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Nov. 7, 2018

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Voters Approve All 3 Arkansas Ballot Issues

Nearly half of Arkansas' 1.7 million registered voters cast their ballots during the mid-term Election that wrapped up Tuesday. Voters ended up approving all three statewide ballot measures.

[Issue 2](#), a constitutional amendment that will require voters to provide photo identification when casting a ballot in person or via absentee ballot, passed in all 75 counties. So did a [state law](#) increasing the state's minimum wage from \$8.50 up to \$11 per hour by 2021.

The [casino gaming amendment](#) had the closest tallies on Election Day. The [Arkansas Secretary of State's office](#) reported Thursday that the constitutional amendment passed in all but 11 counties. The tally as of Thursday afternoon was:

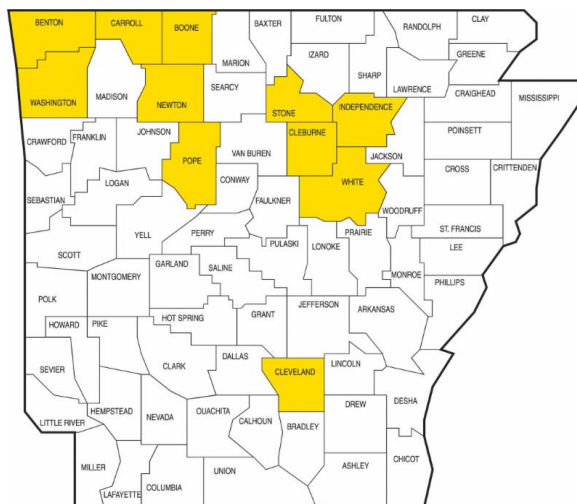
- 462,519 in favor (54.07%)
- 392,962 against (45.93%)

The 11 counties that rejected casino gaming at four locations in Arkansas included Benton, Boone, Carroll, Cleburne, Cleveland, Independence, Newton, Pope, Stone, Washington and White counties.

Issue 4 established that casino gaming would be allowed in Jefferson and Pope counties and at Oaklawn in Hot Springs and Southland in West Memphis. Under the amendment, the Arkansas Racing Commission will over see casino gaming in Arkansas.

The amendment requires the commission to automatically grant licenses to Oaklawn and Southland.

The commission has 120 days to adopt rules governing the application process for the licenses in Jefferson and Pope counties, such as how much the application fee will be. The amendment says the



fee can't be over \$250,000 and it requires the commission to begin accepting applications by June 1, 2019.

The application process requires a letter of support from the county judge or quorum court, and from the mayor if the casino operator wanted to locate inside city limits. Jefferson County voters approved the statewide amendment by a vote of 12,192 in favor to 5,722 against. But the amendment failed in Pope County by a vote of 10,858 against to 7,064 in favor.

Voters in Pope County did approve a local ordinance Tuesday that requires an additional county election before the county judge or quorum court could provide a letter of support to a casino applicant.

How that local ordinance will play out remains to be seen. A spokesperson for Driving Arkansas Forward, the group that sponsored Issue 4, declined to speculate about what would happen next or their role in the Pope County application process.

How did Arkansas vote?

| Issue | For | Against | Total |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| Voter ID (Issue 2) | 681,361 (79.53%) | 175,391 (20.47%) | 856,752 |
| Casino Gaming (Issue 4) | 462,519 (54.07%) | 392,962 (45.93%) | 855,481 |
| Minimum Wage (Issue 5) | 594,985 (68.41%) | 274,766 (31.59%) | 869,751 |

Source: *Arkansas Secretary of State*

Looking Ahead 2020 - Did you know?

The number of valid voter signatures required for 2020 ballot issues depends on the number of people who voted for governor in yesterday's election.

Constitutional amendments require signatures equal to 10 percent of the people who voted for governor. For the 2018 ballot, 84,859 valid signatures were required.

State laws, such as Issue 5, require signatures equal to 8 percent of the people who voted for governor. For the 2018 ballot, 67,887 valid signatures were required.

Although the final tally for governor will change as counties certify their results in coming days, the 2020 ballot will require more voter signatures for amendments and initiated acts.

As of Wednesday afternoon, the Arkansas Secretary of State's Office reported that 876,220 people cast votes in the governor's race. This turnout represents 49.1 percent of Arkansas' 1,784,015 registered voters.

How did we do?

We want your feedback. Take this anonymous survey to let us know how we did with the [2018 Arkansas Ballot Issue Voter Guide](#) and our other educational materials.

Did we provide you with enough information to make a decision on the ballot issues? What did you like? What could we do better?

Take the survey:

tinyurl.com/ivotedarkansas



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.

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