

# The Observer Portland, OR, October 2, 2002

## Yes Vote Urged on Children's Initiative

The Portland Children's Initiative, which will provide much needed additional support for Portland's kids, will appear on the city's ballot.

Measure 26-33 will raise approximately \$10 million annually through a five-year property tax levy. The money would be used to create a Children's Investment Fund to target investment of early childhood development, after school and mentoring programs and prevention of child abuse and neglect.

City Commissioner Dan Saltzman, who helped get the measure referred to the ballot by City Council, said, "simply put, the

Children's Initiative is a smart, cost-effective idea that solves an important problem."

He said the investment in proven programs for kids will make children a higher priority, help ease the burden on schools, and better place to live, and create tremendous long-term savings to taxpayers."

The Children's Investment Fund is modeled after successful programs in San Francisco and Seattle that took the local investment from their levies and leveraged significant additional federal and private dollars.

In San Francisco, where the first levy passed in 1991 and where the city was able

to match local taxpayer monies with federal and private dollars by almost a 7 to 1 ratio, the successes have been staggering.

Saltzman said the city was able to reduce juvenile felony arrests by 24 percent, decrease reports of child abuse and neglect by 25 percent, decrease the foster care population by 19 percent, increase the high school completion rate by 11 percent and decrease emergency mental health hospitalizations by 32 percent.

Portland measure has won key endorsements from the Portland Business Alliance, the Citizens' Crime Commission, The Urban League of Portland, the Portland Associa-

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—City Commissioner Dan Saltzman.

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tion of Teachers, The Schools Alliance, The Morrison Center, The Northwest Oregon Labor Council, Self Enhancement, Inc., Friends of the Childer, Stand For Children, Children First For Oregon, and hundreds of other organizations and individuals.