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QuickPoint! – Does Oregon Rank Dead Last in Corporate Taxes? NO

By Steve Buckstein

Trying to sell voters on the largest tax increase in Oregon history, [Measure 97](#) proponents claim that “[Oregon ranks dead last in corporate taxes.](#)” But the nation’s leading independent tax policy research organization, [The Tax Foundation](#), says [this claim is misleading](#). It looked at three ways to rate corporate taxes and found:

- Oregon’s top marginal corporate income tax rate is the 18th highest in the nation.
- On a revenue per capita basis, Oregon’s corporate income tax is the 28th highest.
- The Foundation’s State Business Tax Climate Index ranks Oregon 37th nationally for overall corporate income tax structure.

The “dead last” corporate tax claim relies on two national reports ([AEG](#), [COST](#)) that look at total business tax burdens, not just the tax burdens of large C corporations, the only entities directly targeted by Measure 97. Even so, both these reports make clear that they rate Oregon’s business tax burden low not because corporate taxes are low, but rather because Oregon doesn’t have a sales tax.

As the [COST report](#) notes, “If sales tax revenue is excluded...[Oregon] moves from the lowest...to the 20th-lowest rate.”

Misleading voters about Oregon’s corporate tax structure may simply be a tactic to keep us from focusing on the fact that Measure 97 is really a hidden [sales tax on steroids](#) that will hit every Oregonian. When we realize that, Measure 97 should suffer the same fate as every other statewide sales tax measure—defeat.

Read much more about Measure 97 and why you should vote against it on [Cascade’s Measure 97 webpage](#).

Steve Buckstein is Founder and Senior Policy Analyst at Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon’s free market public policy research organization.

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