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## **The Stouffer Report: *Electing Assessors Instead of Appointing Them***

We are only weeks away from one of the more crucial mid-term elections in U.S. history. In addition to all of the candidates you will see on your November 2 ballot, there will also be four measures — two constitutional amendments and two propositions — for you to decide.

[Amendment 1](#) is the result of [Senate Joint Resolution 5](#), which was passed by the Missouri General Assembly last year. Passage of the amendment would change the [Missouri Constitution](#) so that county assessors would be elected, instead of appointed, in counties with a charter form of government. The only exception would be counties with a population between 600,000 and 700,000.

Granted, whether or not this passes has no immediate impact on folks in rural Missouri, since the only charter counties in the state are St. Louis, St. Charles, Jefferson and Jackson. However, I believe this amendment points to something I have talked about for many years. When you appoint someone to an office, a greater

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chance of wrongdoing may arise. The need to operate within the law is not as great when a system of checks and balances is not present. In this case, the checks and balances come every few years from voters at the ballot box.

Regardless, this is a statewide issue, because voters from throughout the state are the ones who decide any changes to the state constitution. Here is what you will see on your ballot for Amendment 1:

*A “yes” vote will amend the Missouri Constitution to require that assessors in charter counties be elected officers. This proposal will affect St. Louis County and any county that adopts a charter form of government. The exception is for a county that has between 600,001-699,999 residents, which currently is only Jackson County.*

*A “no” vote will not change the current requirement for charter counties.*

*If passed, this measure will not have an impact on taxes.*

Over the next three weeks, I will outline the remaining ballot questions. I hope everyone will get out and exercise their right to vote on November 2.

*Senator Stouffer serves the counties of Carroll, Chariton, Cooper, Howard, Lafayette, Macon, Ray, Saline, and a part of Clay.*

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please call toll free (866) 768-3987 or by e-mail at [bstouffer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:bstouffer@senate.mo.gov).

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