

STATE WIDE BALLOT ISSUES NOVEMBER 8, 2016 ELECTION

Information provided by the League of Women Voters of Missouri

Constitutional Amendment 1

The Missouri Sales Tax for Parks and Conservation Measure

Upon voter approval, Amendment 1 would renew the existing sales and use tax of 0.1 percent for 10 years. The revenue goes toward conservation efforts designed to “continue to generate approximately \$90 million annually for soil and water conservation and operation of the state park system and historic sites. It was automatically referred to the ballot which must be reapproved by the voters every 10 years.

Pros: This legislation has strong support from both parties and both urban and rural areas. Conservation programs would be significantly cut back if it were not passed.

Cons: There is no organized opposition. Those opposed do not like taxes.

Constitutional Amendment 2

Missouri State and Judicial Campaign Contribution Limits Initiative

This proposed constitutional amendment was put on the ballot by the initiative petition method, whereby sufficient signatures of voters on petitions were certified by the Secretary of State’s office to qualify for the ballot. This proposal would establish limits on campaign contributions by individuals or entities to political parties, political committees, or committees to elect candidates for state or judicial office. It prohibits individuals and entities from intentionally concealing the source of such contributions, requires corporations or labor organizations to meet certain requirements in order to make such contributions, and provides a complaint process and penalties for any violations of the amendment.

Pros: This amendment is probably the only way to enact contribution limits that then cannot be overturned by the legislature. It is important that Missouri do something about campaign contributions and this is a start.

Cons: Some groups say that this does not go far enough to control campaign finance problems.

Constitutional Amendment 3

Missouri 60 Cent cigarette Tax Amendment

This measure was put on the ballot by initiative petition, signed by a sufficient number of voters. It would increase the taxes on a pack of cigarettes from 17 cents to 77 cents by 15 cent increments until 2020. It would also impose a fee on wholesalers of 67cents per pack on cigarettes produced by a “non-participating manufacturer” (in other words, the smaller cigarette manufacturers who do not currently participate in an earlier lawsuit settlement). At least 75% of the revenue would be devoted to increasing access to early childhood education programs. Around 10 % would go toward grants for Missouri health care facilities, and approximately 5% would be devoted to smoking prevention programs. There is also a competing tobacco sales tax measure; if both pass, the one with the most votes becomes law.

Pros: Those who support this amendment say that early childhood education is very important and that it is not adequately funded.

Cons: The money generated by the tax could be used to support private and parochial schools, violating the principle of “public money for public schools.” In addition, opponents say the measure lacks strong oversight and places all decisions in the hands of an unelected commission. Some health care groups are opposed as they say it could interfere with stem cell research.

Constitutional Amendment 4

Missouri Prohibition on Extending Sales Tax to Previously Untaxed Services Amendment

This amendment was put on the ballot by initiative petition. It would prohibit a new state sales or use tax on any service or activity that was not subject to a sales or use tax as of January 1, 2015.

Pros: Supporters (including the Missouri Association of Realtors) want to prohibit taxes on professional services.

Cons: This proposal would impact a governmental entity's ability to revise their tax structures. Putting such in the constitution would not be a "good government" policy. It could possibly cost the state a significant source of revenue in the future, as public spending for services tends to rise more than the public spending for products.

Constitutional Amendment 6

Missouri Voter ID Requirement Amendment

This amendment was put on the ballot by the Missouri legislature since earlier attempts to mandate a state-issued photo ID for voting was declared unconstitutional in 2006. This proposal empowers the state government to require the presentation of only certain federal or state-issued voter ID at public elections.

Pros: Supporters say that this would prevent voter fraud.

Con: Opponents say that voter fraud does not exist and that approximately 230,000 Missourians would be disenfranchised by this amendment. In addition, it would cost the state approximately \$17 million over three years to implement.

Proposition A

Missouri 23 Cent Cigarette Tax

This measure was put on the ballot by initiative petition. It would increase the current tax of 17 cents per pack of cigarettes by 2 cents every 2 years until 2021 when the total tax would reach 23 cents. It would also tax non-cigarette tobacco products 5% of the manufacturer's invoice price, paid by the seller. Tax revenue would be used to fund transportation infrastructure projects. Additionally, passage of this measure would repeal these taxes if a measure to increase any tax or fee on cigarettes or other tobacco products is certified to appear on any local or statewide ballot.

Pros: Supporters say that this proposition should pass to defeat the larger tax increase in Amendment 3.

Cons: This would tie the hands of future legislatures to pass fair tax policies.