished by Roger F. Evans)*

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Benton County, nor does the County warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in this argument.

### ARGUMENT AGAINST

DO NOT LEND SUPPORT TO ANOTHER TAX BEING PLACED ON YOUR TELEPHONE BILLS

VOTE "NO" ON MEASURE 02-54

The Oregon Telecommunications Association is a statewide organization that has been in existence since 1917. Many of our members are small, rural telephone companies that currently pay franchise fees to the cities in which they operate. These fees are collected as a tax by the phone company from you, our customers, and then transferred to the cities where we operate.

As a consumer, you are probably keenly aware of the laundry list of taxes, fees and surcharges that are foisted upon you through your monthly telephone bill. The new telecommunications tax that the Corvallis City Council has unilaterally imposed upon you is simply one more in a long line of such taxes.

The Oregon Telecommunications Association objects to telephone companies being forced into the position of serving as tax collector. Please consider the following:

- If you have a landline phone or fax, it is likely you will pay more tax each month to the government, not less tax as has been stated by the proponents of this new tax.
- If you have a wireless phone, you will begin paying a brand new tax to the government each and every month, without end.
- If you have a combination of landline and wireless telecommunications services, the taxes you pay will certainly be much more than they are currently.

YOU NOW HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO WHAT MANY OF YOUR FELLOW OREGONIANS DO NOT – LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD AND REPEAL THIS TAX!

*(This information furnished by Oregon Telecommunications Association)*

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Benton County, nor does the County warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in this argument.

CITY OF CORVALLIS

**Measure No. 02-54**

**ARGUMENT AGAINST**

Cell phone tax hurts small, local business  
Vote "NO"

Corvallis residents and local businesses deserve better than to be saddled with a one-of-a-kind permanent tax on our cell phones, home phones, and business lines. It sends the wrong message to our core of small businesses, and quite frankly, makes Corvallis look silly.

Corvallis has spent significant taxpayer dollars to attract a good economic base of clean, high wage, high value businesses. Most of these businesses use lots of technology and communications services. How are these businesses going to view Corvallis as a place to do business when they see this new tax on their service provider bills?

The truth is, this new tax will hurt the local small business core of Corvallis while probably leaving bigger businesses untouched. Many local small business pay well over \$1,000 per month for their communications services, and the proposed new taxes on land lines, cell phones and internet would cost these small businesses an additional \$700 or more per year for these services.

But many large businesses will be able to avoid the tax through the use of third party communication service providers with no nexus in Corvallis, or the use of out of town billing addresses. Small local businesses may have to pay the tax, but "big box" chains and larger multi-branch businesses that bill cellular services through their headquarters, may not. This clearly is not fair or equitable to our local small businesses.

Finally, if Corvallis needs new Fire Department equipment and facilities, what makes a phone tax a logical way to pay for them? What relationship is there between cell phone use and the need for fire protection? Obviously, there is none.

If added fire protection is the goal, then the city should re-arrange its priorities to find the money in its existing budget. If new money is needed, then a more equitable tax with a clearer connection to the problem should be found.

*(This information furnished by Eric Blackledge,  
National Federation of Independent Businesses)*

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Benton County, nor does the County warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in this argument.

**ARGUMENT AGAINST**

**9 Reasons to say "NO" to the new tax on your home phone, business phone, wireless phone, and internet phone service.**

1. Corvallis consumers will bear this tax burden, not communication companies.
2. It does not make sense to tax communication services to pay for fire equipment. There is no connection between the tax and the purposes to which the revenue will be applied.
3. The tax will continue indefinitely – long after the fire equipment is purchased and paid for.
4. Citizens have no idea how the city will use the tax revenue in the future.
5. The tax is not a fair way of funding the fire department. Under this tax, individuals and businesses that rely heavily on telecommunications services will pay more towards the city's fire services. Everyone within the city receives an equal benefit from the city's fire services. Why should some be required to pay a greater portion simply because they have multiple phone lines?
6. This tax is not really about the fire department. The ordinance says the revenue from the tax is for **general governmental purposes**. The city is saying revenue will initially be used for the fire department to generate political support for the tax.
7. Unfair business taxes hurt the local economy. The average business pays approximately \$1,200 per month for phone lines, cell phones and internet services, and the telecommunications tax would cost the average business an additional \$60/month or \$720/year for these services.
8. The telecommunications tax is a band-aid approach. If additional resources are truly needed, the city should engage citizens and identify ways to generate a predictable and fair revenue stream to fund necessary city services.
9. Citizens should have been able to vote on this tax without having to resort to the referendum process. Voting "NO" will encourage the council to hold a public vote before adopting future tax increases.

*(This information furnished by  
Corvallis Citizens Against Telephone Sales Tax)*

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Benton County, nor does the County warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in this argument.

# CITY OF CORVALLIS

## Measure No. 02-54

### ARGUMENT AGAINST

**The Taxpayer Association urges you to examine the tax the Corvallis City Council didn't want you to vote on.**

Corvallis City Council rejected citizen calls for a public vote, and instead hastily adopted this tax. Upset at being left out of the decision making process, Corvallis taxpayers helped put this measure on the ballot.

The city council didn't want you to vote on their big tax grab because it is seriously flawed. It heaps the tax burden on cell-phone users to pay for government programs with no relation to cell phones. It is unequal, bad policy, and sloppy taxation. No wonder city council didn't want you to vote.

Also, keep in mind that this isn't simply a new tax on cell-phones. Even senior citizens and others on fixed incomes who use the most basic landline services will see their phone bills go up.

Vote No on 02-54 to stop this bad tax and to stop the city from taxing people without their consent.

**Cell phone tax hurts small businesses.**

This cell-phone tax creates a Corvallis tax penalty for businesses locating in Corvallis. Small start-up businesses who depend on cell-phones should be invited to come to Corvallis not punished. Some businesses might have to pay as much as \$700 per year just to weather this "Corvallis-only" tax.

**Cell phone tax hurts senior citizens and the disabled**

Many seniors and disabled use cell-phones as an emergency devise – something to carry with them for when they need to call for help. Seniors are asking "Why are we singled out for this tax? Shouldn't taxes be paid by everyone?"

**Vote No on 02-54.**

*(This information furnished by Taxpayers Association of Oregon)*

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Benton County, nor does the County warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in this argument.

### ARGUMENT AGAINST

You may wonder why a group representing **REALTORS®** is concerned about a new tax on telecommunications for Corvallis residents and is urging a vote to repeal.

It's true that, other than adding to our phone bills, realtors won't be directly affected by this measure. The concern is the precedent set by the city singling out users of a specific service to help cover a general budget shortfall. If the City Council thinks it's a good idea to tax phone calls to pay for fire trucks, who's to say in a few years we won't add a new tax on restaurant meals to pay for jail beds or pass a new levy on real estate transactions to complete a road project.

We rely on government to ensure public safety and other essential services, and telecommunications companies, like realtors, have to pay their fair share. If the city can no longer pay for these essential services and there's no choice other than to raise taxes, we should do so in a way that spreads the burden equally among and between businesses and individuals.

What the city has done is single out users of a specific service to foot the bill. That strikes us as arbitrary and unfair, especially when the service being taxed is in no way related to need for which the money is collected.

This telecommunications tax is also in effect a sales tax on a specific service. We don't have a sales tax in Oregon and voters have repeatedly rejected that approach. We're troubled by the city appearing to take the first step in that direction, especially without giving voters a chance to weigh in.

We urge voters to repeal the telecommunications tax so a more fair and equitable solution to the city's budget problems can be found.

Sincerely,

Nancy Hamby, President  
Willamette Association of REALTORS®

*(This information furnished by Willamette Association of Realtors, Nancy Hamby, President)*

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Benton County, nor does the County warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in this argument.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q. What do I do, when a ballot for someone else is delivered to my home?**

A. It is important that you **DO NOT THROW OUT THE BALLOT**. Write on the envelope that the person is no longer at that address and **PUT IT BACK INTO THE MAIL**. Postage is not needed. Once our office has received the undeliverable ballot you will stop receiving them.

**Q. If I mark my ballot in pen will it still count?**

A. Yes. We recommend that you mark over the pen marks with a pencil to ensure that the vote tally machine reads your responses.

**Q. I forgot to put my ballot in the secrecy envelope. Will you still count my ballot?**

A. Yes. We recommend that voters use the secrecy envelope. You can open the ballot return envelope, place your ballot in the secrecy envelope and re-seal it. Write "Opened by Voter" along the portion that you opened and sign your full name. Once we determine it was you who opened the ballot, it can be counted.

**Q. How do you know I am the one who voted my ballot?**

A. The signature on EACH ballot return envelope is checked. Election staff compares the signature on your ballot return envelope to the signature on your voter registration card. If the signatures do not match, we contact you to resolve the issue. **Remember:** Even a person with a Power of Attorney cannot sign your ballot. Only you can.

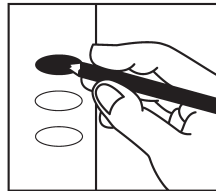
**Q. How can I find out the election results?**

A. Election results are available on the Benton County Elections website at: [www.co.benton.or.us/elections](http://www.co.benton.or.us/elections).

The first results will be available between 8:00 PM and 9:00 PM Election Night. Further results will be added to the website as they are tallied. The majority of ballots cast will be counted within 4 hours after the polls close. However, the election cannot be certified until voters whose ballots have been challenged have had an opportunity to respond to challenges and ballots returned in other counties have been received and tallied in Benton County.

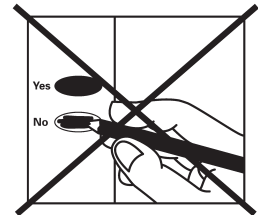
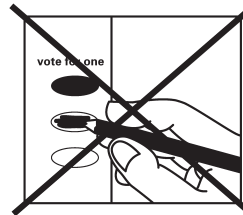
### check your ballot!

Make sure you **use a pencil** to fill in the ovals next to your choices.



If you vote for more candidates than allowed, or if you vote **both Yes and No** on a measure, it is called an overvote.

Your vote **will not count** for that candidate or measure.



You do not have to vote on all contests. Those you do vote on will still count.

Contact Benton County Elections to request a replacement ballot if:

- you make a mistake
- your ballot is damaged or spoiled
- you lose your ballot

**Benton County Elections**

Phone: (541) 766-6756  
 Fax: (541) 766-6757  
 TTY: (541) 766-6080  
 Email: [bcelections@co.benton.or.us](mailto:bcelections@co.benton.or.us)

**1 866 ORE VOTES/673 8683**

*Se Habla Español*

**[www.oregonvotes.org](http://www.oregonvotes.org)**

## Oregon Voter Registration Card

### you may use this card to:

- register to vote in Oregon  
*The deadline to register to vote is the 21st day before an election.*
  - change your name, mailing address, residence address or political party affiliation on your voter registration
  - become eligible to sign petitions, including initiative, referendum and recall petitions
- ### how to register to vote
- Fill out the form using black pen and print clearly.  
*If the form is incomplete, it may be rejected.*
  - Sign the form.
  - Mail or drop off the completed form at your County Elections Office.  
*Do not fax! If you fax this form it will be rejected. Addresses are online at <http://www.sos.state.or.us/elections/other/info/clerk.htm>*
- Your County Elections Office will mail you a Voter Notification Card to confirm your registration.

### selecting a political party

Some political parties require you to be registered in their party to vote for their candidates at a Primary Election.

### identification

New laws require that people must provide identifying information to register to vote. If you have a current, valid Oregon DMV Driver's License/ID, you must provide that number in section 4. If you do not have a current, valid Oregon DMV Driver's License/ID, you must provide the last four digits of your Social Security number in section 4a.

If you do not have a current, valid Oregon DMV Driver's License/ID or a Social Security number, you must affirm this by marking the boxes in sections 4 and 4a, and if you are registering by mail, you must provide a **copy** of one of the following:

- valid photo identification
- a paycheck stub
- a utility bill
- a bank statement
- a government document
- proof of eligibility under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) or the Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act (VAEH)

### assistance

If, because of a disability, you need assistance registering to vote or voting please contact your County Elections Official.

### for more information:

call 1 866 ORE VOTES/673 8683 visit [www.oregonvotes.org](http://www.oregonvotes.org) tty 1 866 350 0596  
 se habla español for the hearing impaired



SEL 500web rev. 1/06

### 1 qualifications If you mark no in response to either of these questions, do not complete this form.

Are you a citizen of the United States of America?  Yes  No  
 Will you be 18 years of age on or before election day?  Yes  No

### 2 personal information \*denotes optional information

name last \_\_\_\_\_ first \_\_\_\_\_ middle \_\_\_\_\_  
 Oregon residence address (include apt. or space number) \_\_\_\_\_ city \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_  
 date of birth (month/day/year) \_\_\_\_\_ county of residence\* \_\_\_\_\_  
 phone number\* \_\_\_\_\_ email address\* \_\_\_\_\_  
 mailing address (required if different than residence address) \_\_\_\_\_ city \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

### 3 political party choose one of the following:

Constitution  Democratic  Libertarian  
 Pacific Green  Republican  Not a member of a party  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

### 4 Oregon DMV Driver's License/ID number If you fill in this section, do not send a copy of ID.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 valid Oregon DMV Driver's License/ID number

### 5 Mark here only if you do not have a valid Oregon DMV Driver's License/ID and go to step 4a.

#### 4a last four digits of Social Security number If you fill in this section, do not send a copy of ID.

x x x - x x - \_\_\_\_\_  
 last four digits of Social Security number

Mark here only if you do not have a valid Oregon DMV Driver's License/ID or a Social Security number. If you are registering by mail, please include a copy of acceptable identification, listed to the left.

### 6 signature I swear or affirm that I am qualified to be an elector and I have told the truth on this registration.

sign here \_\_\_\_\_ date today \_\_\_\_\_

### 7 If you sign this card and know it to be false, you can be fined up to \$125,000 and/or jailed for up to 5 years.

### 8 registration updates If you are previously registered and updating your information, fill out this section.

previous registration name \_\_\_\_\_ previous county and state \_\_\_\_\_  
 home address on previous registration \_\_\_\_\_ date of birth (month/day/year) \_\_\_\_\_

**TO REQUEST AN ABSENTEE BALLOT**

This is **not** a voter registration form.  
 You must be a registered voter to request an absentee ballot.  
 If you are unsure of your voting status, contact the Benton County Elections Office.

- Fill out and **SIGN** the form below.
- Mail, fax, e-mail, or deliver **SIGNED** completed form to Benton County Elections Office.
- You may deliver an absentee ballot request for someone else, but he/she must sign it.
- Ballots received after 8:00 PM Election Day cannot be counted.
- If mailing your ballot, be sure to allow enough time for it to arrive by the deadline.



**BENTON COUNTY ELECTIONS DIVISION**  
 120 NW 4<sup>TH</sup> ST RM 13  
 CORVALLIS, OR 97330  
 Tel: (541)766-6756 Fax: (541)766-6757  
 Website: [www.co.benton.or.us/elections](http://www.co.benton.or.us/elections) E-Mail: [bcelections@co.benton.or.us](mailto:bcelections@co.benton.or.us)

**ABSENTEE APPLICATION**

Please select the category that applies to you:

- Military     Overseas     Snowbird     Student     Other

I am applying for an absentee ballot for:

- This election only \_\_\_\_\_ (mth/day/yr)  
 All future elections until \_\_\_\_\_ (mth/day/yr)  
 I will be away from \_\_\_\_\_ (mth/day) till \_\_\_\_\_ (mth/day) yearly  
 I will be in Benton County from \_\_\_\_\_ (mth/day) till \_\_\_\_\_ (mth/day) yearly  
 This will continue to happen until \_\_\_\_\_ (mth/day/yr)

<b>Name (Last, First, Middle)</b>	<b>Date of Birth (mth/day/yr)</b>
-----------------------------------	-----------------------------------

**Absentee Address Line 1**

**Absentee Address Line 2 (if needed)**

**City, State, Zip / COUNTRY**

**Benton County Residential Address**

**City, State, Zip**

<b>E-Mail Address</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
-----------------------	------------------

<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
-------------------	--------------

**Note: Mail, fax, e-mail, or deliver SIGNED completed form**

Mail application to PO Box 888, Corvallis, OR 97339  
 Fax application to 541.766.6757  
 E-Mail application to [bcelections@co.benton.or.us](mailto:bcelections@co.benton.or.us)  
 Deliver application to Benton County Courthouse, 120 NW 4<sup>th</sup> St., Room 13, Corvallis, Oregon

**Benton County  
VOTERS' PAMPHLET  
Special Election  
September 19, 2006**

Elections Office Open 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM Election Day

PUBLISHED BY THE  
BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Election Questions?  
Benton County Elections Office  
Phone (541) 766-6756  
TTY (541) 766-6080  
Fax (541) 766-6757  
Website: [www.co.benton.or.us/elections](http://www.co.benton.or.us/elections)  
Email: [bcelections@co.benton.or.us](mailto:bcelections@co.benton.or.us)