

Assessment of the 2016 Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review on Measure 97

DRAFT REPORT prepared concurrently for the Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review Commission and the Democracy Fund

by

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Summary Evaluation of the 2016 Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review

This one-page summary highlights key findings from an assessment of the 2016 Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review on Measure 97. The full report is available online at <http://tinyurl.com/cironline>. Principal funding for this research came from the Democracy Fund and the National Science Foundation. This research included direct observation of the CIR panels, panelist surveys, detailed assessments of the Citizens' Statements, as well as phone and online surveys of Oregon voters.

The 2016 Oregon CIR panel achieved a high quality of deliberation, which enabled panelists to understand and consider the key arguments for and against Measure 97.

- The 2016 Oregon CIR maintained the same high level of deliberation obtained in previous years.
- The vast majority of participants reported learning enough about the measure, and most reported little difficulty processing information, arguments, and underlying values related to Measure 97.
- CIR panelists and neutral observers largely agreed in their assessment that the CIR was conducted in a democratic fashion. SEE SECTION 1

The 2016 Oregon CIR produced a clear and reliable Citizens' Statement.

- Claims made in the 2016 Citizens' Statement generally were accurate and verifiable, though some elements reflected unchallenged expert testimony of indeterminate accuracy.
- The 2016 Oregon Citizens' Statement was clearly written in broadly accessible language, but the Statement could have been stronger if CIR panelists had more leeway in crafting it after voting on which key findings and pro/con arguments to include. SEE SECTION 2

The 2016 Citizens' Statements reached a majority of voters, consistent with previous years.

- A statewide phone survey of Oregon voters found that 52% of Oregon voters were aware of the CIR, a figure comparable to rates found in 2012-2014.
- Roughly 43% of Oregon voters read the Citizens' Statements before completing their ballots, with the vast majority finding them at least somewhat helpful and informative. SEE SECTION 3

The 2016 Citizens' Statement made voters better informed about Measure 97.

- Evidence from an online survey experiment showed an increase in voter knowledge as a result of reading the 2016 Citizens' Statement on Measure 97.
- A large majority of voters (69-77%) said they would "probably" or "definitely" share the four pieces of information from the Citizens' Statement included in the survey.
- When asked if they would continue to believe the CIR Statement even if it were refuted by an alternative source, 29-48% of voters were inclined to do so, particularly if contrary claims came from pro or con campaigns on Measure 97. SEE SECTION 4

Many voters do not understand the CIR, but those who find the CIR Citizens' Statements most helpful view it as a necessary improvement on an initiative process they want to preserve.

- Citizens had limited knowledge of key features of the CIR, being most familiar with its use of expert and pro/con testimony on the ballot measures it studies.
- Oregon voters who find the CIR Citizens' Statements most helpful are also more eager to serve in public role, more favorable toward the initiative process, but also more keen on seeing the initiative process improved in Oregon. SEE SECTION 5

Introduction

This report provides an overall assessment of the quality of deliberation that took place during the 2016 Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review (CIR), as well as the quality, utility, and impact of the resultant Citizens' Statement that review produced. We focus on the 2016 CIR but make reference to earlier findings from our reports that assessed the 2010, 2012, and 2014 CIRs.

The Oregon legislature created the Citizens' Initiative Review (CIR) in 2009 to help voters make informed choices on statewide ballot measures. After convening two CIRs in 2010, the Oregon legislature made this process a regular institution in 2011. Thereafter, the Citizens' Initiative Review Commission has overseen two CIR panels in 2012, two in 2014, and one in 2016.

Healthy Democracy, which has convened every CIR thus far, held one CIR in Monmouth, Oregon on August 18-21. Healthy Democracy convened a stratified random sample of 20 registered voters to study and deliberate on Measure 97, the "Oregon Business Tax Increase," which would remove the cap on corporate gross sales tax and tax all sales in excess of \$25 million at 2.5%.¹ Citizen panelists heard from both sides of the issue, talked with neutral witnesses, and deliberated intensively as a full panel and in small groups, then wrote a one-page analysis for distribution to the wider electorate via official Oregon Voters' Pamphlet.

Our research method for studying the Oregon CIR in 2016 included direct observation of the panels, surveys of the citizen panelists, detailed assessments of the Citizens' Statement, a usability study of the Statement, and phone and online surveys of the Oregon electorate. This paralleled the methods used in our evaluations from 2010-14. This report includes occasional comparative references to those earlier CIR panels, including all previous Oregon CIRs and pilot CIRs from 2014 run in Colorado, Phoenix (Arizona), and Jackson County (Oregon). Those who wish to learn more about previous findings in this research project can read them at <http://tinyurl.com/cironline>.

¹ [https://ballotpedia.org/Oregon_Business_Tax_Increase,_Measure_97_\(2016\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Oregon_Business_Tax_Increase,_Measure_97_(2016))

Section 1. CIR Process Design and Deliberative Quality

To assess the quality of the CIR's deliberative process, we applied the same evaluative scheme used in 2010-14. In particular, we were interested in understanding whether the CIR provided opportunities for analytic rigor, sustained a democratic group process, and resulted in informed and egalitarian decision making. Such features are essential to any deliberative democratic process, including the CIR.²

For the 2016 review, the four authors of this report were present to observe the process. We took detailed notes and engaged in real-time coding of the deliberative quality of each agenda segment. In addition, CIR panelists completed daily and end-of-review evaluations that asked them to assess their overall satisfaction with the process and its performance according to several criteria.

In this section, we detail how the 2016 CIR process performed on each of these criteria. We also compare it to similar results from previous CIR panels. In addition to evaluating the CIR, we also present concrete recommendations for how to improve the process, but we save all such recommendations for the final section of this report.

1.1 Overall Satisfaction

Before addressing the specific criteria, we begin by reporting on CIR panelist satisfaction. At the end of each review, panelists are asked to rate their "overall satisfaction with the CIR process." Results for the 2016 Oregon CIR appear in Table 1.1. Three-quarters of panelists were at least "satisfied" with the process, which represents a drop-off from previous years (94% in 2014, 92% in 2012, and 98% in 2010). Moreover, the difference was not an increase in neutral ratings, but rather in dissatisfaction: The four dissatisfied/very dissatisfied participants in 2016 represent a peak percentage (20%) for those figures compared to previous CIRs.

Table 1.1. Responses to "Looking back over the past four days, how would you rate your OVERALL SATISFACTION with the CIR process?"

Response	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Very Dissatisfied	2	10%
Dissatisfied	2	10%
Neutral	1	5%
Satisfied	5	25%
Very Satisfied	10	50%
<i>Total</i>	20	100%

In sum, the vast majority of panelists found the process satisfying, but there were dissenters from that view. This will be important to keep in mind while analyzing the CIR process more closely.

² Gastil (2008). More generally, see Nabatchi et al. (2012). For a comparison with another comprehensive report on a deliberative process in Australia, see Carson et al. (2014).

1.2 Analytic Rigor

A minimal test of a CIR process' analytic rigor is whether the panelists believed that, by the end of the week, they adequately understood the initiative they had studied. To assess this, the final panelist survey asked if they had learned enough to reach a good decision. Table 1.2 presents the results from 2016. The figures show that almost all panelists could at least say they *probably* had the information they needed.

Table 1.2. Responses to “Do you believe that you learned enough this week to make an informed decision?”

Response	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Definitely no	0	
Probably no	0	
Unsure	1	5%
Probably yes	8	40%
Definitely yes	11	55%
<i>Total</i>	20	100%

These figures continue a drop-off trend in “definitely yes” averages since 2010. In the first year of the CIR, 90% of CIR panelists gave that response, compared to fewer each year (79% in 2012, 71% in 2014). The only comparable previous CIR was the panel convened in 2014 on genetically modified food labeling (Measure 92), which only had 50% of panelists say that they “definitely” had enough information. The shortened length of the CIR (from a five-day process in its first years to a shorter one now) may account for that decline, but it could also result from complexities in the particular issues CIR panels have had to address since 2010 (e.g., GMO labeling and tax laws).

Weighing Information and Values

Another measure of analytic rigor asked the CIR panelists to rate the process' performance at weighing arguments and evidence. Table 1.3 shows that the vast majority of panelists thought the CIR did a “good” or “excellent” job of handling both pro and con information. These figures were roughly comparable to previous CIRs. As with past CIRs, there were one or two dissenters, and these dissenting views will reappear in other analyses in this report.

Turning to whether the process gave ample opportunity for the consideration of underlying values, most panelists thought the CIR did a “good” job of considering both pro and con values (Table 1.4). These figures were comparable to previous CIRs, though those used a slightly different question wording and had considerable variance in responses across different issues.

Following the Discussion

Our last measure of analytic rigor asks whether panelists had difficulty grasping the discussion. At the end of each day, we asked panelists how often they had had “trouble understanding or following the discussion today.” Table 1.5 shows that the most common response was that panelists “rarely” or “never” had trouble, with those two categories accounting for 69% of responses across the four days. By contrast, only 10% of responses were “often” or “almost always.” This result is roughly equivalent to the pattern across CIRs from 2010-14.

Table 1.3. CIR performance rating at “weighing the most important arguments and evidence” in favor of and opposing the measure.

Response	Weighed arguments IN FAVOR		Weighed arguments OPPOSING	
	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Very poor	0		0	
Poor	1	5%	2	10%
Adequate	4	20%	4	20%
Good	7	35%	8	40%
Excellent	8	40%	6	30%
<i>Total</i>	20	100%	20	100%

Table 1.4. CIR performance rating for considering “the values and deeper concerns motivating” those in favor of and those opposing the measure.

Response	Considered concerns of those IN FAVOR		Considered concerns of those OPPOSING	
	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Very poor	0		0	
Poor	0		0	
Adequate	3	15%	3	15%
Good	11	55%	12	60%
Excellent	6	30%	5	25%
<i>Total</i>	20	100%	20	100%

Table 1.5. Responses to “How often did you have TROUBLE UNDERSTANDING...the discussion today?”

Response	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Total Pct. of Responses
Never	3	4	3	6	20%
Rarely	11	7	12	9	49%
Occasionally	4	7	4	2	21%
Often	2	2	1	2	9%
Almost always	0	0	0	1	1%
<i>Total</i>	20	20	20	20	100%

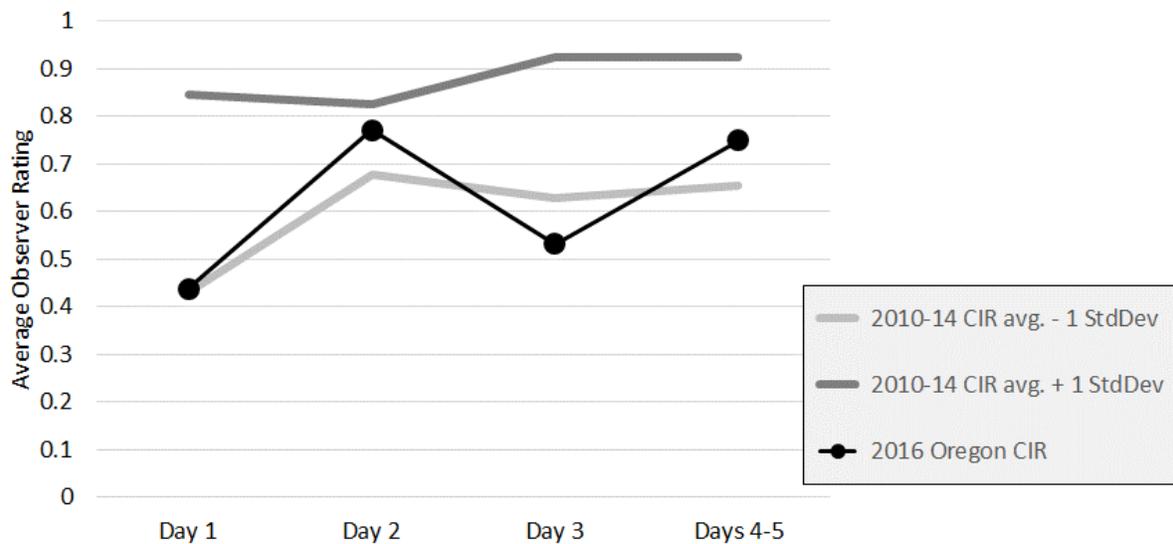
Comparison with Observer Ratings

Four researchers were present to observe the 2016 Oregon CIR, and three team members rated each agenda segment of the CIR to assess its quality along various dimensions. The first of these concerns the analytic rigor of the CIR, which roughly includes the criteria measured in panelists' self-report data (weighing information, weighing values, and following the discussion). Rating scores were scaled to range from 0.0 to 1.0, with the higher score indicating greater rigor. Figure 1.1 shows two gray lines that represent the upper and lower bounds of previous CIR averages, plus or minus one standard deviation. The 2016 Oregon CIR fell into that range, except on the third day when its score dipped outside of it.

The third day of the Oregon CIR presented considerable challenges, as it was when panelists worked out the sentences that were likely to make up the core of their Citizens' Statement. Not all panelists were able to understand the procedures, and some complexities in the issue itself continued to be debated even as claims came up for votes. In other words, the CIR panelists were not all equally prepared to judge which claims were "strong and reliable" (the language used routinely in the CIR process manual).

This could reflect the challenge of running the process in four days, rather than five days. For comparative purposes, the five-day CIRs have their fourth and fifth days collapsed in Figure 1.1. Those longer CIR processes had less pressure on their third day compared to the 2014-16 CIRs.

Figure 1.1. Comparison of observer ratings of analytic quality from the 2016 Oregon CIR vs. 2010-14 CIRs



1.3 Democratic Process

In assessing the democratic quality of the discussion, we looked for relatively equal speaking opportunities across the panelists, mutual comprehension of one another, and signs of thoughtful

consideration of each other's arguments amidst a respectful group climate.³ The CIR has generally performed very well in this regard, both across previous years and during the 2016 Oregon CIR.

Neutral Facilitation

Table 1.6 shows that panelists rarely perceived bias. Across the four days, panelists were as likely to see a bias toward Measure 97 proponents as toward the opponents, but even those perceptions were rare.

Table 1.6. Responses to "Did the moderators demonstrate a preference for either side...today?"

Response	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Total Pct. of Responses
Favored proponents	1	1	0	1	4%
Neutral	19	19	19	18	94%
Favored opponents	0	0	1	1	3%
<i>Total</i>	20	20	20	20	100%

As in past years, the lead CIR moderators facilitated all large group discussions and carefully monitored, or directly oversaw each of the small group sessions. Moreover, the moderators maintained strict neutrality during the process and were careful to avoid interjecting their own opinions on the measure or showing favoritism. As noted in previous reports, this style of moderation is particularly well suited to the CIR, where the maintenance of neutrality is crucial.

A second indicator was the perception of equal time being given to both pro and con sides. Table 1.7 shows the results, which again demonstrate that the moderators achieved good balance and maintained the process' neutrality.

Table 1.7. Responses to "Was equal time given to both pro and con sides today?"

Response	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Total Pct. of Responses
Proponents received more	0	0	0	1	1%
Equal time	19	20	19	18	96%
Opponents received more	0	0	1	1	3%
<i>Total</i>	19	20	20	20	100%

Equality of Speaking Opportunities

To explore test for equal speaking opportunities, at the end of each day we asked panelists to assess whether they "had sufficient opportunity to express [their] views today." On a scale from "Definitely No" to "Definitely Yes," Table 1.8 shows that almost all panelists rated the reviews highly on this criterion, saying that they definitely or probably had sufficient speaking opportunities. Those figures are comparable to similar ones collected from 2010-14 CIRs.

³ Gastil (2014) stresses these as essential features of democratic small groups of all varieties.

Table 1.8. Responses to “Would you say you had sufficient opportunity to express your views today?”

Response	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Total Pct. of Responses
Definitely not	0	1	1	2	5%
Probably not	0	0	0	2	3%
Unsure	3	2	1	0	8%
Probably yes	10	11	11	7	49%
Definitely yes	7	6	7	9	36%
<i>Total</i>	20	20	20	20	100%

A finer-grained analysis across the days shows that of the 20 CIR panelists, 13 responded that they “definitely” had sufficient opportunity to speak every one of the four days of the CIR. Only four panelists ever marked “probably/definitely not.”

This year, a new survey item complemented the speaking opportunity question. This new item appeared on the final day’s survey and asked panelists, “How comfortable did you feel expressing what was truly on your mind during this week’s CIR?” Three-quarters said “very comfortable,” and only one panelist wasn’t at least “a little comfortable” speaking his/her mind.

Table 1.9. Responses to “How comfortable did you feel expressing what was truly on your mind during this week’s CIR?”

Response	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Very uncomfortable	0	
A little uncomfortable	0	
Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable	1	5%
A little comfortable	4	20%
Very comfortable	15	75%
<i>Total</i>	20	100%

Consideration of Different Views

Similar patterns emerge when panelists were asked, “When experts or other CIR panelists expressed views different from your own today, how often did you consider carefully what they had to say?” Table 1.10 shows that over 90% of responses were “often” or “almost always,” and this parallels previous CIRs.

Table 1.10. Responses to “When experts or other CIR participants expressed views different from your own today, how often did you consider carefully what they had to say?”

Response	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Total Pct. of Responses
Never	0	0	1	0	1%
Rarely	0	0	0	0	0%
Occasionally	1	1	1	3	8%
Often	9	11	12	7	49%
Almost always	10	8	6	10	43%
<i>Total</i>	20	20	20	20	100%

Mutual Respect

To assess the level of respect, we asked panelists at the end of each day, “How often do you feel that other panelists treated you with respect today?” Table 1.11 can be read in two different ways in this regard. The overall pattern was one of high respect, which is comparable to previous CIRs. On Day 2, however, six panelists said they only felt respected “occasionally,” and one said s/he “never” received respect from fellow panelists.

Table 1.11. Responses to “How often do you feel that other panelists treated you with respect today?”

Response	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Total Pct. of Responses
Never	0	1	0	0	1%
Rarely	0	0	0	0	0%
Occasionally	0	6	1	0	8%
Often	3	12	5	6	30%
Almost always	17	8	14	14	61%
<i>Total</i>	20	20	20	20	100%

The problem on Day 2 may have been specific to individuals, who began interacting more intensively with each other on this second day. Correspondence with the staff of Healthy Democracy revealed that one panelist requested reseating to avoid a panelist who made what she considered sexist remarks. Another panelists’ neighbors found that individual’s quiet asides during witness testimony to be disrespectful.⁴ Also, the frustration may have been localized to one of the small group discussions, such as the one in which a participant remarked to another, “I am going to shut up because I don’t know the process.” For some panelists, these group discussions felt rushed because the second day presented panelists with the greatest volume of new information. The urgency to get through the agenda may have led to less emphasis on decorum that day.

Comparison with Observer Ratings

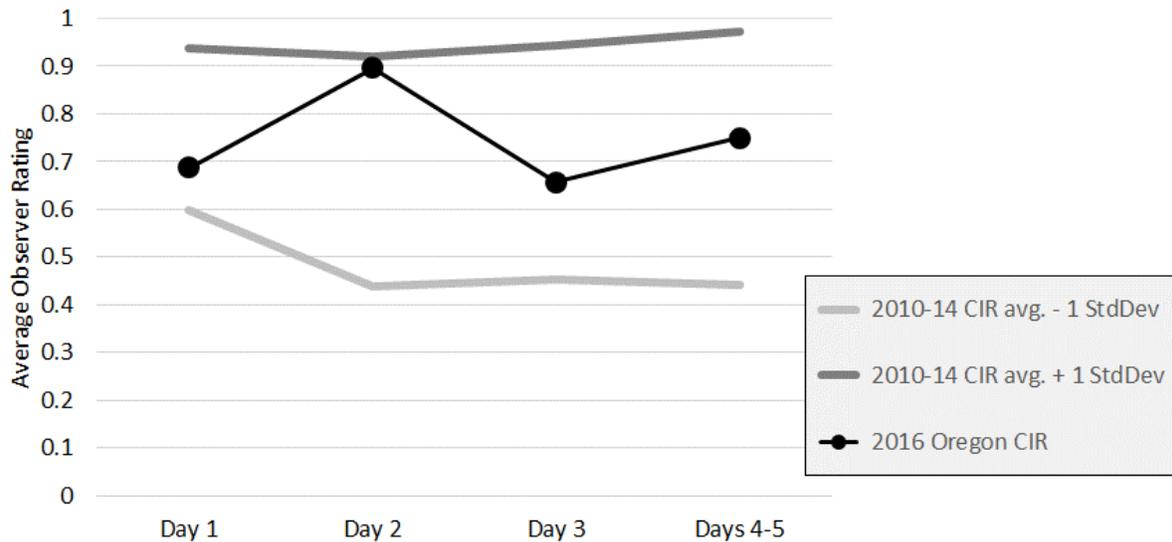
In spite of problems with panelists’ feelings of mutual respect on Day 2, the overall pattern for the 2016 CIR was a democratic process receiving good marks from panelists. That pattern paralleled

⁴ Feedback provided by Health Democracy staff in response to draft report in January, 2017.

previous CIR, and Figure 1.2 shows that the ratings that our research team gave the 2016 Oregon CIR was also within the general pattern of previous CIRs.

Figure 1.2. Comparison of observer ratings of democratic process from the 2016 Oregon CIR vs. 2010-14 CIRs

Observer Ratings of Democratic Process, 2016 CIR vs. 2010-14 CIRs



One difference between panelists' self-assessments of respect versus observer ratings is that panelists reported a dip in respect on Day 2, whereas observers noted one on Day 3. This could reflect the fact that observers did not pick up on building tensions among panelists until they persisted into the third day of the Review.

1.4 Decision Making

In evaluating the decision-making process, we took a slightly different approach than in past years' assessments. Previously, we found that the CIR panelists' overall satisfaction with the CIR process was correlated strongly with subsidiary satisfaction ratings for the elements of the Citizens' Statement. We used the 2016 CIR cycle to take a different approach to this panelist surveys on this issue, and as with the other sections, we complement these self-report data with observer codings.

Learning and Playing an Important Role

This year, we focused instead on whether at the end of the week participants believed that they had played an important role in the CIR process and whether the process, in turn, learned new information as a result of participating. Those proximate measures of reciprocal influence may better reflect the key elements of CIR "decision making," which is less about voting and more about a Statement drafting process that incorporates each participant effectively.

Results show that 85% of panelists believed they had learned "a great deal" through the four days of deliberation (see Table 1.12). In addition, the majority (60%) said they played a "very" or "extremely" important role in the deliberation, with another 25% saying their role was "moderately" important (Table 1.13). This squares with previous analyses that suggest two-to-four panelists often felt sidelined or simply less relevant as participants in the 2016 CIR's deliberation.

Table 1.12. Responses to “How much did you learn from participating in the CIR process this week?”

Response	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Nothing	0	
A little	1	5%
Some things	2	10%
A great deal	17	85%
<i>Total</i>	20	100%

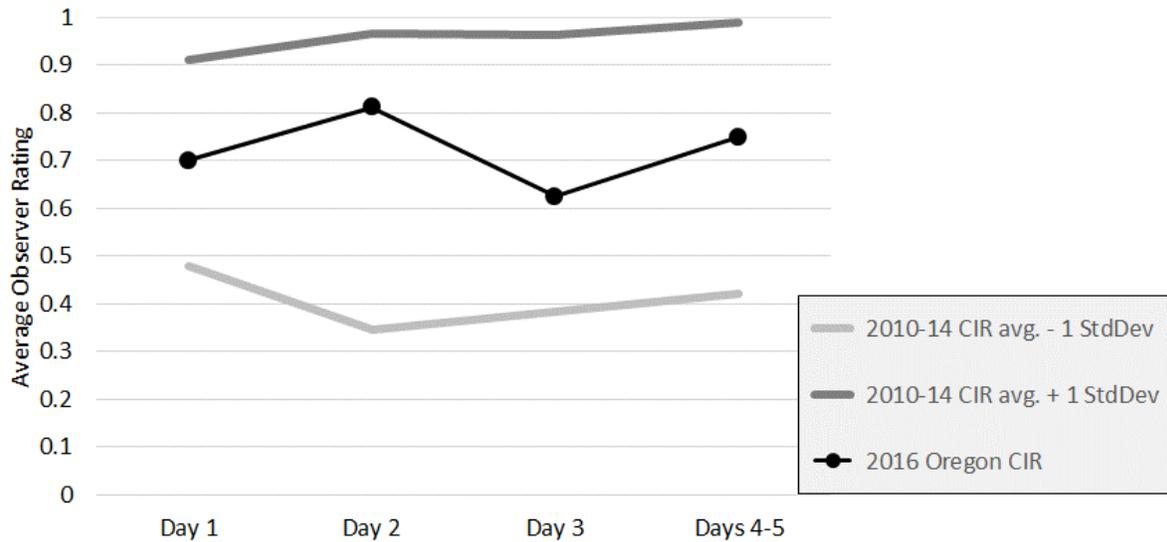
Table 1.13. Responses to “Overall, how important a role did YOU play in this week’s CIR discussions?”

Response	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Not at all important	2	10%
A little bit important	1	5%
Moderately important	5	25%
Very important	9	45%
Extremely important	3	15%
<i>Total</i>	20	100%

Comparison with Observer Codings

The observer ratings for the four-day Oregon CIR fell within the high and low bands from previous CIRs held in 2010-14. The ratings given on Day 1, however, reflect subjective estimates based on other coded variables, since the panel didn't have intensive decision-making tasks on that first day.

Figure 1.3. Comparison of observer ratings of decision making quality from the 2016 Oregon CIR vs. 2010-14 CIRs



1.5 Summary

We found that 2016 Oregon CIR generally maintained the high standard for democratic deliberation evidenced in the 2010-14 Reviews. This CIR was unusual in having a small but visible subset of participants, who experienced mounting frustrated with the process and even came to feel disrespected at times during what was a difficult deliberation on Measure 97. Some of this reflected difficulty during the Statement drafting process, as was also experienced during CIRs held in 2014. As during that year, panelists were pressed for time and had less autonomy in crafting their Statements than they did in 2010-12. This will be reflected in the recommendations for future CIRs that appear in Section 6.

Section 2. Accuracy, Readability, and Coherence of the Citizens' Statement

In a previous research reports on the CIR panels held from 2010-14, we assessed the accuracy, readability, and coherence of the CIR Statements produced in previous years relative to other relevant elements of official voter guides.⁵

To provide a comparative context for the present Statement, consider these assessments as a baseline:

- To assess accuracy, each assertion in each Citizens' Statement from 2010-14 was evaluated to determine whether it was verifiable, supported by the evidence presented to the panelists, and consistent with the text of the ballot initiative on which the panelists deliberated as well as other publicly available factual and legal information. In general, the Citizens' Statements produced were highly accurate.
- CIR Statements from 2010-14 were also assessed using tools that determine the reading-grade level (in the U.S. public school system) required to understand the language used in the statement.⁶ The CIR Statements were generally found to require the equivalent of a high school education. Paid pro and con arguments were written at an even lower reading level, but official explanatory statements and full text of ballot measures required a college or graduate-level education to decipher.
- Finally, the 2010-14 Citizens' Statements were found to be coherent and comprehensive documents, though erratic topical sequencing, inadequate section headings, and grammatical problems limited the overall coherence of most previous Statements.

It is against that background that we provide the following assessments of the 2016 Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review Statement on Measure 97.

2.1 Accuracy

The 2016 Oregon Citizens' Statements contained no claims inconsistent with the text of the measure, nor did it contain any clear factual inaccuracies. One of the first key findings hit on an important subtle point: "Approximately 80% of the state budget is already in education & health care, so there is a strong propensity for money to go to those areas if M97 passes." This simultaneously acknowledged the state legislature's freedom to spend new revenue as it saw fit and the likelihood that it would go to the measure proponents' stated purposes. This was the preferred phrasing of neither proponents nor opponents testifying before the CIR panel, but it captured effectively a key insight.

The furthest that the CIR panel reached beyond its evidentiary record was when panelists chose to close the Key Findings section by referencing one expert's testimony during the CIR deliberations. The panel included in its Statement this sentence: "According to Roberta Mann, a law professor at the University of Oregon, if this measure passes, it is likely that 75% of the tax burden would be

⁵ Gastil et al. (2015).

⁶ Kincaid, Fishburne, Rogers, & Chissom (1975); Gunning (1968); McLaughlin (1969). Formulas for the scores appear in the note to the table accompanying this section.

borne by shareholders and investors rather than being reflected in increased pricing for goods and services." This is a broadly accurate restatement of one portion of that expert's testimony, but the source cited in the quote did not express a high level of certainty about these estimates. They were the result of being pressed for detail on the question of where costs would fall, between consumers and corporations.⁷

Consider, for example, the Citizens' Statements con arguments cited another claim on this topic, which was paired with an accurate statement about the uncertainty of any such statistic: "The estimated overall impact of M97 is based on an assumption that consumers would receive 50% of the burden, however the actual burden on consumers cannot be determined." Given the limited testimony and evidence on hand at the CIR deliberation, "cannot be determined" is the most accurate statement. One might not think such a statement is particularly helpful to voters, but it could serve to make voters more skeptical of advertisements that confidently forecasted glory or doom resulting from Measure 97.

2.2 Readability

The concept of readability has spawned multiple systematic measurement techniques. In this report, we employ three common scoring methods, each of which emphasizes different linguistic attributes or combinations of attributes:

- The Flesch-Kincaid score, which accounts for both average sentence length and average number of syllables per word, provides a gauge of the overall complexity of language in a text.
- The FOG score likewise accounts for both sentence- and word-length, but emphasizes sophisticated vocabulary by giving more weight to words having three or more syllables.
- The SMOG score, based solely on words having three or more syllables, measures only the amount of sophisticated vocabulary used in a piece of writing.⁸

These measures indicate that the overall linguistic complexity of the Citizens' Statements lies at the level of a high school senior, or slightly higher.

Using these indicators, Table 2.1 shows that the 2016 Oregon CIR Citizens' Statement ranks number 4 in readability, at about the 11th to 12th grade level. Generalizing across all four reading indices, this is comparable to past years' Statements, so this year's efforts to encourage "plain language" in the Statement had no discernible effect on its readability. As in years past, the Statement was less readable for many citizens than the paid pro and con arguments, as well as the Ballot Title. The

⁷ After the Con advocates objected to the substance of the Roberta Mann key finding, the CIR moderators denied the request of many CIR panelists to revise that portion of the Citizens' Statement. This was not a judgment call on the part of the moderators because the 2016 version of the CIR process offered no such flexibility at that juncture.

⁸ *Flesch-Kincaid*, *FOG*, and *SMOG* scores indicate grade-levels within the U.S. public school grade numbering system, so that, e.g., "12.1" means slightly higher than a twelfth-grade reading level. The formula for the Flesch-Kincaid score is: $0.39 * (\text{words} / \text{sentences}) + 11.8 (\text{syllables} / \text{words}) - 15.59$ (Kincaid et al., 1975, p. 14). The formula used to calculate the FOG score is: $((\text{words of one or two syllables} + 3 * \text{words of three or more syllables}) / \text{sentences}) - 2) / 2$ (Kincaid et al., 1975, p. 14). The formula for the SMOG score is: $(\text{square root of} (\text{words of three or more syllables per 30 sentences})) + 3$ (McCloughlin, 1969, p. 639). *Clarity* is an index consisting of the mean of three measures: the percentage of sentences in each Citizens' Statement that are free from, respectively, grammatical or vocabulary error, confusing or incoherent phrasing, and undefined jargon.

Financial Impact Statement was more difficult to read, and as usual, the text of the measure itself was the most challenging document to read, requiring a college or advanced graduate education to understand.

Table 2.1. Readability expressed in educational grade level for the 2016 Oregon CIR Citizens' Statement and other voting guide materials concerning Measure 97

Document Type	Flesch-Kincaid Reading Level	SMOG Reading Level	FOG Reading Level	Index Reading Level	Rank: Easiest to Read
Pro and Con Argument	9.3	11.7	8.4	9.8	2
Ballot Title	10.4	11.9	6.6	9.6	1
Financial Impact Statement	14.5	15.2	15.3	15.0	5
CIR Citizens' Statement	10.8	13.4	11.5	11.9	4
Explanatory Statement	11.3	13.2	8.8	11.1	3
Text of Measure	13.8	15.3	22.4	17.2	6

To put these findings in context, consider that a substantial share of adults in Oregon (roughly one-in-ten) have an educational attainment below the twelfth grade, or lack basic literacy skills.⁹ Language about the tenth-grade reading level is also inconsistent with the standard set by the Oregon Department of Administrative Services.¹⁰

2.3 Coherence

Overall, the 2016 Oregon Citizens' Statement appeared to be a very readable document, and data in Section 3 provides voter assessments thereof. Even so, it had some deficiencies. The opening sentence of the Statement is of particular importance, and the 2016 panelists opened their Statement with a descriptive sentence: "Measure 97 is an amendment to an existing law (ORS 317.090), that would revise the minimum corporate income tax for C-corporations making over \$25 million in Oregon sales." That sentence provided accurate information, but it used a technical term ("C-corporation") without definition and didn't point directly to a key feature of the ballot measure beyond its basic title.

Beyond the opening, the ordering of claims in the Statement—particularly in the Key Findings—was haphazard. The ordering reflected the participants' assessments of how important each claim was for voters to know. This criterion limited the overall coherence of the sentence ordering in that section. A similar but less acute problem of sentence ordering occurred in the pro and con argument sections of the Statement.

⁹ According to the U.S. Census Bureau, as of 2009 the percentage of adults aged 25 or above who had not obtained a high school diploma or equivalent degree was 10.9% in Oregon (Ryan & Siebens, 2012). The rate for all voters may be higher when adults aged 18-24 are accounted for. In addition, the National Assessment of Adult Literacy estimated that as of 2003 the percentage of adults lacking basic literacy was 10% in Oregon (U.S. Department of Education, 2003).

¹⁰ Oregon Department of Administrative Services (2015).

The more serious problem in the pro/con sections was an attempt to get at the values at stake on Measure 97. Previous assessments of the CIR have noted the difficulty of blending information analysis with careful values analysis. Ideally, deliberation would result in a Statement that shows how key facts pertain to underlying value arguments. This connection was anything but seamless in this Statement, with the values grafted onto the end of the last two sections. The Statement in Support of the Measure section ended by simply listing the values “at stake,” which included “fairness, responsibility, and accountability.” Likewise, the Statement in Opposition to the Measure listed “efficiency, transparency, and fairness” as the key values. Not only were those values not connected to related information elsewhere in the Statement, but there was no way in the CIR process (nor the resulting Statement) to understand how concerns about “fairness” cut both ways when weighing Measure 97.

2.4 Summary

Taken as a whole, the CIR has produced Citizens' Statements from 2010-2016 that get high marks for accuracy, clarity, and comprehensiveness. They generally require no more than a high school senior reading level, which is less demanding than the explanatory statements provided in the *Voters' Pamphlet*. The statements have a straightforward design, but improvements could be made in sequencing, section headings, and grammar. Recommendations regarding these issues will be discussed in Section 6.

Section 3. Voter Awareness, Use, and Assessment of Citizens' Statements

To understand how voters use and assess the CIR, surveys were conducted for the electorates corresponding to each of the 2016 CIR panels. The surveys maintained continuity with the approach taking in 2010-2014, and they made it possible to determine whether the experience of the CIR was changing for the average Oregon voter. Complementary surveys for the pilot CIRs conducted in 2016 permitted tests on different varieties of CIR and an exploration of how the CIR appears to new users.

3.1 Awareness of the CIR

The most basic question about the CIR's adoption is whether voters become aware of the panels, read their Citizens' Statements, and find those one-page analyses useful. To answer those questions, we used a statewide phone survey of likely voters and attempted to replicate the research method used in 2010-14.

The 2016 phone survey of 600 voters was conducted the final weekend before the election (November 3-7). The cooperation rate was 55%, which meant that more than half of the eligible respondents that interviewers successfully contacted provided a complete survey. Using screening quotas, the phone survey's demographics were very representative of Oregon in terms of respondent party registration, residence, age, and sex.¹¹

As in previous years, an overwhelming majority of respondents reported using the official *Voters' Pamphlet*. Among those who had already cast their ballots when interviewed, 83% reported using the pamphlet—a figure comparable to the 86% in the 2014 survey.¹²

Those who had already voted in the election are the focus for this section because those respondents show what information sources had been used by those whose ballots were complete. Some comparisons can be made between these respondents and an equivalent subsample from previous years, and the most straightforward one appears in Table 3.1: As in the past two survey years, roughly half of Oregon voters had become aware of the CIR by the time they voted.

Table 3.1 Awareness levels for the Oregon CIR for respondents who had already voted at the time of the survey, 2010-2016

CIR awareness level	2010	2012	2014	2016
Not aware	59%	47%	46%	49%
Somewhat aware	26%	28%	35%	27%
Very aware	16%	25%	20%	24%

¹¹ For example, 41% of the online sample self-identified as Democratic, 29% as Republican, and 30% as Independent. This comes very close to statewide figures from September 2016 of 39% Democratic, 28% GOP, and 33% other/none. See <http://sos.oregon.gov/elections/Documents/registration/Sep16.pdf>.

¹² Question: "By this point, some people have already read the online or print version of the official Oregon Voters' Pamphlet for the November election. Others may plan to read the pamphlet later or not at all. How about you? Have you already read it, plan to read it later, or do you not intend to use it this year?"

Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Sample size (N)	111	323	403	435
<i>At least somewhat aware</i>	40%	52%	54%	52%

As in 2014, our phone survey included the question, “Where did you first learn of the Oregon Citizens’ Initiative Review?” As shown in Table 3.2, 44% said that they learned of it from the Voters’ Pamphlet, which is considerably lower than in 2014 and might have reflected an up-tick for the social media/blogs category, which rose from 5% to 13% of responses.

Table 3.2. Source from which respondent first learned about the CIR

Source	2014	2016
Oregon Voters' Pamphlet	58%	44%
TV/Radio	17%	16%
Word of mouth	11%	11%
Newspaper	8%	9%
Social media/blogs	5%	13%
Other	1%	7%
Total	100%	100%

3.2 Reading the CIR

As in 2014, regarding readership of the CIR we chose to focus on just those respondents who had already voted.¹³ The point of such analysis is to find out the proportion of Oregon voters who know about the CIR and then choose to consult at least one of its Statements. Table 3.3 breaks down Oregonians who had cast their ballots into three groups: those unaware of the CIR, those aware but not reading a Statement, and those who were both aware of the CIR and chose to read at least one of that year’s Citizens’ Statements. All three of these figures have held steady since 2010, with 43-

¹³ We also put a restriction on readership responses, such that one who acknowledges no prior awareness of CIR cannot be counted as among those who have read a Citizens’ Statement. The skip logic used in the 2012 survey permitted asking those “not aware” of the CIR whether they had read one or the other Citizens’ Statement from that year. In this analysis, those individuals are all counted as non-readers.

44% of Oregonians who had already cast their ballots reading an available CIR Statement before doing so.

Table 3.3 CIR awareness and readership among voters who had cast their ballots, 2010-2016

CIR awareness and readership	2010	2012	2014	2016
Not aware of CIR	60%	48%	46%	49%
Aware of CIR but did not read Citizens' Statement	11%	9%	10%	8%
Read the Citizens' Statement	29%	43%	44%	43%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Sample size (N)	111	323	403	435

This year's survey also repeated a question from the 2012 and 2014 surveys regarding how "helpful" the CIR Statement was in deciding how to vote on the corresponding ballot measure/s:

In deciding how to vote on MEASURE 97, how HELPFUL was it to read the Citizens' Initiative Review statement? Was it VERY helpful to you, SOMEWHAT helpful, or did it make NO DIFFERENCE?

Table 3.4 shows that the responses to this question in 2016 fall between those from previous years. Forty percent of respondents said the Measure 97 Citizens' Statement "made no difference," with 37% saying it was "somewhat helpful" and 23% rating it as "very helpful." The latter figure is higher than for either measure in 2014 but lower than for the two measures the CIR analyzed in 2012.

Table 3.4 Ratings of CIR helpfulness among voters who had cast their ballots, 2012-2016

	2012 Election		2014 Election		2016 Election
Rating CIR helpfulness	Measure 82 (Casinos)	Measure 85 (Kicker)	Measure 90 (Primaries)	Measure 92 (GMO Labels)	Measure 97 (Receipt Tax)
Made no difference	35%	27%	44%	42%	40%
Somewhat helpful	37%	39%	42%	45%	37%
Very helpful	28%	34%	14%	13%	23%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

A variation on this question began with the 2014 survey asked how much information voters got from reading the Citizens' Statements:

In helping you understand MEASURE 97, how INFORMATIVE was the Citizens' Initiative Review statement? Was it VERY informative, SOMEWHAT informative, or did it contain NO NEW INFORMATION for you?

This phrasing was developed to correspond more directly to the purpose of the CIR, which is designed to provide reliable information to voters. In 2014, most respondents rated the Citizens' Statements as "somewhat informative" (55% for Measure 90 and 49% for Measure 92), with roughly two-thirds in both cases finding them to be at least somewhat informative. The figures for the 2016 Citizens' Statement on Measure 97 were similar, though the "very informative" rating was more common in this most recent survey.

Table 3.5 Ratings of CIR informativeness among voters who had cast their ballots, 2014-2016

	2014 Election		2016 Election
Rating CIR informativeness	Measure 90 (Primaries)	Measure 92 (GMO Labels)	Measure 97 (Receipt Tax)
No new information	33%	37%	31%
Somewhat informative	55%	49%	50%
Very informative	12%	14%	19%
Total	100%	100%	100%

3.3 CIR Design and Funding

A new question in this year's survey addressed a key design feature of the CIR process—its use of a random sample of voters. The new question asked,

The Citizens' Initiative Review panelists were everyday citizens randomly selected from the state's registered voter list to reflect the state population. Does the fact that the Review's statement was written by regular citizens make you more likely to trust it, less likely to trust it, or does it make no difference?

The majority of respondents (60%) said that the details of panelist selection “made no difference,” but five times as many voters (33%) said it made the “more likely” to trust the results compared to the 7% who said it made them “less likely” to trust the CIR's statements.

A final pair of questions asked voters about the appropriate funding method for the CIR. The first question explained the CIR funding mechanism in detail before asking voters to weigh private versus state funding:

The Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review Commission currently receives all of its funding from charitable donations. The Commission has received enough funding to conduct one or two reviews per election cycle, at a cost of approximately \$65,000 each. If the Commission were funded by the State of Oregon, Citizens' Statements could be created for more statewide ballot initiatives. Would you rather the Commission continue to receive only private funds, which may limit it to just one or two Reviews per election, or should the Commission receive state funds that ensure it can conduct Reviews for as many as three statewide ballot measures each election?

In response, 23% of the full sample of 600 voters surveyed said they could not give an answer one way or the other. Just under 50% said they recommended “private funding to conduct just one or two Reviews per election, with the remaining 28% preferring the use of “state funds to ensure up to three Reviews per election.”

A follow-up question then posed a plausible scenario, in which the CIR's reliance on private funding could present a dilemma: “If the Citizens' Initiative Review Commission cannot secure sufficient private funding in a future election, should state funds be provided to ensure it can conduct at least one Review?” A smaller proportion (17%) declined to give a response to this question. Of those who did reply, 59% said they recommended using state funds in such a scenario, compared to 41% who would decline to do so.

3.5 Summary

A majority of Oregon voters remain aware of the CIR process, and roughly two-fifths of the electorate read the 2016 CIR Statement. Both figures represent steady awareness and readership rates since 2012. Also consistent with past years, a large majority of those who read the CIR continue to find it useful and informative. Many voters appreciate that the CIR panel is randomly selected, but the majority do not consider that a crucial feature. Oregon voters are wary of relying entirely on state funds for the CIR, but most would prefer using state funds if necessary to ensure a CIR Citizens' Statement in a future election.

Section 4. Citizens' Statement Impact on Voters

One finding consistent from 2010 through 2014 was that reading the CIR Statement increased voters' knowledge levels. This has been tested using cross-sectional survey data, but we have relied principally on a variety of survey experiments. We use this technique because of the logical power of inferring causation from experimental data. When respondents follow different randomly-assigned paths through an online survey, we are controlling for all the other variables that otherwise confound the inferences one might make about the CIR's impact in cross-sectional data.

The online survey sample included 446 respondents who had already voted and 1,654 who had not. Taken together, 40% of the online sample self-identified as Democratic, 26% as Republican, and 31% as Independent. This comes very close to statewide figures from September 2016 (39% Democratic, 28% GOP, and 33% other/none).¹⁴ As for the focal policy question in this survey, voters in Oregon opposed Measure 97 by a 59-41% margin. Since emphasis in this section is on differences *between* groups of respondents who had not yet voted, it is reassuring that these survey respondents broadly paralleled the final voting population: 40% opposed Measure 97, 36% were in favor, and 24% remained undecided.

This section takes the same experimental approach as previous CIR evaluations to studying the impact of the Oregon CIR Statement on its readers. Thus, the survey respondents who had not yet voted were split at random into two groups, with roughly one-third ($n = 536$) seeing just official voting guide material on Measure 97 (Ballot Title and Summary) and two-thirds ($n = 1,118$) seeing the same documents plus the CIR Citizens' Statement.¹⁵

4.1 Satisfaction with Information Obtained

The CIR Statement aims to provide voters with relevant and trustworthy information about the ballot measure, and we asked respondents questions regarding the materials provided during the experiment. How did those who read the official guide *along with the CIR Statement* compare to those who only read the official guide?

After reading materials on Measure 97 and stating their voting preference, our survey asked respondents, "How RELEVANT is the information you just read to YOUR voting decision on Measure 97?" Responses differed significantly between the two experimental groups.¹⁶ For those who read only the Ballot Title and Summary, a bare majority (50.5%) rated the information as "somewhat" or "mostly" relevant. By contrast, 60% of those also shown the CIR in addition to the Ballot Title and Summary gave their materials equivalent ratings.¹⁷

Results were similar for a parallel item, which read: "Thinking about *other Oregon voters* you know, how RELEVANT is the information you just read to THEIR voting decisions on Measure 97?" Fifty-

¹⁴ State statistics from Sept. 2016 are at <http://sos.oregon.gov/elections/Documents/registration/Sep16.pdf>.

¹⁵ The difference in subsample size was intentional and reflected our interest in subsequent subsample analyses we will conduct on those shown the CIR. It does not affect the randomness of assignment—only one's odds of ending up in one experimental condition versus the other.

¹⁶ This contrasts with the two 2016 CIR pilot projects (Arizona and Massachusetts), where there were no differences in these relevance ratings between CIR readers and non-readers. These other reports can be found at the CIR research site at <http://sites.psu.edu/citizensinitiativereview/publications>.

¹⁷ Chi-square = 18.97 ($df = 1$), $p < .001$.

two percent of those reading only the Ballot Title and Summary said these were “mostly” or “completely” relevant to other Oregon voters, compared to 58% of those also shown the CIR.¹⁸

Reading the CIR Statement did, however, increase the already-high percentage of respondents who responded affirmatively to the question, “Would you say you've received enough information on Measure 97 to make a WELL-INFORMED VOTE?” Table 4.1 shows that positive scores on this measure rose from 72% for those only reading official materials to 79% for those who read both official materials and the CIR Statement.¹⁹

Table 4.1. Responses for two experimental groups to question, “Would you say you've received enough information on Measure 97 to make a WELL-INFORMED VOTE?”

Response	Shown title and summary only	Shown CIR Statement with title + summary
I have NOT heard enough	28%	21%
I have heard ENOUGH	72%	79%
<i>Total</i>	100%	100%

4.2 Knowledge Relevant to Measure 97

Did this greater confidence for CIR Statement readers manifest itself in real knowledge relevant to the ballot measure? To find out, our survey asked respondents about four factual claims, each of which was adapted from the Statement. Table 4.2 shows the four Statement items tested included two Key Findings, one of the arguments for the measure, and another opposing it.

Before seeing questions for these four claims about Measure 97, respondents were given this instruction:

“The next few statements are claims you may or may not have heard during this election about Measure 97. Some of these may be accurate statements, and some may not be accurate. It can be disorienting to see a statement in a survey that you believe is incorrect, but please remember that such statements are just a necessary part of a true/false question set. For each statement, please indicate whether you believe the statement is definitely true, probably true, probably false, or definitely false. If you are not sure either way, mark the “don't know” response. Please DO NOT read websites or other material before answering. We are interested in hearing the responses you give without further study.”

¹⁸ Chi-square = 8.34 ($df = 1$), $p = .080$. Note that the linear association test statistic (5.50) met a higher threshold for significance ($p = .019$).

¹⁹ Chi-square = 12.06 ($df = 1$), $p < .001$.

Table 4.2. Adaptation of four passages in the 2016 Oregon CIR Statement

Item	Passage in CIR Statement	Survey item language
Second Key Finding	The revenue generated by Measure 97 can be utilized according to the priorities identified by the Oregon legislature.	The Oregon legislature would have the authority to use the revenue generated by Measure 97 according to the priorities it identifies.
Third Key Finding	If passed, the estimated 6 billion dollars generated would represent a 25% increase in overall state revenue biennially.	The estimated 6 billion dollars Measure 97 could generate biennially would represent a 25% increase in overall state revenue.
Third Pro	Oregon state expenditures are growing faster than tax revenue.	Oregon state expenditures are growing faster than the state's tax revenue.
First Con	A nonpartisan study by the Legislative Revenue Office says M97's tax could increase costs consumers pay for essential goods and services, costing a typical family \$600 more per year.	Measure 97's tax could increase significantly what consumers pay for essential goods and services.

In previous studies of the CIR, a common finding was that reading the CIR Statement increased respondents' confidence in the accuracy of valid factual claims. This finding appeared again in experimental tests of knowledge of the two selected Key Findings in the Oregon CIR Statement. Table 4.3 shows that a response that differed consistently between the two experimental conditions was "definitely true." The proportion of respondents who "definitely" understood that the legislature would retain authority over how to spend revenue from Measure 97 rose from one-quarter (25%) to nearly one-third (32%) when respondents were shown not only the Ballot Title and Summary but also the CIR Statement.²⁰ Likewise, the fact that an estimated six billion dollar increase in revenue from Measure 97 would represent a 25% increase in the state was recognized as "definitely true" by only 7% of those reading the Ballot Title and Summary, but that figure more than doubled to 17% after reading the same information alongside the CIR Statement.²¹

²⁰ Chi-square = 14.8 (*df* = 4), *p* = .005.

²¹ Chi-square = 42.2 (*df* = 4), *p* < .001.

Table 4.3. Impact of reading the CIR Statement on knowledge of two key findings regarding Measure 97.

Response	“The Oregon legislature would have the authority to use the revenue generated by Measure 97 according to the priorities it identifies.”		“The estimated 6 billion dollars Measure 97 could generate biennially would represent a 25% increase in overall state revenue.”	
	Only shown official issue summary	Shown both summary and CIR Statement	Only shown official issue summary	Shown both summary and CIR Statement
Definitely false	18%	17%	36%	24%
Probably false	5%	3%	2%	3%
Don't know	10%	7%	10%	10%
Probably true	43%	41%	43%	46%
Definitely true	25%	32%	8%	17%
<i>Total</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%

The CIR Statement had a weaker net impact on knowledge regarding important factual claims foregrounded by opponents and proponents of Measure 97.²² Table 4.4 shows that for both the pro and con arguments tested in our study, only 24% of voters recognized them as “definitely true” after reading the Ballot Title and Summary. For the pro claim regarding expenditures rising faster than revenues, reading the CIR Statement increased “definitely true” responses to 30%, but no such change occurred for the corresponding con claim about rising consumer costs.²³

²² This parallels the findings for the Massachusetts 2016 CIR pilot, which showed equivocal impacts generated by the pro/con statements in its online survey experiment.

²³ For the significant result, chi-square = 10.5 ($df = 4$), $p = .033$.

Table 4.4. Impact of reading the CIR Statement on knowledge of facts emphasized by proponents and opponents of Measure 97.

Response	PRO: "Oregon state expenditures are growing faster than the state's tax revenue."		CON: "Measure 97's tax could increase significantly what consumers pay for essential goods and services."	
	Only shown official issue summary	Shown both summary and CIR Statement	Only shown official issue summary	Shown both summary and CIR Statement
Definitely false	25%	21%	16%	17%
Probably false	2%	2%	5%	5%
Don't know	6%	4%	22%	20%
Probably true	43%	44%	32%	34%
Definitely true	24%	30%	24%	24%
<i>Total</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%

We also investigated whether these changes in knowledge occurred regardless of whether a respondent favored, opposed, or was undecided on Measure 97. To simplify comparisons across these groups, we created two indices.

- A respondent's Knowledge Score was calculated as the number of claims recognized as probably or definitely true. Given that we studied four knowledge claims in this survey, scores could range from zero to four.
- A second index took into account the degree of certainty about the claims, as well as whether a respondent was willing to venture a guess at all. A respondent's Mastery Score on a given claim ranged from -2 (definitely false) to 0 (don't know) to +2 (definitely true). Thus, knowing all four statements to be definitely true would yield a Mastery Score of 2.0, whereas being unsure about all four would yield a Mastery Score of zero.

Table 4.5 compares these Knowledge and Mastery scores for those shown the official voting guide material versus those who also saw the CIR Statement, but it also breaks those comparisons down by voting group. Results showed a consistent pattern of higher Knowledge and Mastery scores across all three voting groups for those who read the CIR Statement. Most—but not all—of those differences reached conventional levels of statistical significance, as detailed in Table 4.5.²⁴

²⁴ For those voters opposing the passage of Measure 97, Knowledge and Mastery also were considerably higher (for both those shown or not shown the CIR Statement).

Table 4.5. Impact of reading the CIR Statement on Knowledge and Mastery scores across three voting groups

Voter group	Knowledge Score <i>average number of claims recognized as probably or definitely true (Score range = 0 to 4)</i>		Mastery Score <i>average score using a scale from -2 (definitely false) to +2 (definitely true) (Score range = -8 to +8)</i>	
	Only shown official issue summary	Shown both summary and CIR Statement	Only shown official issue summary	Shown both summary and CIR Statement
Opposes Measure 97 (Minimum $n = 196$)	2.7	2.9**	3.4	3.7
Undecided (Minimum $n = 138$)	2.2	2.4	2.0	2.6**
Favors Measure 97 (Minimum $n = 202$)	2.3	2.5**	1.8	2.5**
Overall (Minimum $n = 536$)	2.2	2.3**	0.5	0.7**

Note. * indicates $p < .05$, ** indicates $p < .01$.

4.3 Willingness to Share CIR Knowledge

The next section of the survey narrows the focus to only those respondents who had not yet voted but were shown the CIR Statement. The section began by revealing to respondents the origin of the four claims and introduced a new judgmental task:

“Each of the following four statements appeared in different sections of the Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review Statement on Measure 97. Which, if any, of these pieces of information would you like to share with friends, family, acquaintances, or others before they vote on Measure 97?”

For each of the four knowledge claims first introduced in Table 4.2, respondents could indicate that they would “definitely not share,” “probably not share,” “probably share,” or “definitely share” the information. Those who chose a “don’t know” response were dropped from these analyses, which left a minimum sample size of 803 respondents.

For all four knowledge claims, a small or large majority of respondents said they would probably or definitely share what they learned from the Statement. How eager one was to share knowledge depended on the specific claim, but this desire sometimes reflected respondents' positions on the

ballot measure. Table 4.6 shows that Measure 97 supporters were more eager to share the information about a revenue increase than the costs that might entail. Large majorities of the opponents of Measure 97 were inclined to share each fact, but that majority was smallest (59%) regarding the revenue increase Measure 97 would engender. For all four items, more than three-quarters of the undecided voters were ready to pass the information along to others.

Table 4.6. Percentage of respondents who would probably/definitely share four claims from the CIR Statement on Measure 97

Voter group	KEY FINDING: Legislative authority	KEY FINDING: Revenue increase	PRO CLAIM: Expenses rising fast	CON CLAIM: Raise costs for consumers
Opposes Measure 97 (Minimum $n = 448$)	77%	59%	69%	85%
Undecided (Minimum $n = 245$)	80%	77%	78%	87%
Favors Measure 97 (Minimum $n = 449$)	75%	80%	80%	44%
Overall (Min. $n = 1,162$) ²⁵	77%	71%	75%	69%

4.4 Resistance to Refutation

Previous studies of the CIR have asked voters to assess the trustworthiness of the information found in Citizens' Statements, and results have shown moderate to high levels of trust. This year, we took a different approach. As in the previous discussion on information sharing, we focused on those respondents who had not yet voted but were shown the CIR Statement as part of the survey. Before answering the next question set, respondents were shown this preview: "In the days leading up to Election Day, you may learn more information about Measure 97. The following questions ask how these new arguments or information might change your views about key claims on this issue."

For the two key findings, respondents were asked to consider this possibility: "Imagine that an independent expert analysis of Measure 97 comes out with a statement that REJECTS the following claim from the Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review Statement: [corresponding condensed text, as shown in Table 4.2]. Given these two CONFLICTING views, who would you be more likely to believe?"

For the other two claims examined in this study, respondents were asked what they would do if they were to "receive mail from" either "the campaign OPPOSING Measure 97" (for the Pro claim) or from "the pro campaign SUPPORTING Measure 97" (for the Con claim). In all four cases,

²⁵ Chi-square comparisons of column-wise differences were significant, $p < .001$. This means that the three groups were not identical in their response patterns.

respondents could say that they would probably/definitely believe the refutation, probably/definitely trust the CIR Statement, or express uncertainty (“don’t know”). We retained the don’t know responses to give a clear indication of what proportion of CIR readers overall would continue to trust that source in the face of an attempt at refutation during the election.

For the full set of persons who had not yet voted but who were shown the CIR Statement, a rough generalization is that they split into thirds—with one-third inclined to trust the CIR, another third more likely to believe the expert or campaign refuting it, and the final third uncertain of how they would react to such a challenge to a CIR claim. The two left-most columns in Table 4.7 suggest that independent experts would pose greater challenges for the CIR, but the responses also vary across the CIR claims themselves.

Table 4.7. Percentage of respondents who would believe an alternative information source if it challenged one of four claims from the CIR Statement on Measure 97

Voter group	Refuted by “independent expert”		Refuted by opposite campaign	
	KEY FINDING: Legislative authority	KEY FINDING: Revenue increase	PRO CLAIM: Expenses rising fast	CON CLAIM: Raise costs for consumers
Definitely believe refutation	8%	7%	4%	4%
Probably believe refutation	29%	33%	13%	12%
Don’t know	29%	30%	36%	40%
Probably believe CIR Statement	24%	23%	35%	35%
Definitely believe CIR Statement	9%	6%	13%	9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note. Sample size (N) = 1,118.

To look at these data under a finer lens, we also considered whether voters’ responses to refutations depended on their voting preferences at the time of the survey. Results in Table 4.8 show that responses varied both depending on the claim and one’s voting preference on Measure 97. The undecided voters in this sample were least inclined to believe the CIR Statement if it were challenged.²⁶ The largest gap in Table 4.8 comes for the fact stressed by Measure 97’s proponents: expenses are growing faster revenue in Oregon, and 61% of the measure’s proponents would still

²⁶ This finding contrasts with studies conducted this year for the Arizona and Massachusetts CIR pilot projects. The Oregon voters for and against Measure 97 also contrasted with those other two statewide surveys in that they differed less from one another than did their counterparts in Arizona and Massachusetts.

believe this even if Measure 97's opponents disputed the claim. By contrast, only 41% of those opposing the measure would still believe the CIR Statement if similarly disputed.

Table 4.8. Percentage of respondents who would probably/definitely continue to believe four claims from the CIR Statement on Measure 97 even if subsequently challenged

Voter group	Refuted by "independent expert"		Refuted by opposite campaign	
	KEY FINDING: Legislative authority	KEY FINDING: Revenue increase	PRO CLAIM: Expenses rising fast	CON CLAIM: Raise costs for consumers
Opposes Measure 97 (Minimum $n = 461$)	38%	30%	41%	50%
Undecided (Minimum $n = 256$)	24%	22%	40%	33%
Favors Measure 97 (Minimum $n = 392$)	34%	33%	61%	45%
Overall (Min $n = 1,109$) ²⁷	34%	29%	48%	44%

4.5 Summary

Looking across the results in this section, the Oregon voters surveyed found the CIR Statement to be relevant. Though most voters believed themselves prepared after reading official material, that figure rose even higher when a CIR Statement was also provided. Reading that Statement made voters more knowledgeable about the ballot measure and weakened the hold misinformation might have on some voters. Large majorities of CIR Statement readers wanted to share the information they read, and this was true even for voters with different positions on Measure 97. Between roughly a third and half of respondents said they would continue to believe CIR Statement claims, even if challenged during the remainder of the election campaign. Statement claims disputed by pro/con campaigns were more likely to be trusted after being challenged.

²⁷ Chi-square comparisons of column-wise differences were significant, $p < .001$. This means that the three groups were not identical in their response patterns.

Section 5. CIR Reader Perceptions and Attitudes

This section looks at a large subpopulation of the online survey sample—those 855 respondents who were “somewhat aware” or “very aware” of the CIR and who reported reading it prior to taking the survey.²⁸ This population holds special interest because it represents individuals who at least *report* accessing the Citizens' Statement on Measure 97 of their own volition.

The respondents studied in this section includes three subgroups, which we will distinguish when relevant in the findings: 277 respondents who had already voted and then were shown the CIR Statement as part of the survey; 412 respondents who had not yet voted but were shown the CIR Statement; and 166 people who had not yet voted and were *not* shown the CIR Statement. The latter group insisted that they had prior awareness of the CIR and had already read the Statement on Measure 97, but they weren't given a chance to review it again during the course of the survey.

5.1 Probing Citizens' Knowledge of the CIR

This and previous evaluations of the CIR have examined the ability of Citizens' Statements to increase voter knowledge, but we have not previously examined how much knowledge of *the CIR itself* these Statements and other sources provide Oregon citizens. This is a concern partly because our standard question regarding CIR awareness relies entirely on respondents' subjective assessments of their familiarity with the CIR.

To better understand what CIR Statement readers do and don't know about the CIR, we included three multiple-choice questions in this year's survey regarding the design of the CIR. Table 5.1 shows that for all three of the questions, a minority of respondents gave correct answers, though if one sets aside “don't know” responses, at least the correct answers were the ones most commonly given. Those who declared themselves “very aware” were less likely to respond “don't know” to each of the three design questions, but this came with only a modest increase in correct responses and a much higher rate of incorrect guesses.²⁹

The highest level of knowledge came in regard to who testified at the CIR on Measure 97: a plurality of respondents knew that this included proponents, opponents, and independent experts. The vast majority of respondents who could guess at how long the CIR panel deliberated gave a guess of between three days and a full week—which broadly encompasses the three-and-a-half days for which the 2016 panel met. Of those respondents “somewhat aware” of the CIR, roughly half of those who hazarded a guess correctly identified the selection method used to form a CIR panel, though this represented only 17% of all such respondents. The “very aware” group guessed more haphazardly, with far more giving incorrect responses (29%) than correct ones (19%).

²⁸ The awareness question wording was, ““In this year's election, for Measure 97 there is a one-page Citizens' Statement was created detailing the most important arguments and facts about the ballot measure. This Statement was written by an Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review panel. Prior to completing this online survey, were you VERY aware, SOMEWHAT aware, or NOT AT ALL aware of the 2016 Citizens' Initiative Review on Measure 97?” For those who were shown the CIR as part of the survey, the question simply read, “As part of this survey, you saw the Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review statement on Measure 97. Prior to participating in this survey, how aware were you of the statewide Citizens' Initiative Review?” Those who were at least somewhat aware were asked, “Have you already read the Citizens' Initiative Review statement on Measure 97?”

²⁹ For panelist recruitment, chi-square = 27.19 (3), $p < .001$; for testimony given, chi-square = 22.7 (3), $p < .001$; for days deliberating, chi-square = 11.09 (3), $p = .049$.

Table 5.1. Knowledge of CIR design features, split by subjective CIR awareness

Knowledge question	Somewhat aware of CIR	Very aware of CIR
Do you happen to recall how the Citizens' Initiative Review panelists on Measure 97 were selected?		
Citizens were invited by mail, then a subset of respondents were chosen to reflect the state population. (CORRECT)	17%	19%
Citizens were invited to apply through an advertisement, then volunteers were chosen at random.	8%	15%
The pro and con campaigns solicited volunteers, then each chose half the panelists.	8%	14%
Don't know	68%	52%
During the Citizens' Initiative Review on Measure 97, which of the following groups TESTIFIED to the panel?		
The proponents of Measure 97	6%	10%
The opponents of Measure 97	5%	9%
A panel of independent experts	8%	9%
ALL of the above (CORRECT)	37%	42%
Don't know	42%	28%
For how many days did the Citizens' Initiative Review panelists deliberate on Measure 97?		
One or two days, responses combined	2%	5%
Three days to "a full week," responses combined (CORRECT)	20%	24%
Don't know	77%	71%
Minimum sample size	492	232

Note. Questions and response options were shown in random order.

This year's evaluation included one additional knowledge question similar to those used in previous surveys. Respondents were asked, "Do you happen to recall the position taken by the Citizens' Initiative Review panelists on Measure 97, which would increase the corporate minimum tax when sales exceed \$25 million to fund education, healthcare, and senior services? To the best of your knowledge, which of the following was true?" The correct answer was that a "small majority" of the CIR panel (11 out of 20 members) favored Measure 97.

Table 5.2 breaks down responses in two different ways. First, it shows that the correct guess was the most common one for all three of the different comparison groups of respondents who had/had not already voted and had/had not been shown the CIR Statement during the survey. Those who had already voted (all of whom were shown the CIR Statement again) were most likely to recall the correct answer, with nearly a third remembering it. For all three groups, however, the second most

common recollection was that a *large* majority of CIR panelists favored Measure 97.³⁰ The second set of rows in Table 5.2 shows a result found in previous surveys: Voters engage in a measure of wishful thinking or biased recall, with those taking a position opposite the CIR panel's being more inclined than other voting groups to believe the panel shared their view. In this case, this meant that of those respondents who took a position against Measure 97, the most common recollection (18%) was that a large majority of the CIR panel took that same position. Put another way, only 23% of voters opposed to Measure 97 thought a small or large majority of the CIR panel favored the measure, whereas 46% of those respondents who favored Measure 97 thought the CIR was similarly inclined.³¹

Table 5.2. Knowledge of CIR panel's position on Measure 97

Respondent's recollection of the CIR panel's position on Measure 97						
Response group	LARGE majority OPPOSED	Small majority OPPOSED	EVENLY divided	Small majority FAVORED	LARGE majority FAVORED	Don't know
Readership sample						
Not yet voted, NOT shown Statement	10%	5%	5%	18%	14%	47%
Not yet voted and SHOWN Statement	11%	3%	8%	20%	15%	43%
Already voted and SHOWN Statement	6%	4%	5%	30%	20%	35%
Respondent position on Measure 97						
Favored M97	3%	3%	7%	25%	21%	41%
Undecided	8%	3%	7%	17%	15%	51%
Opposed M97	18%	5%	7%	15%	8%	46%

Note. Response options were shown in random order. Sample sizes for the first three rows were 152, 369, and 203, respectively. For the bottom three rows, $n = 217, 72,$ and $228,$ respectively.

5.2 Perceived Helpfulness of the CIR

For the remainder of this section, we break the 855 CIR Statement readers from our online sample into three subgroups, based on their responses to this question: "In deciding how to vote on Measure 97, how helpful was it to read the Citizens' Initiative Review statement? Was it very

³⁰ Chi-square = 18.51 (10), $p = .047$.

³¹ Chi-square = 47.70 (10), $p < .001$.

helpful to you, somewhat helpful, or did it make no difference?" Overall, the modal response was "somewhat helpful" (49%), followed by "very helpful" (36%) and "made no difference" (15%).³²

In Section 3 of the report, this same question was analyzed for its intrinsic meaning—that is, as an indicator of how helpful the CIR Statement on Measure 97 was for Oregon voters in 2016. In this section, by contrast, we argue that this measure reveals substantially different subgroups of the electorate. How those different subgroups view the CIR appears to relate to many other attitudes toward public life and election reform.

5.3 Discussion of the CIR with Others

One question we posed to voters concerned their discussion of the CIR. Any useful piece of political information should find its way into voters' discussions. In face-to-face exchanges and through social media, voters share things they learn from various media, which could include the CIR.³³

The corresponding survey question read, "During this election, how many times have you already discussed with family, friends, coworkers, or other people something you learned about in this year's Citizens' Initiative Review statement on Measure 97?" Response options included "never," "once or twice," "a few times," and "many times." Among those who had already voted, the modal response was "many times" (34%), and for those who had not yet completed their ballots, the modal response was "a few times" (39%).³⁴

Table 5.3 shows that even those who didn't find the CIR Statement helpful in shaping their own vote on Measure 97 still discussed it with voters either "a few times" (33%) or "many times" (28%). That was roughly the same discussion frequency as for those voters who found the CIR Statement "somewhat helpful," but a plurality of those who found it "very helpful" discussed it "many times" (38%), with 70% of the latter group discussing it at least "a few times."³⁵

5.4 Willingness to Serve in Public Roles

One's perception of the CIR's helpfulness as a voting aid, however, connects to attitudes that go beyond the CIR itself. Not surprisingly, Table 5.4 shows that those who found the CIR Statement on Measure 97 "very helpful" were most eager to serve on a CIR if called. Thirty-two percent were "very eager" to do so, compared to one-in-five of other Statement readers. That said, a majority of voters were at least "somewhat eager" to serve if called, regardless of how they assessed the CIR Statement on Measure 97.³⁶

What's more striking is that this same basic pattern repeats for other opportunities for public service. Those who found the CIR Statement "very helpful" were also more willing to serve on a criminal jury if summoned (38%), serve on an advisory commission for a week if requested by state government (33%), or attend a city council meeting if neighbors requested their presence.³⁷ In other words, it appears that those voters who find the CIR more helpful when voting are also

³² Those responses varied depending on experimental group, with those respondents who had already voted having the most favorable scores (43% "very helpful," 44% "somewhat helpful," and only 14% "no difference"), chi-square = 11.68 (4), $p = .02$.

³³ For a classic treatment of this subject, see Gamson (1992).

³⁴ Chi-square = 13.97 (3), $p = .003$.

³⁵ Chi-square = 27.74 (6), $p < .001$.

³⁶ Chi-square = 21.14 (6), $p = .002$.

³⁷ Chi-squares ($df = 6$) were 21.40, 13.08, and 32.23, respectively, all $p < .05$.

citizens more eager to fulfill other civic obligations placed on them by government or community members.

Table 5.3. Discussion of the CIR Statement broken down by perceived CIR helpfulness

Frequency of discussing CIR Statement with others	Perceived helpfulness of reading CIR Statement in deciding how to vote on Measure 97		
	Made no difference (n = 126)	Somewhat helpful (n = 414)	Very helpful (n = 307)
Never	18%	12%	9%
Once or twice	21%	24%	22%
A few times	33%	42%	32%
Many times	28%	23%	38%
<i>Total</i>	100%	100%	100%

Table 5.4. Discussion of the CIR Statement broken down by perceived CIR helpfulness

"Very eager" to serve on...	Perceived helpfulness of reading CIR Statement in deciding how to vote on Measure 97		
	Made no difference (n = 126)	Somewhat helpful (n = 414)	Very helpful (n = 307)
Serve on a criminal jury if summoned	23%	22%	38%
Attend a city council meeting when neighbors requested you to join them	15%	11%	29%
Serve on an advisory commission for a week if requested by state govt.	27%	21%	33%
Serve on a CIR panel if called on to do so	18%	21%	32%
<i>Total</i>	100%	100%	100%

Note. These four questions appeared in random order in the survey.

5.5 Attitudes towards Initiative Elections

How one rates the CIR Statement's helpfulness also corresponds toward attitudes about the initiative process. First, we asked all respondents this question about the difficulty of voting on initiatives: "During most Oregon statewide elections, you are asked to vote on ballot initiatives and propositions on anything from land use to immigration to election rules. In general, how easy is it to understand the details of these statewide ballot measures?" Those who found the CIR "somewhat helpful" were the most likely to say they found ballot measures "very" or "somewhat" difficult to understand (43%). Only 37% of those who found that the CIR "made no difference" had similar difficulty with ballot measures, and only 22% of those who found the CIR "very helpful" "had that same level of difficulty. Correspondingly, those who find the CIR most useful as the same respondent group most likely to say ballot measures are "very easy to understand"—a response given by one-third (33%) of all such voters.³⁸

Responses also differed to the question, "Do you believe that your vote makes a difference on statewide ballot measures?" A large majority (62%) of those who found the CIR Statement on Measure 97 "very helpful" also said that their vote "definitely" made a difference, compare to less than 45% of the two comparison groups. Those most cynical about their vote were those who said the CIR "made no difference," with more than one-in-four (27%) saying their vote "probably" or "definitely" had no impact.³⁹

Not surprisingly, this difference showed up again in broader attitudes toward initiative elections. On this topic, our survey posed the following question: "Generally speaking, would you say you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with the way the initiative process is working in Oregon today?" Among those who reported that the CIR Statement made no difference, 30% said they were "not satisfied" with the initiative process, compared to only 10% who were "very satisfied." (The rest gave the midway response of "somewhat satisfied.") Those who found the CIR Statement "somewhat helpful" were split—with 18% unsatisfied and 14% "very satisfied." By contrast, those who found the CIR "very helpful" had more favorable attitudes—with 36% "very satisfied" versus only 14% "not satisfied."⁴⁰

Attitudes toward reforming the initiative process also differed among these groups. We posed this question to respondents: "Do you think that the initiative process in Oregon is in need of major changes or minor changes or that it is basically fine the way it is at this time?" Those who found the CIR "made no difference" favored "minor changes" (50%), with the rest split evenly between the other two response options. Those who found the CIR "somewhat helpful" also favored "minor changes" (54%), with the remaining responses split. For those who found the CIR "very helpful" when voting on Measure 97, a plurality (40%) favored "minor changes," but another 34% wanted "major changes" to the system.⁴¹

5.6 Note and Summary

Note that the robustness of these findings was tested by splitting the sample between those respondents who favored versus those who opposed Measure 97. After all, it was possible that the differences between those who found the CIR very helpful versus those who found it did not help them decide how to vote could be spurious. Those differences could have simply reflected deeper

³⁸ Chi-square = 76.46 (6), $p < .001$.

³⁹ Chi-square = 35.01 (6), $p < .001$.

⁴⁰ Chi-square = 58.94 (4), $p < .001$.

⁴¹ Chi-square = 12.62 (4), $p < .013$.

ideological divides between those favoring or opposing the substance of Measure 97, which was a tax-increase disfavored by conservative Oregon voters.⁴² Though the absolute values of some attitudes, such as the desire to reform the initiative process, differed between those favoring or opposing Measure 97, within both groups the same overall pattern of differences appeared between those who found the 2016 CIR Statement very helpful or not helpful at all.

That overall pattern suggests that among those who read the 2016 CIR Statement, the Oregonians who find it most helpful are also more eager to seize opportunities for public engagement, better able to understand ballot measures, and more favorable toward initiative elections *and reforming them*. In other words, people who most value the CIR Statement also are enthusiastic about direct democracy and its gradual improvement.

⁴² There was a large association between these variables, if one treats a three-point attitude scale toward Measure 97 as a continuous variable. The correlation was $r = 0.51$ for those who had already voted and $r = .46$ for those who had not yet voted, both $p < .001$.

Section 6. Recommendations for Refining the CIR

This section offers practical suggestions for improving the CIR process. The first set of suggestions focus on the CIR process itself, and the second focuses on the Citizens' Statement. Finally, a few recommendations concern how to strengthen the impact of the CIR on the electorate.

- 1. Ensure that participants understand the purpose of each agenda segment and how it will lead to the development of the Citizens' Statement. The agenda should give participants adequate time both to draft *and revise* their Statement.** In previous years, too much time was lost during the Review to procedural confusion, but this year's Review addressed that problem while creating another. The agenda was adhered to by the moderators and panelists, but the panelists did not appear to recognize how a set of votes on "strong and reliable" claims fixed not only the content but also the wording and ordering of sentences in the Statement. They had very little editorial latitude after early votes, and this frustrated them when they wanted to do more than tweak grammar. It may have also contributed to retaining a problematic passage in the Statement.⁴³ Forum moderators need to stay firm in ensuring that participants stay on task and complete assigned goals within the allotted time frame, but the agenda itself has to permit panelists more leeway in crafting their Statement even into the final day.
- 2. Value considerations need a more meaningful role in the CIR deliberation.** The revised CIR agenda has given more prominence to values considerations at the front and back end of the deliberation, but it remains disconnected from the actual craft of Statement writing. The intention appears to be keeping values out of the Key Findings, which is fine if these are meant to only present factual information divorced from relevant values. In the pro and con sections, however, values need to appear not as an appendix to claims but should be more carefully integrated with them. Discussion guides such as those produced by the National Issues Forums may provide a useful model for CIR planners to consider when thinking about how to help panelists recognize and craft values claims in their Statement writing.
- 3. Write the Citizens' Statement in simpler and more accessible language.** Results of readability tests reported above identified, once again, that the CIR Statement requires a reading level that may be too high for many voters. As we suggested in our previous report, we believe panelists should split complex sentences into shorter ones. Wherever possible, shorter, more familiar words should replace longer and more arcane words. Any technical terms that are necessary should be defined clearly. One possibility is giving the CIR panelists more precise information about this problem: Before the final day of the CIR, a draft of the Citizens' Statement (or the components likely to compose it) could be subject to the quantitative analysis used to assess readability in Section 2.2 of this report. That coding is automatic and can identify specific elements of the Statement that are pulling the required reading level upward.
- 4. The vote tally should be removed from the Citizens' Statement.** The question of whether to include a panelist vote tally for and against a measure in the Statement has been the subject of discussion among members of the broader research team studying the Review since 2010. This year, we have reached the conclusion that the inclusion of that vote is a net negative for the Review for a number of reasons. First, it distracts panelist attention

⁴³ See Footnote 7 in Section 2.1 of this report.

away from the substance of the Statement and toward the split that will come when a vote is taken. This problem was more visible in the 2016 Review because the split between panelists for and against the measure could be seen in the rising frustration of some panelists during their deliberations. Moreover, the emphasis on the vote tally detracts from the Review's substance when media accounts of the Review stress the "vote" and "endorsement" of the panel over its findings.⁴⁴ Close votes, such as the 11-9 tally in 2016, are common for the Review, and they provide an unreliable estimate of how equivalent samples might have voted had they been similarly convened.⁴⁵

- 5. Provide more information about the CIR process/panel atop the Citizens' Statement.** Our survey data showed that many Oregon citizens who read the CIR Statements remain unsure about key aspects of the process. Given the importance of random selection as a component of the CIR, it is especially noteworthy that this was the least well understood of the features examined in our survey. of the trustworthiness of Citizens' Statements want to know more about the process. This information can be provided online, but most Statement readers will only learn what they read on the page presented in the Voters' Pamphlet. Moreover, unless the preamble of the CIR Statement is made more effective, even that may not convey to voters the basic features of the CIR.
- 6. The CIR still needs a more robust public information campaign, including classroom-based public education.** Changes to the CIR process and Statement will have maximum impact if the Statement reaches a wider population. The fact that roughly half the Oregon electorate remains unaware of the CIR suggests it has a much larger potential audience. Ignorance about key features of the process even among CIR readers also suggests the need to reinforce the public's understanding of the CIR. Either Oregon or one of the new CIR adopters should experiment with a more concerted public outreach effort to see how many voters can find their way to the CIR. Doing so is a logical next step after investing the effort into the CIR itself. One such approach might focus on future users by developing educational modules for use in Oregon high schools, as well as in civic-oriented classes in Oregon colleges and universities. Simulated CIR exercises, such as those used by the first author of this report in his own classrooms, provide students a first-hand understanding of how a CIR process operates.
- 7. Public descriptions of the CIR should emphasize its features, not just its outcomes.** Voters need to know more about the CIR process itself, from how it is funded to how panel deliberations are conducted. The public's trust in this process hinges not merely on the quality of Citizens' Statements produced, but also on the public's understanding of the CIR process, such as its use of random selection.
- 8. Outreach roles could be developed for both CIR panelists and others initially invited to participate in the CIR.** The British Columbia Citizens' Assembly encouraged the citizen participants in that process to serve as "ambassadors" who could reach out to the wider

⁴⁴ For example, media accounts after the Review told readers that the panel "narrowly endorses" (<http://www.opb.org/news/series/election-2016/oregon-measure-97-citizens-panel-endorses>) or "endorses" (<http://portlandtribune.com/nbg/142-news/320713-200468-citizens-panel-endorses-m-97>) or "votes to endorse" Measure 97 (http://www.oregonlive.com/politics/index.ssf/2016/08/citizen_panel_votes_to_endorse.html).

⁴⁵ See Fishkin (2013).

public and explain the findings of that body's deliberations.⁴⁶ The CIR panelists could potentially play such a role, though care must be taken not to overextend the responsibilities of those reluctant to do more than serve in a deliberative capacity. Moreover, the CIR recruits from a large pool of citizens initially invited to participate, and that larger public body could be invited to follow more closely the CIR deliberation and spread the word about the process.

⁴⁶ See Warren and Pearse (2008).

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Gastil, J. (2015). Principal Investigator, The **Democracy Fund**. "2015-2016 Citizens' Initiative Review Study and Reporting." (\$75,000) An addition \$20,000 in cost-sharing funds was added to this research contract by the **Pennsylvania State University**.

Knobloch, K. R. (2014). Principal Investigator, **National Science Foundation** (Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences: Decision, Risk and Management Sciences, NSF Award #1357444, Amendment 001). "A Multi-State Investigation of Small Group and Mass Public Decision Making on Fiscal and Scientific Controversies through the Citizens' Initiative Review: Research Experiences for Undergraduates Supplement." (\$6,000)

Gastil, J., & Knobloch, K. (2014). Co-Principal Investigators, **National Science Foundation** (Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences: Decision, Risk and Management Sciences, NSF Award #1357276/1357444). "Collaborative Research: A Multi-State Investigation of Small Group and Mass Public Decision Making on Fiscal and Scientific Controversies through the Citizens' Initiative Review." (\$418,000)

Gastil, J. (2013). **Pennsylvania State University** Social Science Research Institute. Award for summer workshop bringing together researchers investigating the Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review. (\$5,000)

Gastil, J., & Knobloch, K. (2012). Joint learning agreement (research contract) with the **Kettering Foundation**, with 76% of the budget allocated to Pennsylvania State University and 24% to Colorado State University. "Examining deliberation and the cultivation of public engagement at the 2012 Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review" (\$30,000).

Gastil, J. (2010). Principal Investigator, **National Science Foundation** (Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences: Decision, Risk and Management Sciences and Political Science Programs, NSF Award # 0961774), "Investigating the Electoral Impact and Deliberation of the Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review" (\$218,000).

Gastil, J. (2010). Principal Investigator, **University of Washington** Royalty Research Fund. "Panel Survey Investigation of the Oregon Citizen Initiative Review" (\$40,000).

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