



Oct. 13, 2016

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Supreme Court Knocks Two Issues Off Ballot

The 2016 Arkansas ballot just got a little bit shorter. The Arkansas Supreme Court on Thursday removed Issue 4 and Issue 5 from the ballot.

The court agreed with challengers that the two ballot titles did not fully inform voters what was being asked of them.

[Issue 4](#) sought to give legislators the ability to pass laws related to medical-injury lawsuits. [Issue 5](#) asked voters to approve casinos in Boone, Miller and Washington counties.

The rulings come after many counties have already printed their paper ballots or programmed electronic voting machines. Voters may still see Issue 4 and Issue 5 listed on their ballot, but any votes cast will not be counted.

Justices also ruled Oct. 13 that [Issue 6](#) will remain on the ballot. They rejected a challenge over the medical marijuana amendment ballot title and said voters could understand what was being asked of them. The court last month rejected a similar ballot title challenge for [Issue 7](#) but is still reviewing a lawsuit questioning voter signatures that put the measure on the ballot.

Want to read the Arkansas Supreme Court rulings? Here are some links:

- Issue 4 - Supreme Court [opinion 1](#) & [opinion 2](#)
- Issue 5 - [Supreme Court opinion](#)
- Issue 6 - [Supreme Court opinion](#)
- Issue 7 - [Supreme Court opinion](#)

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Arkansas Ballot Issue Voter Guides Available

With five ballot issues to decide in November, your five minutes in the voting booth might fly by. Go prepared by reading the *2016 Arkansas Ballot Issues Voter Guide* published by the Public Policy Center at the Cooperative Extension Service.

The voter guide summarizes the ballot issues and includes a worksheet you can take with you to help remember how you wanted to vote on each issue.

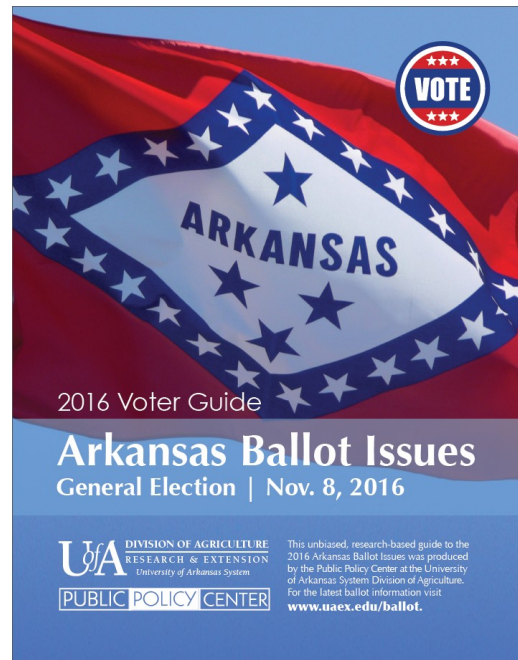
Download your own copy

You can also access the voter guide at www.uaex.edu/ballot and find links for each of the ballot issues.

The Public Policy Center has published neutral summaries on every statewide ballot issue since 2004. Our publication looks different this year but it contains the same information our fact sheets have had in the past, including:

- How the proposal will appear on the ballot
- Answers to some basic questions about each issue
- Reasons why people may support or oppose the proposal

Want to watch instead? Watch our video below to hear each ballot issue being explained by Stacey McCullough and Kristin Higgins with the Public Policy Center.



Arkansas Ballot Issues Voter Guide

Understand the 2016 Arkansas Ballot Issues

Did you know?

Gambling is a hot topic this year for voters. According to the Initiative & Referendum Institute, multiple states are considering ballot measures related to gambling, marijuana, minimum wage, animals, capital punishment and taxes.

"Every year, some issues appear on the ballot in multiple states. This may happen as a result of a coordinated campaign by an interest group, or as individual states respond to a common event, such as a court ruling, or learn from each other. Multistate issues can take on a life of their own and spread across the country if they meet with voter approval initially and reveal popular support for an issue. For this reason, multistate issues are worth watching as possible leading indicators of national trends."

Source: [Ballotwatch, Issue 1, Initiative & Referendum Institute](#)

Arkansas' 2016 Ballot Issues

On the ballot

Issue 1 - Proposing an Amendment to the Arkansas Constitution Concerning The Terms, Election, And Eligibility of Elected Officials (HJR1027)

Read the [Legislative bill](#)

[Coalition for Arkansas Election Reform](#) has filed with the Arkansas Ethics Commission to support the amendment.

Issue 2 - An Amendment to the Arkansas Constitution to Allow the Governor to Retain His or Her Powers and Duties When Absent from the State (SJR3)

Read the [Legislative bill](#)

Issue 3 - An Amendment to the Arkansas Constitution to Encourage Job Creation, Job Expansion, and Economic Development (SJR16)

Read the [Legislative bill](#)

[Jobs for Arkansas](#) has filed with the Arkansas Ethics Commission to support the amendment.

Issue 6 - The Arkansas Medical Marijuana Amendment of 2016 - Opinion No. 2016-007 - A constitutional amendment to make the medical use of marijuana legal under state law and establish a system regulating the cultivation, acquisition and distribution of medical marijuana.

[Arkansans United for Medical Marijuana](#) has filed with the Arkansas Ethics Commission to support the proposal. [Coalition for Safer Arkansas Communities](#), [Family Council Action Committee](#), [Arkansans Against Legalized Marijuana](#) and [Families First Action Committee](#) have filed to oppose the measure.

[Challengers](#) are asking the Arkansas Supreme Court to remove this issue from the ballot.

Issue 7 - The Arkansas Medical Cannabis Act - Opinion No. 2014-086 - A state law to make the medical use of marijuana legal under state law and establish a system regulating the cultivation, acquisition and distribution of medical marijuana.

[Arkansans for Compassionate Care 2016](#) has filed with the Arkansas Ethics Commission to support the proposal. [Coalition for Safer Arkansas Communities](#), [Family Council Action Committee](#), [Arkansans Against Legalized Marijuana](#) and [Families First Action Committee](#) have filed to oppose the measure.

Challengers are asking the Arkansas Supreme Court to remove this issue from the ballot. Two lawsuits have been filed by separate parties. Here are links to the lawsuits: [Lawsuit 1](#) [Lawsuit 2](#)

Looking Forward - Potential 2018 Ballot Issues from Citizens

Attorney General Opinions

The Attorney General is responsible for reviewing the language and titles of potential ballot issues submitted to voters by the public. Ballot issue groups can circulate petitions only after the Attorney General verifies that the ballot title and popular name honestly, intelligibly and fairly describe the purpose of a proposed constitutional amendment or act. The following are recent Attorney General opinions regarding potential ballot issues:

Ballot proposals rejected

Oct. 10, 2016 - A proposal to allow a company to initiate a local election to allow a casino was rejected in part because its popular name was too long and read more like a ballot title, according to [Opinion No. 2016-099](#). The Attorney General noted numerous problems with the proposal, including that it sought to be on the November 2017 ballot. There is no statewide general election in 2017. Barry Emigh of Hot Springs submitted the measure.

Sept. 26, 2016 - The Arkansas Cannabis Amendment - A proposal to legalize the cultivation, production, distribution, sale, possession and use of the cannabis plant and products derived from the plant was rejected because of ambiguities in the ballot title, according to [Opinion No. 2016-097](#). The Attorney General also noted problems with several definitions. This is the third time this proposal has been rejected. See [Opinion No. 2016-089](#) (Aug. 22, 2016) and [Opinion No. 2016-078](#) (Aug. 1, 2016) for previously rejected proposals this petition cycle. Mary L. Berry of Summit submitted the measure.

Ballot proposals approved for signature gathering

July 29, 2016 - Arkansas Term Limits Amendment - A proposal to reduce the number of years a state senator or representative can serve in office was certified for signature gathering, according to [Opinion No. 2016-080](#). The

proposal would repeal [Amendment 94](#), which voters passed in 2014 and set term limits of 16 years for members of the General Assembly. The proposal is similar to one circulated during the 2016 election cycle, but sponsors did not collect enough voter signatures. Skip Cook of Little Rock submitted the measure.

Stay Connected

Know of a potential ballot issue?
E-mail the information to publicpolicycenter@uaex.edu or call Kristin Higgins at 501-671-2160.

You can find past newsletters and ballot issue fact sheets at
<http://www.uaex.edu/ballot>



The Public Policy Center was established in 2004 to provide Arkansans with timely, credible, unbiased 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.

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