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Oct. 2, 2014

NEWS & NOTES

Arkansas Ballot Issues

Fact Sheets on 2014 Ballot Issues Now Available Lawsuit filed over Minimum Wage petitions

New ethics rules for state elected officials, statewide alcohol sales and a raised minimum wage are among the five issues voters will be asked to decide upon when they go to the polls on Nov. 4.

To help voters understand the complexity of the issues and the arguments on both sides, the Public Policy Center of the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture has developed easy to understand fact sheets on each ballot item.

The fact sheets, available for download or through the local county extension office, are edited by a coalition of experts to ensure they are neutral presentations of the ballot issues. Drafts of the fact sheet are made available to proponents and opponents for comment and review before they are printed, as part of a vetting process to ensure the information is an unbiased representation of the issue and the arguments by proponents and opponents.

"The issues at stake have far-reaching consequences for state leaders, communities and the economy," said Stacey McCullough, director of the Public Policy Center. "And with voters bombarded with advertisements and opinion through media and other channels, we wanted to create a tool where voters could cut through the noise and understand the issues and the arguments."

Now available for download are these issues with their popular names download at <http://uaex.edu/business-communities/voter-education/state-ballot-issues.aspx>:

- Issue No. 1 - An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules and Distribution.

- Issue No. 2 - An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 percent of the valid signatures required.
- Issue No. 3 - An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials, and setting term limits for members of the general assembly.
- Issue No. 4 - The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment.
- Issue No. 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage

Hard copies of the fact sheets will be available at county extension offices in the next two weeks.

As of Oct. 1, Issues No. 3, 4 and 5 are facing court challenges. Jackson Stephens, Jr. filed a [lawsuit](#) Sept. 23, challenging the act to increase the state's minimum wage. Similar to the lawsuit over the Alcoholic Beverage Amendment, Stephens' lawsuit challenges the July 7 submission of signatures as well as the legality of some of the signatures on the petition itself.

Arkansas' Constitution requires ballot issue petitions be filed with the Secretary of State's Office no later than four months before the election. This year, the deadline would have fallen on July 4. The Secretary of State advertised the deadline as July 7, the first business day after the holiday.

Court briefs in the minimum wage lawsuit aren't due until Oct. 16, so it will be mid-October before voters know if the issue will be struck from the ballot. According to the [Associated Press](#), oral arguments are scheduled for Oct. 9 regarding the lawsuit over the alcohol sales measure.

The [Public Policy Center](#) will continue to follow these issues and keep you updated on the 2014 ballot measures.

Did You Know?

The Public Policy Center is evaluating its ballot issue education program, including its newsletters. You can participate by taking this quick and anonymous [survey](#).



Legislative Ballot Issues

Read up on the three ballot issues referred by the legislature. We include links to legislative bills, sponsors and financial impact forms.

[Read More](#)



Ballot Issues From the People

Click here to find links to ballot proposals from the people as well as links to supporters and opponents.

[Read More](#)



Ballot Proposal News

Here you will find mentions of ballot issues on news blogs and websites.

[Read More](#)

In the News

News organizations from across the state have been reporting on ballot measures and Arkansas election/voting issues. Here are links to stories we have come across:

- "State lawmakers seek greater power over executive branch" - [Arkansas News Bureau](#)
- "Minimum wage vote measure faces suit" - [Arkansas Democrat-Gazette](#)
- "State Asks Court to Dismiss Stephens' Challenge to Minimum Wage Measure" - [Associated Press](#)
- "Arkansas appoints Robbins as master to review evidence in suit over wage increase measure" - [Associated Press](#)
- "If Arkansas Goes Wet, ABC Has Plan" - [Arkansas Business](#)

Background on Ballot Measures from the Legislature

[Issue 1 - An Amendment Empowering the General Assembly to Provide for Legislative Committee Review and Approval of State Agencies' Administrative Rules](#)

Read the [Legislative bill](#)

Sponsor: [Sen. Dismang](#)

Additional Information: [Legislative Impact Statement](#)

There are no proponent or opposition groups registered with the Arkansas Ethics Commission specifically for this proposed ballot measure.

[Issue 2 - An Amendment Allowing More Time to Gather Signatures on a State-Wide Initiative or Referendum Petition Only if the Petition as Originally Filed Contained at Least 75% of the Valid Signatures Required](#)

Read the [Legislative bill](#)

Sponsor: [Sen. Sample](#)

There are no proponent groups registered with the Arkansas Ethics Commission specifically for this proposed ballot measure.

Opponent Group(s)
[Ballot Question Committee Filing](#) for Family Council Action Committee

[Issue 3 - An Amendment Regulating Contributions to Candidates for State or Local Office, Barring Gifts from Lobbyists to Certain State Officials, Providing for Setting Salaries of Certain State Officials, and Setting Term Limits for Members of the General Assembly](#)

Read the [Legislative bill](#)

Sponsor: [Rep. Sabin](#)

There are no proponent groups registered with the Arkansas Ethics Commission specifically for this proposed ballot measure.

Opponent Group(s)
["Arkansas Term Limits" website](#)
[Legislative Question Committee filing](#) for Arkansas Term Limits
[Ballot Question Committee filing](#) for Family Council Action Committee

Background on Ballot Measures from the Public

[Issue 4 - Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment](#)

Read the Attorney General's Opinion certifying the measure at [Opinion No. 2014-049](#).

Ballot Issue Group

["Let Arkansas Decide" website](#)

["Let Arkansas Decide" Facebook page](#)

[Ballot Question Committee Filing](#) for Let Arkansas Decide

Opponent Group(s)

No website found for opposition group "Citizens for Local Rights," formerly known as "Let Local Communities Decide for Themselves"

[Ballot Question Committee Filing](#) for Citizens for Local Rights/Let Local Communities Decide for Themselves

[Ballot Question Committee Filing](#) for Arkansas Beverage Retailers Association

[Ballot Question Committee Filing](#) for Conway County Line Liquor Association Fund

[Issue No. 5 - An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage](#)

Read the Attorney General's Opinion certifying the measure at [Opinion No. 2013-156](#).

Ballot Issue Groups

["Give Arkansas A Raise Now" website](#)

[Ballot Question Committee Filing](#) for Give Arkansas A Raise Now

[Ballot Question Committee Filing](#) for Arkansas Interfaith Alliance

Opponent Group(s)

There are no opposition groups registered with the Arkansas Ethics Commission specifically for this proposed ballot measure.

Looking Forward - 2016 Ballot

Attorney General Opinions

Approved for circulation

Aug. 5, 2014 - [The Arkansas Hemp and Cannabis Amendment](#) - A ballot measure to legalize the cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, possession and use of the cannabis plant in Arkansas was certified for signature gathering. [Opinion No. 2014-079](#) said the proposed constitutional amendment was identical to a previously approved measure. Frederick W. Porter of Hot Springs submitted the measure.

Aug. 14, 2014 - [The Arkansas Medical Cannabis Act](#) - A ballot measure to legalize the use of medical marijuana, and a system for growing and selling medical marijuana was certified for signature gathering. The ballot measure was similar to a recent proposal that did not receive enough signatures for the 2014 ballot. In [Opinion No. 2014-086](#), the Attorney General cautioned the group that "according to my experience there is a direct correlation between the length and complexity of initiated acts and their susceptibility to a successful ballot title challenge." Melissa Fults, campaign director of Arkansans for Compassionate Care 2016, submitted the measure.

Stay Connected

Know of a potential ballot issue? E-mail the information to publicpolicycenter@uaex.edu.

You can find past newsletters and ballot issue fact sheets at

<http://www.uaex.edu/business-communities/voter-education/state-ballot-issues.aspx>



The University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Smith-Lever Act, the law responsible for creating Extension.

To learn more about Extension's history and role in Arkansas, watch this [video](#).



The Public Policy Center was established in 2004 to provide Arkansans with timely, credible, unaligned and research-based information and education about public issues. Public issues are defined as pressing and emerging issues that involve multiple points of view and have widespread consequences. Our goals are to:

- increase citizen knowledge, awareness and understanding of public issues;
- enhance public participation in decisions regarding public issues and
- help citizens craft, evaluate and implement alternative solutions to public issues.

University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture - <http://www.uaex.edu>

News & Notes Volume 3, Issue 11. This e-mail newsletter is shared with Cooperative Extension Service agents, subscribers from the general public and election officials or educators identified by the Public Policy Center. To unsubscribe, click below on "instant removal with SafeUnsubscribe."

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