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## Measure 58

Friday, September 5, 2008 - Of course all students in Oregon should know or be learning English. So why does Bill Sizemore want to strictly limit efforts to do that? KINK Considers ballot measure 58.

We agree with Bill Sizemore on this: English is the language of opportunity in this country, it's our cultural bond, and all students should know or be learning it.

But Sizemore's Measure 58 on this fall's ballot limits efforts to teach English to non-native speakers to one year for elementary school kids in Oregon and two years for high school students.

Measure 58, which looks like it could have been written on a napkin, does seem to require shorter but more intense English instruction. Right now, most of Oregon's 50-thousand- plus English language learners spend most of their time in regular classrooms but have access to a teaching assistant in that classroom who can help them with language problems.

A much shorter, more intense approach would require self-contained language classrooms at an expense of about 250-million-dollars a year, according to an official state estimate. Yet in California, which has a similar but less extreme approach than Sizemore's, there has been no gain in English proficiency through the short, intense approach.

It's obvious to us, that if Measure 58 passes, more kids will be mainstreamed without being proficient in English. Bottom line: An even higher high school dropout rate combined with a higher cost to Oregon taxpayers.

So why would Measure 58 even be proposed? Sizemore does have a track record of trying to pick fights with Oregon's teachers unions. If he can keep them off-balance and tie up their resources, it makes it harder for them to challenge Sizemore's most transformational ballot measure this year.....a major tax cut for wealthy Oregonians.

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Written and produced by Jacob Lewin, KINK Considers airs Wednesday and Friday at 5:10am, 10:50am, & 3:10pm.

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