



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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**A Weekly Column for the
Week of Oct. 20, 2008**

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Statewide Propositions

JEFFERSON CITY – Last week I discussed the two proposed amendments to the Missouri Constitution on the November ballot. Constitutional amendments typically appear on the ballot as a result of legislative action, such as approval of a House or Senate joint resolution. However, amendments may also be placed on the ballot through the initiative petition process.

Missouri is one of just 24 states that allow its citizens to make changes in state laws and the Missouri Constitution through the petition process. This year Missouri voters will decide three changes to state laws which originated through the initiative petition process.

Proposition A asks voters to amend state law by removing the current \$500 loss limit for gambling at Missouri casinos. It would prohibit future loss limits, it restricts the number of casinos in Missouri to those already built, it increases the gambling tax from 20% to 21%, and it creates a new education fund from the gambling tax proceeds generated by the measure called the “Schools First Elementary and Secondary Education Improvement Fund.

Proposition B would create the Missouri Quality Homecare Council to help elderly Missourians and those with disabilities to continue living independently in their own homes. The Council would ensure the availability of quality home care services under the Medicaid program by recruiting, training and stabilizing the home care workforce. The exact cost of the measure is unknown but is estimated to exceed \$510,560 annually, although matching federal funds could reduce state costs. The measure would provide no costs or savings to local governments.

Proposition C on the November ballot would change state law to require investor-owned utilities in Missouri to generate or buy electricity from renewable sources such as solar, wind, biomass and hydropower. The measure would require these utilities to generate or buy electricity

from renewable sources equaling 2% of retail sales by 2011, increasing to at least 15% by 2021. It also restricts any resulting rate increase to just 1% for consumers. The estimated costs to state government is \$395,183, and state and local governments may face increased electricity rates as a result of the proposal.

Once again, I urge everyone to take the time to vote in this important election November 4th. We could have a record turnout this year, so voters may encounter lines at their polling places. Please be patient, and be kind and courteous to the folks who have volunteered to be poll workers.

If you have any questions or comments about this or any other issue, give my Capitol office a call at (573) 751-7852, send me an email at wes.shoemyer@senate.mo.gov, or drop a line to Room 434, State Capitol, 201 West Capitol Ave., Jefferson City, MO 65101.