

Want to read in a website format? [click here](#)



Oct. 18, 2017

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

More Groups Forming Around Court-Related Ballot Issue

The Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce announced this week the formation of a group advocating the passage of a constitutional amendment on the 2018 ballot.

Arkansans for Jobs and Justice filed the paperwork necessary Monday to campaign in favor of [SJR8](#), a proposed constitutional amendment from the legislature "concerning civil lawsuits and the powers of the General Assembly and Supreme Court to adopt court rules."

The ballot issue group is the first to file its intentions to support the measure. Three groups have filed to oppose the measure, including the recently formed Defending Your Day in Court.

Ballot Issue Groups Related to SJR8

Date Filed	Name	Officers	Amount Raised
6/6/17	Liberty Defense Network	Brad Hendricks	\$259,005
7/17/17	Protect AR Families	Adam Jegley David Williams Col. Mike Ross (Ret.)	\$575,968
10/6/17	Defending Your Day in Court	Mark A. Bennett Annabelle Imber Tuck Paul Keith David Williams	\$0
10/16/17	Arkansans for Jobs and Justice	Randy Zook David Wroten Marvin Childers	\$0

Source: [Arkansas Ethics Commission](#), Legislative Question Committee filings

SJR8 was referred to voters by the legislature. The measure is similar to [Issue 4](#), an initiated amendment submitted by an organization that collected voter signatures to put the issue on the ballot. The Arkansas

Supreme Court struck [Issue 4](#) from the 2016 ballot just before Election Day after a lawsuit was filed challenging the proposal's ballot title.

The 2018 ballot measure seeks to establish a dollar limit for financial damages awarded in certain types of lawsuits, shift authority from the state supreme court to the legislature in setting court rules and procedures, and limit how much attorneys are paid in medical injury lawsuits.

Supporters of these types of laws often use the phrase "tort reform" when talking about them. In 2003, state lawmakers passed the Civil Justice Reform Act to change procedures related to civil lawsuits. The changes included revisions of rules regarding medical-injury lawsuits. Portions of the law were later found unconstitutional by the Arkansas Supreme Court, leaving the constitutional amendment process as the only way to make changes related to state compensation laws.

No Legislative Question Committee groups have filed with the Arkansas Ethics Commission in relation to a second constitutional amendment referred by the legislature. [HJR1016](#) would require citizens present photo identification when voting and for the state to provide photo identification to eligible voters free of charge. Groups that raise or spend money on the passage or defeat of a ballot measure are required to register with the Ethics Commission and file financial reports.

Get Engaged. Get Informed.

The [Public Policy Center](#) has published nonpartisan fact sheets on Arkansas' statewide ballot issues since 2004. We welcome your questions at publicpolicycenter@uaex.edu. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Did you know?

June 6, 2018 is the deadline for ballot issue groups to publish their proposed ballot measure in a newspaper.

Source: [Arkansas Secretary of State](#)

Legislative Ballot Issues



Flickr

Legislators are able to refer up to three constitutional amendments to the voters every general election. These two proposals will be on the Nov. 6, 2018 ballot.

SJR8 - An Amendment Concerning Civil Lawsuits and the Powers of the General Assembly and Supreme Court to Adopt Court Rules.

Read [SJR8](#)

Sponsor: [Sen. Missy Irvin](#)

HJR1016 - A Constitutional Amendment Adding as a Qualification to Vote that a Voter Present Certain Valid Photographic Identification When Casting a Ballot In Person or Casting an Absentee Ballot.

Read [HJR1016](#)

Sponsor: [Rep. Robin Lundstrum](#)

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. 6, 2017 - The Arkansas Recreational Marijuana Amendment - A proposal seeking to legalize the cultivation, production, distribution, sale, possession and use of marijuana and products for recreational purposes was rejected because of ambiguities in the proposal, such as the use of "carry on," "carrying on," and "personal effect," according to [Opinion No. 2017-103](#).

This is the fifth time this proposal has been rejected. See [Opinion No. 2017-097](#) (Sept. 22, 2017), [Opinion No. 2017-093](#) (Sept. 6, 2017), [Opinion No. 2017-084](#) (Aug. 4, 2017) and [Opinion No. 2017-091](#) (Aug. 21, 2017). Mary L. Berry of Summit submitted the measure.

Ballot proposals approved for signature gathering

Oct. 28, 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. 2016-105](#). The proposal would institute six-year terms for representatives and eight-year terms for senators, with a maximum of 10 years total. The proposal would return Arkansas' term limits to what they were before a voter-approved change in 2014 that extended terms. Thomas Steele of Little Rock submitted the measure.

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, 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 System Division of Agriculture - <http://www.uaex.edu>

News & Notes Volume 5, Issue 10. 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."

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture offers all its Extension and Research programs and services without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital or veteran status, genetic information, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

U of A System Division of Agriculture, 2301 S. University Ave., Little Rock, AR 72204

[SafeUnsubscribe™ {recipient's email}](#)

[Forward this email](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Customer Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by khiggins@uaex.edu powered by

