



October 4, 2011

Puget Sound Sage announces support of Proposition 1 and opposition to Initiative 1125: *emphasizing the need to invest in good jobs and a transportation system that meets the needs of low-income families.*

Puget Sound Sage brings together faith, community and labor organizations to make the economy work for working families.

We know that the three pillars of a fair economy are good jobs, affordable decent housing, and reliable transportation to work and services.

According to Got Green's recent report on Women and the Green Economy, 50% of households in Rainier Beach, and more than 30% in the Rainier Valley currently do not own a car. Despite high transit use and their smaller carbon footprint, Southeast Seattle residents' transit needs are not being met.

Low-income families travelling by car or bus need more reliable, faster, and safer trips to work, school, and services, now. This means sustainable funding for transit, better neighborhood connections and basic street and safety improvements -- especially in neighborhoods like Rainier Beach, one of the greenest communities in our city.

We support Proposition 1 because it prioritizes Southeast Seattle residents' transit needs. It is the first transportation funding initiative that has written in race & social equity measurements to direct how the money on transit, street repair, and pedestrian & bike improvements is spent. It also prioritizes 50% of the revenues toward improving transit reliability, including: 1) extending the electric trolley lines, 2) focusing on high capacity transit corridors in the Rainier Valley and Southwest Seattle, and 3) creating a "neighborhood connections opportunity fund" to address the loss of service between neighborhoods that happened after the Central Link Light Rail began operation.

We also support Proposition 1 because it will create good jobs. Proposition 1 will put people back to work filling potholes, building sidewalks, and extending the trolley lines.

Sage recognizes that paying yet another fee could be a significant hardship for many of our members and community allies. Many low-wage workers do not have public transportation as an option and must drive to work. They are forced to drive their 1994 Toyota Corolla in order to get to their swing shift cleaning jobs downtown, their bartending shift at the hotel, their grocery clerk position at the store across town or their factory job in Georgetown.

We believe that a low-wage worker with a 1994 car should not have to pay the same fee as the owner of a luxury SUV who is employed at a high-tech company. Unfortunately, Tim Eyman (and the state legislature) made it illegal for local jurisdictions to implement a progressive tax on vehicle licenses. That is why Puget Sound Sage is committed to working with the City of Seattle to put into place mitigations that makes sense, and developing longer-term transportation funding that is fair to working families.

That is why, Puget Sound Sage endorses Proposition 1 at the same time we vehemently oppose Tim Eyman and Kemper Freeman's Initiative 1125 that would further undermine progressive, sustainable mechanisms to fund critical transportation and highway infrastructure.

In closing, Puget Sound Sage is proud to join with labor unions and low-income advocates in supporting Proposition 1 because it supports family wage jobs and begins to reorient transportation funding to meet the needs of low-income underserved communities.

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