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## **Ballot Measures Up to Will of Missouri Voters**

JEFFERSON CITY — The November general election is just around the corner, with the presidential contest and our own state office races at center stage for Missouri voters. When Missourians head to the polls on Nov. 4, they will also be asked to decide several important ballot measures that could greatly impact our state.

Missouri voters will consider two legislatively-driven constitutional amendments and three initiative petitions when they cast their votes on Election Day. Here is a summary of those measures.

Constitutional Amendment 1, proposed by the Missouri Legislature as House Joint Resolution 7, would establish English as the official language for all government meetings where public business is discussed or decided or where public policy is formulated. This includes meetings conducted in person or by other means of communication, including conference calls, video conference, Internet chat, or Internet message board.

Constitutional Amendment 4 — the second constitutional amendment on the ballot — is the Missouri Storm Water Control Amendment. Currently, the Legislature issues bonds or other types of debt to provide grants and loans to municipalities and water and sewer districts in certain counties and cities for storm water control. This would limit funding to public water and sewer districts, remove limitations on the amount of funds, and remove restrictions on disbursement. Loan repayments would go into a specific fund for storm water control projects.

Missouri Proposition A — the “Schools First Elementary and Secondary Education Funding Initiative” — is a voter-driven initiative that would provide new revenues for schools by increasing the state tax on casinos to 21 percent and eliminating Missouri’s current \$500 loss limit for individual gambling losses. The measure would also limit the number of casinos to those already built or under construction.

A “yes” vote, according to the Secretary of State’s office, would send an estimated \$105.1 million to \$130 million annually for elementary and secondary education and between \$5 million and \$7 million annually for higher education, early childhood development, veterans, and other programs. Local governmental entities receiving gambling boat tax and fee revenues would get \$18.5 million annually.

A “no” vote would maintain the current casino gambling tax, the individual maximum loss limit of \$500 for each two-hour gambling excursion, and would not create the “Schools First Elementary and Secondary Education Improvement Fund.” Also, the number of new casinos built in Missouri would not be restricted.

Proposition B — the Missouri Home Care Initiative — would create the Missouri Quality Homecare Council and ensure quality home care services under the Medicaid program by recruiting, training, and stabilizing the home care workforce. It also would essentially ease the ability of home care workers to unionize. The proposition was forwarded by a Missouri citizen group and others.

The third proposition is Proposition C — the Clean Energy Initiative. This citizen-initiated proposition would create a renewable electricity standard that requires utilities to gradually increase usage of renewable energy until 15 percent of energy used is renewable. The proposition also calls for energy rates not to increase by more than 1 percent annually.

For a complete listing of these measures and the official ballot language, you can visit the Missouri Secretary of State’s website at [www.sos.mo.gov](http://www.sos.mo.gov).

If you haven’t done so already, I encourage you to find out more about these issues so you can make an informed decision — and the best choices for Missouri — when you step into the voting booth on Election Day.

If you have comments or questions about this week’s column or any other matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by phone at (866) 271-2844.

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