

This coming General Election, there will be 11 ballot questions, to include SQ744, the Hope Initiative.

I have listed below brief summaries of each of the ballot questions.

SQ744: Education spending. *Requires the state to spend as much per pupil as the average of surrounding states. That average would be determined by the State Equalization Board as part of the revenue certification process. There are no provisions in the bill on how the state would fund this.*

Ballot measures Passed in 2010

SJR59 by Sen. Newberry & Rep. Thompson

Proposes a constitutional amendment to be sent to a vote of the people, to prohibit any rule or law requiring any person, employer or health care provider to participate in any health care system. It also would allow any person or employer to pay directly for health care services, exclusive of any fines or penalties, and would allow health care providers to accept direct payment from individuals or employers without being subject to fines or penalties. The purchase or sale of private health insurance shall not be prohibited by law or rule. States that this measure will not affect the services of a health care provider, restrict them, or affect laws or rules currently in effect.

SJR51 by Sen. M. Johnson & Rep. Miller

Proposes a constitutional amendment to be sent to the vote of the people to increase the amount of money to be deposited in the Constitutional Reserve Fund (aka Rainy Day Fund) to be fifteen percent of the amount estimated for the annual state budget. Currently the cap is at ten percent. Also clarifies language that the Governor has the discretion to issue deficiency certificates for any department or state agency.

HJR1056 by Rep. Duncan & Sen. Sykes

Proposes a constitutional amendment to be sent to a vote of the people to require the state's courts to adhere to the U.S. Constitution, the Oklahoma Constitution, U.S. Code and federal regulations, established common law, and Oklahoma Statutes and administrative rules in making judicial decisions. Also allows state courts, if necessary, to uphold and adhere to other states' laws in making judicial decisions, provided such laws do not include Sharia Law. Prohibits consideration of the legal precepts of other nations or cultures, specifically international law or Sharia Law, when deciding cases.

Ballot Measures Passed in 2009

HJR1014 by Rep. Osborn & Senator Lamb

Constitutional amendment to modify state expenditure mandates. HJR1014 proposes a new section to be added to the Oklahoma Constitution upon a vote of the people that the Legislature shall not be required to make expenditures for any function of government using a predetermined formula, or by reference to expenditure levels of any other state government or entity. Language has been included to state that the new section shall not be construed to authorize the Legislature to make appropriations in excess of the limits outlined in the balanced budget section or any other provision of the Constitution.

HJR1042 by Rep. Terrill & Senator Sykes

Constitutional amendment to declare English as common language. HJR1042 establishes the English language as the common and unifying language of the state of Oklahoma. The measure requires all official actions of the state to be conducted in English, unless otherwise required by federal law and prohibits any cause of action against an agency or political subdivision for not providing government documents or support in languages other than English. The measure specifies that the new law shall not be construed to diminish the use, study, development, or encouragement of any Native American language.

SB 692 by Senator Ford & Rep. Tibbs

Legislative referendum to modify voting procedures. *SB692 submits a legislative referendum to a vote of the people to require each person who appears to vote in person to provide proof of identity. Proof of identity is defined as a document that shows the name of the person and the name conforms to the name listed in the precinct registry; the document shows a photograph of the person; the document includes an expiration date; and the document was issued by the U.S. or Oklahoma government or a federally recognized Indian tribe. A person may also present his/her voter identification card as proof of identity. If a person does not have proper proof of identity, the bill allows for a provisional voting procedure which requires the voter to sign a statement under oath declaring that he or she is the voter identified in the precinct book. It is a felony to falsely sign the oath and the penalty must be listed on the statement to be signed.*

SJR12 by Senator Brogdon & Rep. Murphey

Constitutional Amendment to set term limits for statewide elected officials. *SJR12 proposes a constitutional amendment to be sent to a vote of the people, limiting individuals who are elected Governor, Lieutenant Governor, State Auditor, Attorney General, State Treasurer, Commissioner of Labor, Superintendent of Public Instruction, or Insurance Commissioner to serve no more than 8 years, Corporation Commissioners to serve no more than 12 years – years served do not need to be consecutive. Any person filling an office due to a vacancy shall not have the time counted against the total allowable limit. The amendment, if passed, will not apply to any individual's time who is currently serving in these positions (except for the current Governor), and are therefore eligible for an additional 8 or 12 years, as allowed, upon voter's approval of the amendment. Under the current Article 6 of the Constitution, the Governor is limited to 2 successive terms, but may serve additional terms not in succession with the first 2 terms.*

SJR13 by Senator Brogdon & Rep. Terrill

Constitutional Amendment modifying signatures required on initiative and referendum petitions. *SJR13 sends to a vote of the people, to amend Article 5, relating to Initiative and Referendum, by basing the percentages required for citizen initiatives on the number of votes cast at the last General Election for the Office of Governor, rather than the state office receiving the highest number of votes at the last General Election, which would sometimes include Presidential election years.*

If currently enacted, the proposed language in the committee substitute would have the following effect on the number of signatures required:

- *Currently required – 8% of 2008 (Presidential) General Election: 117,013*
- *Proposed change – 8% of 2006 (Governor) General Election: 74,117*
- *Currently required – 15% of (Presidential) General Election: 219,400*
- *Proposed change – 15% of 2006 (Governor) General Election: 138,969*

SJR 25 by Senator Coffee & Rep. Bengé

Constitutional Amendment to modify membership of the Apportionment Commission. *SJR25 sends to a vote of the people, amending Article 5, relating to the Legislative Department, renaming the Apportionment Commission the Bipartisan Commission on Legislative Apportionment and amending the Commission's membership. The Commission currently is composed of 3 members, the Attorney General, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Treasurer. The proposed constitutional amendment would have the Commission composed of 7 members, including the Lt. Governor, who would serve as Chair and a nonvoting member; 2 members appointed by the President Pro Tempore, one representing each party; 2 members appointed by the Speaker, one representing each party; and 2 members appointed by the Governor, one representing each party.*

SJR27 by Senator Anderson & Rep. Sullivan

Constitutional Amendment to modify composition of Judicial Nominating Commission. *SJR27 increases the Commission by two members. Currently the commission has 12-members: 6 lawyers appointed by the bar Association and 6 non-lawyers appointed by the Governor. This would add two more non-lawyers, one each appointed by the Speaker of the House and President Pro-Tem of the Senate.*

