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## ‘Absolutely elated’ Eyman celebrates initiative’s success

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Herald Columnist

Voters have spoken and no one could be pleased more by what they said than Tim Eyman.

The professional initiative promoter from Mukilteo had another anti-tax measure on Tuesday’s ballot. And like many of its predecessors, [it is passing with support in nearly every county in the state](#).

“I’m absolutely elated,” he gushed in a phone call after downing four glazed doughnuts at a pop-up election night party at a [Krispy Kreme](#) in Seattle. “It is incredibly gratifying.”

Initiative 1366 [may be his boldest attempt yet](#) to force state lawmakers to do something many don’t want to do, which is to make it harder on them to create new taxes or raise existing ones.

The measure requires the state’s sales tax be reduced by a penny next year unless the Legislature approves a constitutional amendment requiring any new or higher tax be approved by a two-thirds majority of both the House and Senate. Voters must approve the constitutional amendment, too.

On Tuesday, [I-1366 was passing with 54 percent statewide](#). It was ahead in 35 counties, including Snohomish and Island counties. It was losing in King County where the largest mass of pro-tax voters lives, so the final outcome is sure to be closer.

Regardless of the ending margin, Eyman said the results show when it comes to taxes, most voters would like to see them go down if they can and make it harder for them to go up if they can’t.

Eyman celebrated this political touchdown with a little extra step in his victory dance.

He obviously enjoyed repelling foes who contended the measure amounted to blackmailing lawmakers with the loss of billions of sales tax dollars for schools and state programs if they didn’t pass the tax-limiting constitutional amendment.

Eyman also relished that most voters apparently didn’t give a hoot he was the driving force behind the initiative, though opponents strived to disparage the measure by tying his name to it.

This could have been a year for such a tactic to work. Eyman is under investigation by Attorney General Bob Ferguson [for allegedly breaking a bunch of election laws in 2012](#) in order to pass his previous anti-tax measure.

He’s been publicly accused of secretly moving hundreds of thousands of dollars in campaign

contributions between two initiative campaigns and failing to disclose making \$300,000 for himself in the process.

“They threw everything they had at us,” Eyman said.

Now, in an ironic twist, before Ferguson begins prosecuting Eyman for any past electoral hanky-panky, he could be defending the legitimacy of the initiative entrepreneur’s latest undertaking.

Opponents vowed Tuesday to continue their fight in the courts, confident the state Supreme Court will eventually deem I-1366 an illegal manifestation.

“While we are obviously disappointed in the outcome,” began Christian Sinderman, [a spokesperson for the anti-1366 coalition](#), “We have felt all along that this measure was likely unconstitutional, and look forward to next steps to prevent 1366 from cutting billions from already inadequate education funding.”

Eyman figured this might happen.

“We knew where the legal landmines were and designed the initiative in a way to not step on any of those landmines,” he said.

If he’s right, any explosions this measure sets off will be in the Legislature and on the 2016 campaign trail.

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