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New Seasons Market announces support for November ballot initiatives to expand Outdoor School, build affordable housing

Measures would create jobs statewide, address housing affordability crisis in Portland

Portland, Ore.—New Seasons Market’s CEO Wendy Collie today announced New Seasons Market’s support for two ballot initiatives on the November 2016 ballot, continuing the mission-driven business’s commitment to supporting policies that promote thriving communities and economic prosperity in Oregon. The two initiatives are Measure 26-179, which will fund new affordable housing in Portland, and Measure 99, which will create a dedicated source of funding for all Oregon students to attend Outdoor School.

“New Seasons Market was founded on a commitment to champion environmental stewardship and to nurture communities where our employees and customers can thrive,” said Collie. “We are proud to support the Outdoor School for All and Yes for Affordable Homes campaigns as cornerstones of resiliency and prosperity in Oregon and Portland.”

‘Historic investment’ in affordable homes in Portland

Portland is in the midst of a housing affordability crisis, with a shortage of 25,000 affordable homes and rents that continue rising. In 2015 alone, average monthly rents in Portland increased by \$128 citywide. As a result, thousands of families struggle to find homes they can afford, and many are forced to leave the city or become homeless.

With its endorsement of Measure 26-179, New Seasons joins a growing coalition of more than 50 businesses and organizations saying yes to affordable homes.

“The housing affordability crisis threatens the resiliency of our communities and the vibrancy of our city. It’s a problem that touches all of us—and that we need to solve together,” Collie said. “Measure 26-179’s historic investment in affordable housing will create homes that are permanently affordable, housing tens of thousands of Portlanders for years to come.”

Measure 26-179 will create 1,300 permanently affordable homes, easing the financial strain on low-income families, one-quarter of whom spend more than half of their incomes on rent. By investing in more affordable housing for low-income families, the measure will also help bring necessities like healthy food within financial reach. The measure also addresses homelessness by dedicating funding to people who are homeless or living on fixed incomes, including seniors and people with disabilities.

Outdoor School for All to create jobs and enhance lives

New Seasons Market is also supporting Measure 99, which would create a dedicated source of funding to ensure every Oregon fifth or sixth grader has the opportunity to attend Outdoor School.

A uniquely Oregon tradition, Outdoor School has been a rite of passage for Oregon students for almost 50 years. However, due to cutbacks in funding, only about half of Oregon students now have the opportunity to receive the week of hands-on, science-driven outdoor education that, for many, is the first opportunity to experience nature outside of the school setting.

“An educated workforce is critical to Oregon’s economic growth and prosperity,” Collie said. “Outdoor School’s hands-on, exploratory learning style builds skills that are valuable at work and in life. All Oregon kids deserve this opportunity, regardless of where they live and what type of school they go to.”

Research shows that kids who go to Outdoor School do better in school, have improved attendance, and become more motivated to learn. Outdoor School has also been shown to build self-confidence, leadership skills, collaboration and critical thinking.

By designating four percent of Oregon Lottery funds to Outdoor School, Measure 99 would create 600 jobs and \$27 million in positive economic impact each year.

New Seasons’ November 2016 endorsements continue a tradition of supporting policies and programs aimed at enhancing economic vitality and community in the neighborhoods served by its 17 stores. New Seasons was among the largest Oregon businesses to champion the successful campaign to raise the state minimum wage earlier this year, and has been a strong voice for marriage equality and requiring GMO labeling.

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About New Seasons Market

New Seasons Market is the ultimate neighborhood grocery store and a champion for healthy regional food systems. Beginning in 2000 with a single Portland store, today it runs 17 stores company-wide – 16 New Seasons Markets in Oregon and Southwest Washington, and one store in San Jose, Calif. It also owns and operates five New Leaf Community Markets in Northern California. New Seasons is dedicated to cultivating community and delivering trademark customer service that lives up to its reputation as “the friendliest store in town.” Its stores offer a wide array of local organic produce at season’s peak, humanely raised meats from animals fed or finished on a non-GMO diet, sustainably harvested seafood, Oregon Tilth Certified Organic artisan breads, handmade freshly prepared foods and unique, artisanal local finds alongside favorite classic brands. It’s also a leader in sustainability, progressive employment and giving back to community, donating 10 percent of after-tax profits to local nonprofits and

community organizations. As a result of its mission-driven approach, New Seasons became the first grocer in the world to become a certified B Corporation, which recognizes companies committed to using the power of business for good, taking as much care of staff, community and environment as they do their business.