



Sept. 20, 2016

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Arkansas Ballot Issues Voter Guide Now Available

With seven 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 all seven ballot issues and includes a worksheet you can take with you to help remember how you wanted to vote on each issue.

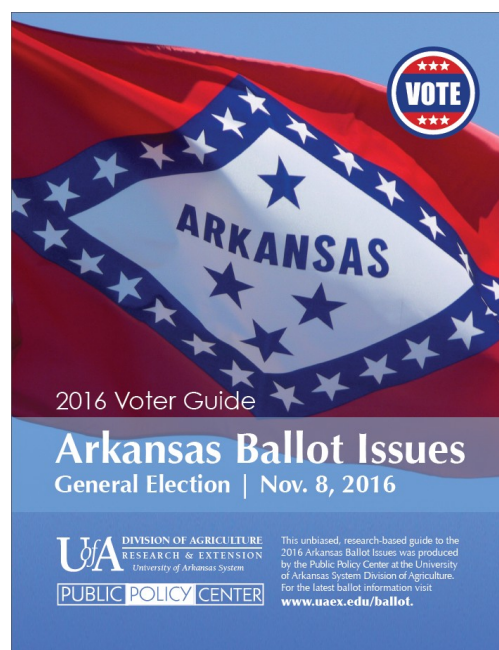
[Download your own copy](#)

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

You can pick up a hard copy of the voter guide at the end of this month from your [county Cooperative Extension Service office](#).



Arkansas Ballot Issues Voter Guide

Four citizen proposals qualify for ballot Opponents file lawsuits to stop vote on all of them

Since the last *News & Notes*, the Secretary of State finalized Arkansas' slate of ballot issues with the certification of a second medical marijuana issue and a constitutional amendment seeking to approve the operation of three casinos.

But what voters will see on Nov. 8 remains up in the air after opponents filed lawsuits against the Secretary of State's Office challenging all four citizen-initiated proposals. Most of the lawsuits claim problems with the wording of ballot titles or flaws in the voter signature process. Ballot issue groups are required to submit paperwork about their signature gatherers, and several of the lawsuits claim the paperwork wasn't properly filed.

You will [find links below](#) to more information about each ballot issue, including who is officially sponsoring/opposing an issue and to lawsuits that were filed with the Arkansas Supreme Court. We will send out an alert if the court removes any issue from the November ballot. You can always find the latest information on our website, www.uaex.edu/ballot.

Get engaged. Get informed.

Arkansas media have published dozens of stories about the seven ballot issues in the past month - too many to be included in this month's newsletter. If you're interested in reading or watching the news about the ballot issues, consider creating a [Google Alert](#). This tool sends you an email with links to news articles for whichever topic you enter. Enter "Arkansas" and "Constitutional amendment" and you'll receive links to a variety of publications.

Follow us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) for the latest info. And if you share, use these hashtags **#ARballot** **#ARvotes16**.

Did you know?

In 2016, 165 measures across 35 states have been certified for the ballot, and all but eight of those will be decided during the November election. Of those, 74 are citizen initiatives.

Source: [Ballotpedia](#)

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 4 - [An Amendment to Limit Attorney Contingency Fees and Non-Economic Damages in Medical Lawsuits](#)

- **[Opinion No. 2016-038](#)** - A constitutional amendment that would define what an excessive medical-injury contingency fee is and prohibit the practice. The proposal also requires legislators to pass laws specifying a maximum dollar amount that could be awarded to people for "non-economic" damage awards. Legislators could not set an amount less than \$250,000.

[Health Care Access for Arkansans](#) and [Arkansas Health Care Association](#) have filed with the Arkansas Ethics Commission to support the proposal. [Committee to Protect AR Families](#) and [Fairness for Arkansans](#) 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](#)

Issue 5 - [An Amendment to Allow Three Casinos to Operate in Arkansas, One Each in the Following Counties: Boone County, Operated by Arkansas Gaming and Resorts, LLC; Miller County, Operated by Miller County Gaming, LLC; and Washington County, Operated by Washington County Gaming, LLC](#) - [Opinion No. 2016-058](#) - A constitutional amendment that would allow gambling in Arkansas at certain locations.

[Arkansas Wins in 2016, LLC](#) and [Arkansas Winning Initiative, Inc.](#) have filed with the Arkansas Ethics Commission to support the proposal. [Committee to Protect Arkansas' Values Stop Casinos Now](#) 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 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

Aug. 22, 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 proposal, according to [Opinion No. 2016-089](#). The Attorney General noted several sections of the proposal that included ambiguous phrases. This is the second time this proposal has been rejected this month. See [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>



- 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>

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