

# SENATOR LUANN RIDGEWAY

## SPECIAL CAPITOL REPORT OCTOBER 30, 2008

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In addition to the candidates on the ballot next Tuesday you will find the following amendments and propositions. With ballot language alone it can be difficult to understand the bottom line. I've trimmed the fat off the language so that you have a summary of each question. My summary is in response to various constituents requesting more information about ballot initiatives. I have done my best to summarize these proposals in a neutral fashion. If you want more information, please feel free to contact me.

### **CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT 1:**

If accepted, Constitutional Amendment 1 will require English to be the official language of Missouri for all governmental proceedings and written documents. The Missouri General Assembly passed a House Joint Resolution to place this issue on the November ballot.

### **CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT 4:**

Constitutional Amendment 4 would change our constitutional process for financing storm water control projects. If approved, Constitutional Amendment 4, as described in Senate Joint Resolution 45, would expand the number of storm water projects that the state could choose to fund through the sale of bonds. Voters gave the legislature the ability to sell bonds for these projects in 1998, but a change in federal tax code has kept any bonds from being sold since 2002. By approving this amendment, water and sewer districts will have the opportunity to seek tax-free grants and loans from the state. In addition, the amendment would remove the existing cap on the amount of funds available for storm water projects and it would remove the existing restrictions on the method of disbursing the funds.

### **PROPOSITION A:**

This measure, placed on the ballot through a voter petition initiative, would change our current gambling laws to remove Missouri's current \$500 loss limit (i.e. no more than \$500 every two hours or \$6,000 per day). Proposition A would raise the casino gambling tax from 20% to 21% bringing an additional \$105 to \$130 million annually to be used for elementary and secondary education. In addition, the amendment would, by statute, restrict the number of casinos in the state to those already built or currently under construction. The amendment would also eliminate some of the additional identity checks currently in place in Missouri casinos and require only identification to verify an individual is at least 21 years old.

### **PROPOSITION B:**

Proposition B seeks to create a new government bureaucracy that is currently estimated to cost the taxpayers of Missouri about \$500,000. The cost would cover administrative staff and their offices and travel expenses of the members of the council. If passed, Proposition B would create a council comprised of 11 members appointed by the Governor. The new bureaucracy is supposed to organize home health-care workers,

keep a statewide registry of personal care attendants, and make wage recommendations to the legislature. The amendment also would allow home health care workers to unionize but would prevent them from striking.

**PROPOSITION C:**

The final ballot initiative, Proposition C, would mandate that all investor-owned electric utilities (i.e. Ameren UE, Empire, and Kansas City Power & Light, etc.) generate or purchase 15% of their electricity from renewable sources by 2021. Renewable energy sources include solar, wind, biomass, and hydropower. The mandate would be phased in incrementally with an initial 2% requirement by 2011. These electric utilities also would be required to have at least 2% of the renewable energy sources come from solar. If proposition C passes, the utility companies may choose to pass the costs of implementation along to the consumer; however, rate increases for costs incurred because of this measure cannot exceed 1%.

If you have any questions, please contact my office at 573.751.2547 or at [luann.ridgeway@senate.mo.gov](mailto:luann.ridgeway@senate.mo.gov)