

# City of Portland

## Measure 26-240

Referred to the People by the City Council.

### BALLOT TITLE

#### Renew Portland Children's Levy investment for five years.

**Question:** Shall Portland continue early childhood, child abuse and mentoring programs; five-year levy \$0.4026 per \$1,000 assessed value beginning 2024? ·

This measure renews current local option taxes.

**Summary:** Renews the Portland Children's Levy investment at current rate; supports proven programs preventing childhood hunger, child abuse and neglect, helping children arrive at school ready to learn, providing safe constructive after-school alternatives for kids, and helping foster children and youth succeed.

Funds can only be used for:

**Preventing childhood hunger:** giving hungry children healthy food.

**Child abuse prevention and intervention:** addressing juvenile crime, school failure, drug and alcohol abuse, homeless youth.

**Early childhood programs:** making childcare more affordable and preparing children for success in school.

**After school, summer and mentoring programs:** promoting academic achievement, reducing the number of youth victimized by crime, increasing graduation rates, mentoring programs supporting transition to college and career for youth.

**Foster care programs:** helping foster children and youth succeed.

Accountability measures include:

- Investments subject to annual audits.
- Programs funded must be cost effective and have a proven record of success.
- Investments subject to oversight by a citizen committee.
- Administrative costs cannot exceed 5%.

The levy will raise approximately \$24,944,885 in 2024–2025, \$25,778,359 in 2025–2026, \$26,603,267 in 2026–2027, \$27,454,571 in 2027–2028, and \$28,333,118 in 2028–2029, for a total of \$133,114,201.

### EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Measure 26-240 will renew the Portland Children's Levy at the same tax rate that voters approved in 2002, 2008, 2013 and 2018. By renewing the Children's Levy, Portland will continue to fund programs to help kids and youth succeed, protecting them from abuse, crime and hunger. The Portland Children's Levy supports proven programs for more than 15,000 children and youth annually who might otherwise grow up without a healthy start and the positive influences that lead to success in school and beyond.

The Portland Children's Levy invests only in proven, cost-effective programs that:

- Ensure children and youth are ready to learn and achieve greater academic success, which eases burdens on schools and teachers because children and youth are better prepared and less disruptive in the classroom.
- Prevent children and youth from becoming victims of crime by supporting programs that give kids safe, constructive things to do during the hours they are most at risk of getting into trouble or becoming victimized.
- Protect children and youth from abuse and neglect. The Children's Levy helps shield children and youth from terrible circumstances and works to eliminate the two greatest risk factors for juvenile crime: drug and alcohol abuse, and homelessness.
- Provide foster children and youth with quality services that improve their chance at success, including educational support, mentoring and mental health services that increase school success and decrease rates of juvenile crime.

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Money raised through the Portland Children's Levy can only be used in program areas that deliver the greatest payoff by improving the lives of children and youth, and providing long-term savings to the community. Leading economic experts agree that early childhood education has the highest return of any public investment, as much as \$17 is saved for every dollar spent. Because the average cost to jail a juvenile is \$112,420 annually, the Children's Levy is a prudent investment in our shared future.

The Portland Children's Levy supports the following program areas:

- **Child abuse prevention and intervention:** addressing juvenile crime, school failure, drug and alcohol abuse and homeless youth.
- **Early childhood programs:** preparing children for success in school and making quality childcare more affordable.
- **After school, summer and mentoring programs:** promoting academic achievement, reducing the number of juveniles victimized by crime and increasing graduation rates.
- **Children and youth in foster care:** supporting children and youth who have been abused and neglected to succeed.
- **Child hunger:** improving children's access to nutritious meals, leading to improved health and academic success.

The Portland Children's Levy contains several elements to ensure accountability, efficiency and effectiveness:

- Supports only proven, cost-effective programs
- Oversight by a citizen committee
- Administrative expenses limited to 5% or less
- Annual independent audits

**Submitted by:**  
Portland City Council

**Submitted by:**  
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NO ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION WERE FILED.