COUNT ME IN!

BALLOT MEASURE SUMMARIES AND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What do the letters and numbers on my ballot mean?

Lettered ballot measures

If the measure is named with a letter, that means it's a referred measure, also known as a referendum. These measures are put on the ballot by the state legislature. There are two types of referred measures: amendments and propositions.

The legislature-referred measures that are amendments to the constitution must receive two-thirds majority support in both the state House and state Senate to get on the ballot. Because Colorado's legislature has a fairly even mix of Republicans and Democrats, that means the lettered amendments had to be referred with bipartisan support. These could be changes to existing law or entirely new laws. Changes to these laws require a vote of the people.

The legislature-referred measures that are propositions require only a simple majority in both houses to get on the ballot. These are changes to statute and could be changed by the legislature and governor later on without a vote of the people. Depending on the composition of the legislature, they may or may not need bipartisan support to make it on the ballot.

Numbered Ballot Measures

Numbered measures are citizen-initiated. They are put on the ballot through a signature gathering process.

The citizen initiative measures that change (or amend) the constitution are amendments. Just like legislature-referred amendments, these laws can only be changed later on by a vote of the people. The citizen-initiated measures that are propositions create new laws or modify existing laws, but they can be modified later by the legislature and governor.

A note about Constitutional amendments: under Amendment 71, passed by voters in 2016, if a legislature-referred or citizen-initiated amendment adds new language to the state Constitution, it must receive 55% or more of the vote.

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AMENDMENT V * ASSEMBLY AGE

Count Me In Summary:

Amendment V is a referred measure from the state legislature that changes the age qualification for a member of the Colorado General Assembly (the official name of the state legislature) from 25 years to 21 years of age.

Current Law:

Current law says in order to be elected as a member of the General Assembly a candidate must be at least 25 years of age.

Ballot Title:

“SHALL THERE BE AN AMENDMENT TO THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION CONCERNING A REDUCTION IN THE AGE QUALIFICATION FOR A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FROM TWENTY-FIVE YEARS TO TWENTY-ONE YEARS?"

AMENDMENT W * ELECTION BALLOT FORMAT FOR JUDICIAL RETENTION ELECTION

Count Me In Summary:

Amendment W is a referred measure from the Colorado legislature that makes the ballot language for voting in judicial retention elections shorter by eliminating repetitive language. Instead of asking the question of whether the judge should be retained for every judge on the ballot, the new language would ask the question once for each category of judges (e.g. Colorado Court of Appeals Judges) and would then be followed by a series of boxes where voters can vote "Yes" or "No" for each named judge separately.

Current Law:

The current ballot format uses the language “Shall Judge [NAME] be retained” for every judge.

Ballot Title:

"SHALL THERE BE AN AMENDMENT TO THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION CONCERNING A CHANGE IN THE FORMAT OF THE ELECTION BALLOT FOR JUDICIAL RETENTION ELECTIONS?"

AMENDMENT X* INDUSTRIAL HEMP DEFINITION

Count Me In Summary:

Amendment X is a referred measure from the Colorado legislature that would remove language from the state Constitution defining hemp and instead uses the federal definition. It does not change the legal status of industrial hemp under state law for production and distribution purposes.

Current Law:

Hemp is defined in the state constitution, section 16 of article XVIII, Personal use and regulation of marijuana as follows: “the plant of the genus cannabis and any part of such plant, whether growing or not, with a delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) concentration that does not exceed three-tenths percent on a dry weight basis.” The THC content of hemp plants is currently measured by the Colorado Department of Agriculture.

Federal law currently defines industrial hemp as, “the plant Cannabis sativa L. and any part of such plant, whether growing or not, with a delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol concentration of not more than 0.3 percent on a dry weight basis.”

Ballot Title:

"SHALL THERE BE AN AMENDMENT TO THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION CONCERNING CHANGING THE INDUSTRIAL HEMP DEFINITION FROM A CONSTITUTIONAL DEFINITION TO A STATUTORY DEFINITION?"

AMENDMENT Y* & Z*

CONGRESSIONAL (Y) AND LEGISLATIVE (Z) REDISTRICTING

Count Me In Summary:

Amendments Y and Z would change the way we draw congressional and state legislative districts in Colorado. Under our current system, elected officials are largely responsible for creating and approving the congressional and legislative district maps. These amendments would change the current system by creating independent redistricting commissions, each made up of 12 people, who would consider and approve district maps. These amendments were referred to voters by a unanimous vote of the state House and Senate.

Current Law:

The responsibility for creating district maps for Congress (known as redistricting) currently falls to the members of the Colorado General Assembly. A similar process applies to state legislative districts, however unlike the current system for redrawing Congressional districts, the redrawing of state legislative districts is currently decided by the Colorado Reapportionment Commission.

Federal law currently defines industrial hemp as, “the plant Cannabis sativa L. and any part of such plant, whether growing or not, with a delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol concentration of not more than 0.3 percent on a dry weight basis.”

Ballot Title Amendment Y:

"SHALL THERE BE AN AMENDMENT TO THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION CONCERNING A CHANGE TO THE WAY THAT CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS ARE DRAWN, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, TAKING THE DUTY TO DRAW CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS AWAY FROM THE STATE LEGISLATURE AND GIVING IT TO AN INDEPENDENT COMMISSION, COMPOSED OF TWELVE CITIZENS WHO POSSESS SPECIFIED QUALIFICATIONS; PROHIBITING ANY ONE POLITICAL PARTY'S CONTROL OF THE COMMISSION BY REQUIRING THAT ONE-THIRD OF COMMISSIONERS WILL NOT BE AFFILIATED WITH ANY POLITICAL PARTY, ONE-THIRD OF THE COMMISSIONERS WILL BE AFFILIATED WITH THE STATE'S LARGEST POLITICAL PARTY, AND ONE-THIRD OF THE COMMISSIONERS WILL BE AFFILIATED WITH THE STATE'S SECOND LARGEST POLITICAL PARTY; PROHIBITING CERTAIN PERSONS, INCLUDING PROFESSIONAL LOBBYISTS, FEDERAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE EMPLOYEES, AND FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS, FROM SERVING ON THE COMMISSION; LIMITING JUDICIAL REVIEW OF A MAP TO A DETERMINATION BY THE SUPREME COURT OF WHETHER THE COMMISSION OR ITS

NONPARTISAN STAFF COMMITTED AN ABUSE OF DISCRETION; REQUIRING THE COMMISSION TO DRAW DISTRICTS WITH A FOCUS ON COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS, SUCH AS CITIES AND COUNTIES, AND THEN TO MAXIMIZE THE NUMBER OF COMPETITIVE CONGRESSIONAL SEATS TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE; AND PROHIBITING MAPS FROM BEING DRAWN TO DILUTE THE ELECTORAL INFLUENCE OF ANY RACIAL OR ETHNIC GROUP OR TO PROTECT ANY INCUMBENT, ANY POLITICAL CANDIDATE, OR ANY POLITICAL PARTY?"

Ballot Title Amendment Z:

"SHALL THERE BE AN AMENDMENT TO THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION CONCERNING A CHANGE TO THE MANNER IN WHICH STATE SENATE AND STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DISTRICTS ARE DRAWN, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, REFORMING THE EXISTING LEGISLATIVE REAPPORTIONMENT COMMISSION BY EXPANDING THE COMMISSION TO TWELVE MEMBERS AND AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS WHO POSSESS SPECIFIED QUALIFICATIONS; PROHIBITING ANY ONE POLITICAL PARTY'S CONTROL OF THE COMMISSION BY REQUIRING THAT ONE-THIRD OF COMMISSIONERS WILL NOT BE AFFILIATED WITH ANY POLITICAL PARTY, ONE-THIRD OF THE COMMISSIONERS WILL BE AFFILIATED WITH THE STATE'S LARGEST POLITICAL PARTY, AND ONE-THIRD OF THE COMMISSIONERS WILL BE AFFILIATED WITH THE STATE'S SECOND LARGEST POLITICAL PARTY; PROHIBITING CERTAIN PERSONS, INCLUDING PROFESSIONAL LOBBYISTS, FEDERAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE EMPLOYEES, AND FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS, FROM SERVING ON THE COMMISSION; LIMITING JUDICIAL REVIEW OF A MAP TO A DETERMINATION BY THE SUPREME COURT OF WHETHER THE COMMISSION OR ITS NONPARTISAN STAFF COMMITTED AN ABUSE OF DISCRETION; REQUIRING THE COMMISSION TO DRAW STATE LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS USING COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST AS WELL AS POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS, SUCH AS CITIES AND COUNTIES, AND THEN TO MAXIMIZE THE NUMBER OF COMPETITIVE STATE LEGISLATIVE SEATS TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE; AND PROHIBITING MAPS FROM BEING DRAWN TO DILUTE THE ELECTORAL INFLUENCE OF ANY RACIAL OR ETHNIC GROUP OR TO PROTECT ANY INCUMBENT, ANY POLITICAL CANDIDATE, OR ANY POLITICAL PARTY?"

AMENDMENT A

PROHIBIT SLAVERY AND INVOLUNTARY SERVITUDE IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES

Count Me In Summary:

Amendment A abolishes the provision that allows slavery and involuntary servitude to exist in Colorado's constitution. 100% of Colorado legislators—Republican, Democrat, and unaffiliated—voted to refer the measure to the ballot.

Current Law:

Section 26 of article II of the Colorado Constitution currently says “Slavery prohibited. There shall never be in this state either slavery or involuntary servitude except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.”Federal law currently defines industrial hemp as, “the plant Cannabis sativa L. and any part of such plant, whether growing or not, with a delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol concentration of not more than 0.3 percent on a dry weight basis.”

Ballot Title:

"SHALL THERE BE AN AMENDMENT TO THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION THAT PROHIBITS SLAVERY AND INVOLUNTARY SERVITUDE AS PUNISHMENT FOR A CRIME AND THEREBY PROHIBITS SLAVERY AND INVOLUNTARY SERVITUDE IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES?"

AMENDMENT 73 *

FUNDING FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Count Me In Summary:

Amendment 73 would provide an additional $1.6 billion in funding for Colorado schools by replacing the state’s current single rate individual income tax with a progressive tax that raises the rates paid by taxpayers with taxable income over $150,000 per year and increasing the state corporate income tax rate from 4.63% to 6%. The measure also changes constitutional property tax law. For the purpose of determining property taxes to support schools, the percent of home value that is taxed (residential assessment rate) is set at 7% and the percent of non-residential property value (nonresidential assessment rate) that is taxed is 24%.

Current Law:

Currently, Colorado has a single rate income tax of 4.63%. Colorado's current residential assessment rate is 7.2%, and the non-residential assessment rate is 29%. The Residential Assessment rate is reconsidered every 2 years, to maintain compliance with the Gallagher amendment and the nonresidential assessment rate is fixed in the Constitution.

Ballot Title:

"SHALL STATE TAXES BE INCREASED $1,600,000,000 ANNUALLY BY AN AMENDMENT TO THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION AND A CHANGE TO THE COLORADO REVISED STATUTES CONCERNING FUNDING RELATING TO PRESCHOOL THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL PUBLIC EDUCATION, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, CREATING AN EXCEPTION TO THE SINGLE RATE STATE INCOME TAX FOR REVENUE THAT IS DEDICATED TO THE FUNDING OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS; INCREASING INCOME TAX RATES INCREMENTALLY FOR INDIVIDUALS, TRUSTS, AND ESTATES USING FOUR TAX BRACKETS STARTING AT .37% FOR INCOME ABOVE $150,000 AND INCREASING TO 3.62% FOR INCOME ABOVE $500,000; INCREASING THE CORPORATE INCOME TAX RATE BY 1.37%; FOR PURPOSES OF SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPERTY TAXES, REDUCING THE CURRENT RESIDENTIAL ASSESSMENT RATE OF 7.2% TO 7.0% AND THE CURRENT NONRESIDENTIAL ASSESSMENT RATE OF 29%TO 24%; REQUIRING THE REVENUE FROM THE INCOME TAX INCREASES TO BE DEPOSITED IN A DEDICATED PUBLIC EDUCATION FUND AND ALLOWING THE REVENUE COLLECTED TO BE RETAINED AND SPENT AS VOTER-APPROVED REVENUE CHANGES; REQUIRING THE LEGISLATURE TO ANNUALLY APPROPRIATE MONEY FROM THE FUND TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO SUPPORT EARLY CHILDHOOD THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS ON AN EQUITABLE BASIS THROUGHOUT THE STATE WITHOUT DECREASING GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS; DIRECTING THE LEGISLATURE TO ENACT, REGULARLY REVIEW, AND REVISE WHEN NECESSARY, A NEW PUBLIC SCHOOL FINANCE LAW THAT MEETS SPECIFIED CRITERIA; UNTIL THE LEGISLATURE HAS ENACTED A NEW PUBLIC SCHOOL FINANCE LAW, REQUIRING THE MONEY IN THE FUND TO BE ANNUALLY APPROPRIATED FOR SPECIFIED EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND PURPOSES; REQUIRING THE MONEY IN THE FUND TO BE USED TO SUPPORT ONLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS; REQUIRING GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION TO INCREASE BY INFLATION, UP TO 5%, ANNUALLY; AND REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO COMMISSION A STUDY OF THE USE OF THE MONEY IN THE FUND WITHIN FIVE YEARS?"

AMENDMENT 74 *

JUST COMPENSATION FOR REDUCTION IN FAIR MARKET VALUE BY GOVERNMENT LAW OR REGULATION

Count Me In Summary:

Amendment 74 is a constitutional amendment that requires the government to provide compensation when a new law or regulation reduces the market value of private property.

Current Law:

Currently, under the Colorado Constitution, when the government takes or damages private property they must provide “just compensation.” Just compensation is determined by a court-appointed commission and private property owners may only seek compensation if there land is taken, or obtained, by the government for public use.

Ballot Title:

“SHALL THERE BE AN AMENDMENT TO THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION REQUIRING THE GOVERNMENT TO AWARD JUST COMPENSATION TO OWNERS OF PRIVATE PROPERTY WHEN A GOVERNMENT LAW OR REGULATION REDUCES THE FAIR MARKET VALUE OF THE PROPERTY?”

AMENDMENT 75 *

CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

Count Me In Summary:

Amendment 75 is a proposed constitutional amendment that would add a new section to the campaign finance contribution limits in Article 28. If a candidate contributes or loans more than $1 million to their own campaign or another committee involved in their election, then the contribution limits for all other candidates in that race would be increased to five times the current limit in the state constitution.

Current Law:

Currently the campaign contribution limits vary from race to race ranging from $50 to $3,650. With most state races having campaign contribution limits of $200 - $575.

Ballot Title:

"SHALL THERE BE AN AMENDMENT TO THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION PROVIDING THAT IF ANY CANDIDATE IN A PRIMARY OR GENERAL ELECTION FOR STATE OFFICE DIRECTS MORE THAN ONE MILLION DOLLARS IN SUPPORT OF HIS OR HER OWN ELECTION, THEN EVERY CANDIDATE FOR THAT OFFICE IN THE SAME ELECTION MAY ACCEPT FIVE TIMES THE AMOUNT OF CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS NORMALLY ALLOWED?"

PROPOSITION 109 TRANSPORTATION BONDS

Count Me In Summary:

Prop 109 requires the Colorado Department of Transportation to borrow up to $3.5 billion for a 20 year period by July 2019. This form of debt is also known as Transportation Revenue Anticipation Notes (or TRANs bonds). The voter approved bonds must be used exclusively for road and bridge expansion, construction, maintenance, and repair on the 66 projects identified in the measure. Projects are in each of the state's 15 transportation planning regions. The proposed measure requires that the bonds be repaid with existing state resources.

Current Law:

Currently, transportation funding in Colorado come primarily from an excise tax on each gallon of fuel and diesel purchased and vehicle registration fees.

Ballot Title:

"SHALL STATE DEBT BE INCREASED $3,500,000,000, WITH A MAXIMUM REPAYMENT COST OF $5,200,000,000, WITHOUT RAISING TAXES OR FEES, BY A CHANGE TO THE COLORADO REVISED STATUTES REQUIRING THE ISSUANCE OF TRANSPORTATION REVENUE ANTICIPATION NOTES, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, NOTE PROCEEDS SHALL BE RETAINED AS A VOTER-APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE AND USED EXCLUSIVELY TO FUND SPECIFIED ROAD AND BRIDGE EXPANSION, CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE, AND REPAIR PROJECTS THROUGHOUT THE STATE?"

PROPOSITION 110 TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

Count Me In Summary:

Prop 110 increases the state sales and use tax rate from 2.9 percent to 3.52 percent starting in January 2019 and ending in January 2039. The measure allows the Colorado Department of Transportation to borrow up to $6.0 billion for transportation projects. The measure also creates a citizen oversight commission that must report annually on how the bond proceeds have been used. The revenue gained from the tax increase will be used as follows:

- 45 percent for bond repayment and state transportation safety, maintenance, and congestions related projects.
- 15 percent for multimodal transportation projects, including bike, pedestrian and transit infrastructure.
- 40 percent for municipal and county transportation projects

Current Law:

Currently, transportation funding in Colorado come primarily from an excise tax on each gallon of fuel and diesel purchased and vehicle registration fees.

Ballot Title:

"SHALL STATE TAXES BE INCREASED $766,700,000 ANNUALLY FOR A TWENTY-YEAR PERIOD, AND STATE DEBT SHALL BE INCREASED $6,000,000,000 WITH A MAXIMUM REPAYMENT COST OF $9,400,000,000, TO PAY FOR STATE AND LOCAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, CHANGING THE COLORADO REVISED STATUTES TO: 1) INCREASE THE STATE SALES AND USE TAX RATE BY 0.62% BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2019; REQUIRING 45% OF THE NEW REVENUE TO FUND STATE TRANSPORTATION SAFETY, MAINTENANCE, AND CONGESTION RELATED PROJECTS, 40% TO FUND MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS, AND 15% TO FUND MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS, INCLUDING BIKE, PEDESTRIAN, AND TRANSIT INFRASTRUCTURE; 2) AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF ADDITIONAL TRANSPORTATION REVENUE ANTICIPATION NOTES TO FUND PRIORITY STATE TRANSPORTATION MAINTENANCE AND CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS, INCLUDING MULTIMODAL CAPITAL PROJECTS; AND 3) PROVIDE THAT ALL REVENUE RESULTING FROM THE TAX RATE INCREASE AND PROCEEDS FROM ISSUANCE OF REVENUE ANTICIPATION NOTES ARE VOTER-APPROVED REVENUE CHANGES EXEMPT FROM ANY STATE OR LOCAL REVENUE, SPENDING, OR OTHER LIMITATIONS IN LAW?"

PROPOSITION 111 PAYDAY LOANS

Count Me In Summary:

Deferred deposit loans or “payday loans” are short-term loans for up to $500. Prop 111 would cap all charges on payday loans, inclusive of interest rates and fees, at 36% APR (annual percentage rate).

Current Law:

Currently payday loan lenders can charge an interest rate of up to 45% plus charges and fees.

Ballot Title:

“SHALL THERE BE AN AMENDMENT TO THE COLORADO REVISED STATUTES CONCERNING LIMITATIONS ON PAYDAY LENDERS, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, REDUCING ALLOWABLE CHARGES ON PAYDAY LOANS TO AN ANNUAL PERCENTAGE RATE OF NO MORE THAN THIRTY-SIX PERCENT?”

PROPOSITION 112 PAYDAY LOANS

Count Me In Summary:

Prop 112 creates a 2,500 ft buffer zone between new oil and gas wells and areas such as homes, schools, hospitals, and water sources. It will only take effect on new drilling permits and does not change the ability of an oil and gas company to engage in horizontal drilling or hydraulic fracturing (also known as “fracking”) to access untapped minerals.

Current Law:

Current setback requirements vary for every object (various wells, lease line, buildings) ranging from 150 ft to 1,200 ft. Currently the setback requirements for any occupied structure is 500 ft.

Ballot Title:

“SHALL THERE BE A CHANGE TO THE COLORADO REVISED STATUTES CONCERNING A STATEWIDE MINIMUM DISTANCE REQUIREMENT FOR NEW OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, CHANGING EXISTING DISTANCE REQUIREMENTS TO REQUIRE THAT ANY NEW OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT BE LOCATED AT LEAST 2,500 FEET FROM ANY STRUCTURE INTENDED FOR HUMAN OCCUPANCY AND ANY OTHER AREA DESIGNATED BY THE MEASURE, THE STATE, OR A LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND AUTHORIZING THE STATE OR A LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO INCREASE THE MINIMUM DISTANCE REQUIREMENT?”