

BEYOND THE CANDIDATES: VOTER'S GUIDE TO AMENDMENTS AND PROPOSITIONS

There are five constitutional amendments and one proposition on the ballot in Missouri for the general election, which require a majority to pass.



Constitutional Amendment 1

There is currently a sales/use tax of one-tenth of one percent on market transactions. This revenue, an estimated \$90 million per year, is currently used for soil and water conservation in state and historic parks. This tax was approved in 2006 and is up for re-submission this year. If approved, this amendment will continue the conservation program and once again re-submit it for voter approval in 2026. Current tax rates will not be affected. Supporters of this amendment argue conservation is an important use of taxes, while opponents wish to end the tax.

*If you agree with this taxation and its uses, vote "yes."
If you wish for this tax to be discontinued, vote "no."*



Constitutional Amendment 2

If approved, this amendment would limit the amount of money an individual or organization can contribute to a political candidate or party running for state or judicial elected positions. It will also prohibit intentionally hiding the source of campaign funds, require corporations and labor organizations to fulfill certain standards before making contributions and set up a process for handling complaints and issues. The amendment will cost the state about \$118,000 annually, but this money will come from existing sources and tax rates will not be affected. Supporters of this amendment claim large campaign contributions distort the democratic process and prevent the most qualified candidates from successfully running. Opponents argue this amendment will place unnecessary restrictions on political expression. A similar version of this amendment was passed and in place from 1996 to 2008.

*If you agree with this restriction, vote "yes."
If you disagree with this restriction, vote "no."*



Constitutional Amendment 3

If approved, this amendment would enact an additional tax that will total to 60 cents per pack of 20 cigarettes through the year 2020. It will also create a fee to be paid by cigarette wholesalers of 67 cents per pack of 20 cigarettes. The funds accumulated from this tax will be put into a newly established Early Childhood Health and Education Trust Fund. Seventy-five percent of the funds in this trust will be used to assist preschools, home-visitation, parent and family support, and training and professional development for early childhood care providers. The other 25 percent will be allocated toward separate grants in Missouri. Supporters of the amendment claim it will benefit Missouri youths' health and education, and that Missouri has the lowest tobacco tax at \$0.17 versus the state average of \$1.65. Opponents argue the amendment contains undesirable clauses, including restrictions on researching the dangers of tobacco, the use of public money by religious schools for the first time in 100 years, and that the tax disproportionately affects lower income people.

*If you agree with this change in tobacco tax for the proposed uses, vote "yes."
If you disagree with this change in tobacco tax for the proposed uses, vote "no."*



Constitutional Amendment 4

If approved, this amendment would prohibit new state or local sales/use taxes on services and transactions not subject to taxation as of Jan. 1, 2015. This could result in increased costs for state and local government agencies. Supporters of the amendment argue sales/use taxes affect lower and middle income people disproportionately, and funding should be obtained from other sources. Opponents argue sales/use taxes are an important source of revenue for state and local governments, and sales/use taxes already require a vote of the people to go into effect.

*If you agree with this tax prohibition, vote "yes."
If you disagree with this tax prohibition, vote "no."*



Constitutional Amendment 6

If approved, this amendment would require citizens to present government-issued photo identification, citizenship, and residence when voting. The potential cost of this amendment is unknown. Supporters argue this amendment is a necessary protection against voter fraud, which preserves the vitality of elections and democracy. Opponents argue voter fraud occurs rarely, and the amendment's purpose is to disenfranchise certain groups of voters by making it more difficult for them to participate in democracy.

*If you agree with this requirement, vote "yes."
If you disagree with this requirement, vote "no."*



Proposition A

If approved, there would be an increase in tax on cigarettes in the years 2017, 2019 and 2021. This would, in the end, total to 23 cents per pack of twenty cigarettes. This would also increase the tax paid by those selling cigarettes or other tobacco products by five percent of invoice price. Funds generated from this tax will be used to fund, exclusively, transportation infrastructure. In the event that a cigarette or other tobacco tax is certified by any local or statewide ballot, this proposition will be repealed. Supporters of the amendment argue it will fund necessary projects that will repair Missouri's aging infrastructure. Opponents argue the tax increase is not sufficient to prevent people from smoking.

*If you agree with this tax on tobacco, vote "yes."
If you disagree with this tax on tobacco, vote "no."*

Christmas festivities begin too early



Trevor Hamblin

Christmas is my favorite time of the year. I love the music, the decorations, and the excuse to give and receive gifts. However, an integral part of at least my enjoyment of the Christmas season is that it lasts for a limited portion of the year. It's important to avoid burning out on Christmas and also be respectful to the spirit of the season.

Some people do not respect the spirit of the season the way I do.

No, instead there is a growing trend of people starting the Christmas season earlier and earlier in the year to the detriment of other holidays. Some even start Christmas activities, like music and decorations, before Halloween, though most of us can

agree on that being too early. But as soon as Halloween is over, it's like all North Pole breaks loose, as songs and decorations come out from every direction. And before I know it, I'm already tired of Christmas songs and it's not even Christmas.

Part of my beef with celebrating Christmas too early has to do with the timing of it. It's like sweets, in a way. I have a huge sweet tooth, and I love my desserts. But eating too many sweets or eating them too often will make you sick and, eventually, make you hate the sweets that made you sick. Instead, sweets are to be eaten at the end of meals — ideally at the end of the day, but let's be honest with ourselves. And in moderation, always. Similarly, there is a time for Christmas, and in that time period it is wonderful.

My hard-and-fast rule is that I don't willingly partake in Christmas activities until Thanksgiving is over. This is mostly to give the holiday its due because, despite the historical reasons one might not be fond of the holiday, without that backdrop it's still a celebration of family and being thankful. And we get out of work and school. But the second I've eaten Thanksgiving dinner and I've escaped my family's inevitable political discussion, I'm putting on Christmas music, because we've reached the time when it's allowed. Getting to that Christmas time is a wonderful marker of my favorite time of year, and I love it whenever it hits.

Now, there is an exception to this rule that I generally allow, and it's with stores' Christmas sections. Many big stores like Walmart put out their Christmas stuff really early in the year — before Halloween even. I know this is the case in my hometown, where Christmas takes over the Garden Center this time of year before everything is moved to the proper Christmas aisles. By putting Christmas stuff out early, people can get ready for the proper Christmas season in a reasonable amount of time.

In a similar vein, as a member of a choir, I and many other musicians start preparing Christmas music really early in the year. Which is, perhaps, also part of my frustration with starting Christmas too early. We spend a lot of time perfecting pieces for that time of year, as do other artists and musicians, so regardless of timing I will be doing something Christmas-y early in the year anyway.

The point I'm getting at is, don't make me hate Christmas stuff. I love all of it to death — snowmen, hot cocoa, jingle bells, Santa Claus, caroling and Christmas trees — and celebrating it too early makes me not love it by the time Christmas comes around. And that's not fun for anyone.

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