

# SENATOR LUANN RIDGEWAY

## CAPITOL REPORT NOVEMBER 13, 2008

---

November 4<sup>th</sup> marked the conclusion of a seemingly endless and hard-fought election season. A record 2.9 million Missourians, or 69 percent of eligible voters, cast their ballots in last week's general election, going well beyond the previous 2004 record of 2.7 million voters. In Clay County, over 73% of registered voters cast ballots, with a total of 110,283 people voting in our county.

Just prior to the election, I wrote a summary of the various non-candidate issues that would appear on your ballot. This report contains the outcome of the various non-candidate ballot issues.

By an overwhelming vote of 86 percent statewide, Constitutional Amendment 1 establishes English as the official language of all governmental meetings where policy is discussed or decided. Clay Countians approved the amendment by 88 percent. I, along with other legislators, voted to put this issue before the voters for their approval so this matter could be settled once and for all by amending our state Constitution.

One of the more contentious issues on the ballot, Proposition A, was approved by 56 percent of Missouri voters and will now remove the casino loss limits (currently set at \$500 per individual gambler) that have been in place since gambling was legalized in Missouri. The measure also increases the taxes on gaming from 20 to 21 percent and restricts the number of casinos allowed in Missouri to those already in existence or in the process of being built. Money from the gambling tax increase will go into the newly created "Schools First Elementary and Secondary Education Improvement Fund". In Clay County, the measure received 66 percent of the vote.

The two other proposed statutes, Propositions B and C, both gained overwhelming approval from Missouri voters. Proposition B, passed by 75 percent of Missourians and 78 percent of Clay County voters, creates the Missouri Quality Homecare Council, the stated purpose of which is to help elderly and disabled Missourians live independently in their homes through recruiting and training a personal care attendant workforce. Proposition C, approved by 66 percent of Missourians and 70 percent of Clay County voters, requires investor-owned electric utilities to generate or purchase electricity from renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, biomass and hydropower and meet certain renewable energy sales targets. The proposition also calls for energy rates not to increase for consumers by more than 1 percent annually as a result of developing these renewable energy sources.

Also receiving a "yes" vote was Constitutional Amendment 4, which relates to the financing of stormwater control projects in Missouri. The 58 percent statewide approval by voters will now limit the funding for these projects to only public water and sewer districts and remove the current limit on the amount of funds that can be made available. Loan repayment funds will now be

deposited into a specific fund to be used solely for stormwater control projects. In Clay County, 64% of the voters approved this measure.

On a personal note, I want to thank the people of the 17<sup>th</sup> District for allowing me the privilege of being able to serve another term and entrusting me to once again be your voice in the Missouri Senate. My service in the Senate means nothing without you and your input. I am only in Jefferson City to further your interests and make sure your concerns are heard when we are making policy that will affect Missourians in the many years ahead. I am honored to have the responsibility and I am looking forward to a successful and productive 2009 legislative session.

I want to thank each and every citizen for making their voice heard in this year's elections. Exercising your right to vote is an important civic duty that truly does make a difference in our state and country. For more information on any of the races or election results, visit the Secretary of State's website at [www.sos.mo.gov](http://www.sos.mo.gov), for state-wide results. For Clay County result, go to [www.claycoelections.com/](http://www.claycoelections.com/). If you have any questions or comments about this Capitol Report, or any other issue, please do not hesitate to contact me by e-mail at [luann.ridgeway@senate.mo.gov](mailto:luann.ridgeway@senate.mo.gov) or by phone at 573.751.2547.