



Peoples Press Collective.org

Bloggage and Original News Coverage From Colorado and Around the Country

PEOPLES PRESS COLLECTIVE — 2008 COLORADO SAMPLE BALLOT

AMENDMENT
46:

YES

AMENDMENT 46: CIVIL RIGHTS INITIATIVE

Prohibits the State from discriminating or giving preferential treatment to individuals or groups based on race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in matters of public employment, public education, or public contracting. **YES**– No individual or group should receive preferential treatment by the government.

AMENDMENT
47:

YES

AMENDMENT 47: RIGHT TO WORK INITIATIVE

Allows employees to opt-out of union membership and prohibits unions from collecting mandatory dues or “agency” fees as a condition of continued employment. **YES** - While unions may serve many good purposes, no one should have their personal freedom stripped by being required to join a union against their will, as a requirement to keep or obtain a job.

AMENDMENT
48:

NO

AMENDMENT 48: PERSONHOOD INITIATIVE

Changes the Colorado Constitution to define a “person” as existing from the moment of fertilization, and entitled from that moment to due process of law and equality of justice. **NO** – This position is not about pro-life/pro-choice; this ambiguous amendment would have far-reaching unintended consequences throughout the entire State constitution.

AMENDMENT
49:

YES

AMENDMENT 49: PAYCHECK PROTECTION INITIATIVE

Prohibits state agencies from performing automatic dues deductions from employee paychecks for private organizations, including unions. **YES** – All non-tax-exempt special interest groups should have to ask their members for money. They should not be allowed to use the public payroll system — at taxpayer expense — as a free dues collection and accounting service.

AMENDMENT
50:

YES

AMENDMENT 50: GAMING INITIATIVE

Allows cities with gaming to set hours of operation and raises the betting limit from \$5 to \$100. Local gaming communities would receive 22 percent of the additional revenue while the remaining 78 percent would be devoted to Colorado’s community colleges. **YES** – Although the initiative removes the majority of the *additional* revenue out of the local communities to fund something those local voters may or may not want to fund, it does return some control to the local communities most affected by gaming.

AMENDMENT
51:

NO

AMENDMENT 51: SALES TAX INCREASE FOR DEVELOPMENTALLY-DISABLED PROGRAMS

Increases sales tax by 2/10 of 1 percent to fund programs for people with developmental disabilities. **NO** – While programs to assist the developmentally disabled may be a worthy cause, compulsory charity is not. This cause is best handled by encouraging private donations to private and accountable charities, and not by increased government redistribution of tax dollars to entities with little or no direct taxpayer oversight.

<p>AMENDMENT 53:</p> <p>NO</p>	<p>AMENDMENT 53: CRIMINAL LIABILITY FOR BUSINESS EXECUTIVES INITIATIVE</p> <p>Makes executives and board directors personally liable for corporate fraud committed by employees. NO – Fraud is already illegal by current federal and state law! Furthermore, this amendment includes executives of non-profits and homeowners associations, and provides for criminal penalties including fines and imprisonment. Consider a volunteer board member of a homeowners’ association who, according to this amendment, could be sued if a contractor stole from the organization.</p>
<p>AMENDMENT 54:</p> <p>YES</p>	<p>AMENDMENT 54: CLEAN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE</p> <p>Prohibits recipients of Government No-Bid contracts greater than \$100,000 per year from contributing to political causes and the campaigns of the politicians who hand out those contracts. It also establishes a state-wide, searchable database all Colorado voters can use to monitor the Government No-Bid contracts handed out at state and local levels. YES – This closes a pay-to-play corruption loophole in Colorado. Consider Halliburton contributing large bags of money to Cheney’s campaign and then once elected Cheney handing out millions and millions of dollars to Halliburton in Government No-Bid contracts. Amendment 54 prohibits such <i>quid pro quo</i> dealings. This amendment does not prohibit individual employees/members of companies or unions from contributing money to the candidate or campaign of their choice.</p>
<p>AMENDMENT 55:</p> <p>NO</p>	<p>AMENDMENT 55: JUST CAUSE INITIATIVE</p> <p>Ends Employment-at-Will in Colorado. Prohibits employers from firing full-time workers without “just cause,” which is broadly defined and requires extensive documentation. Amendment 55 exempts unions from Just Cause. NO – This amendment opens the door to excessive litigation by trial lawyers. Excessive litigation would mostly be settled (financially) out of court and increase the cost of doing business in Colorado; which would encourage businesses to leave and/or avoid Colorado. Furthermore, this initiative creates an incentive for employers to employ their workers as part-time and/or contract employees in order to avoid potential litigation. Colorado Labor Law already protects an employee from dismissal as a result of discrimination against age, gender, gender preference, race, ethnicity, religion and nationality.</p>
<p>AMENDMENT 56:</p> <p>NO</p>	<p>AMENDMENT 56: HEALTH INSURANCE INITIATIVE</p> <p>Requires businesses with 20 or more employees to provide major medical health care insurance, as defined by the Legislature, for full and part-time employees and their dependents. The state and its subdivisions are excluded. Also creates a government agency to administer health care coverage for employers who do not comply. NO – This amendment would increase the cost of doing business, which will result in businesses laying off employees, increasing prices, and being less willing to hire employees with dependents. Businesses will leave and/or avoid Colorado, resulting in increased unemployment.</p>

<p>AMENDMENT 57:</p> <p>NO</p>	<p>AMENDMENT 57: SAFE WORKPLACE INITIATIVE Requires employers to provide a “safe and healthy work environment”. Specific text allows employees “who are injured because of an employer’s violation of this requirement to file suit in district court, with the right to a jury trial, to recover compensatory and exemplary damages, actual past or future pecuniary losses, and noneconomic losses including pain and suffering, emotional distress, inconvenience, mental anguish, and loss of enjoyment of life.” NO – Safe workplaces are already required by federal and state law. Amendment 57 allows injured workers, after collecting workers comp, to “double dip” to sue for unlimited damages including “inconvenience, mental anguish and loss of enjoyment of life.” This amendment will increase the cost of doing business in Colorado. Businesses will leave and/or avoid Colorado, resulting in increased unemployment, while trial lawyers will immigrate to Colorado in record numbers.</p>
<p>AMENDMENT 58:</p> <p>NO</p>	<p>AMENDMENT 58: SEVERANCE TAX REVENUES FOR SCHOLARSHIPS INITIATIVE Eliminates a tax credit for property taxes paid by payers of mineral severance taxes, and dedicates the funds primarily to college scholarship entitlements. NO – Amendment 58 will discourage energy exploration and development in Colorado and will cost oil and gas companies \$321 million a year. This increased cost of business will be passed directly to consumers in higher priced energy. At its inception, the tax credit was given to companies paying severance taxes to both the counties in which they operate and the State. The double taxation was deemed unfair and unproductive. Severances taxes are paid in the counties to mitigate the cost of development for roads, schools, fire departments and other infrastructure necessary to support a growing community based around the energy exploration industry.</p>
<p>AMENDMENT 59:</p> <p>NO</p>	<p>AMENDMENT 59: TABOR REFUNDS FOR EDUCATION FUND AMENDMENT Eliminates TABOR refunds forever while moving those funds to a State education fund savings account. NO - Presently, if the State collects surplus revenue in taxes, those excess taxes are refunded to the taxpayers under the Taxpayer’s Bill of Rights (TABOR). Amendment 59 eliminates TABOR refunds and directs <i>all surplus revenue</i> generated by taxes into an unlimited slush fund for K-12 public education, one of the most inefficient departments in our government. Furthermore, Amendment 59 would suffer from the “lotto effect”, where these directed dollars free up general fund dollars for politicians’ pet programs. The government effectively receives a blank check, paid by taxpayers who have no means to control the growth of government.</p>

<p>REFERENDUM <u>L</u>: YES</p>	<p>REFERENDUM L: LOWERING CANDIDATE AGE LIMITS Changes the age qualifications to run for a seat in the Colorado House of Representatives or the Colorado Senate from 25 to 21. YES – A taxpaying citizen of 21 years of age who can obtain enough votes should be able to participate directly in their state legislature by serving as a representative or senator.</p>
<p>REFERENDUM <u>M</u>: YES</p>	<p>REFERENDUM M: OBSOLETE CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS Eliminates obsolete Constitutional provisions relating to value and taxation of hedges, orchards, and forest. YES – Pruning out obsolete provisions results in no substantive changes.</p>
<p>REFERENDUM <u>N</u>: YES</p>	<p>REFERENDUM N: OBSOLETE CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS Repeals provisions that are no longer relevant to Article XXII of the Colorado Constitution, the intoxication liquor amendments. YES – Eliminating obsolete provisions results in no substantive changes.</p>
<p>REFERENDUM <u>O</u>: NO</p>	<p>REFERENDUM O: CHANGES TO INITIATIVE PROCESS Requires a greater number of signatures on a ballot initiative petition for constitutional amendments. For constitutional amendments, it raises the required number of signatures from 5 percent to 6 percent of the votes cast in the previous election for Governor. It also requires a smaller number of signatures on a ballot initiative petition for state statutes. For state statutes, it reduces the number of signatures required from 5 percent to 4 percent of the votes cast in the previous election for Governor. NO – This referendum would hinder the citizen initiative process for constitutional amendments. Grassroots organizations would be placed at a significant disadvantage to well-funded union and corporate interests, who can simply hire additional petition circulators to obtain the increased number of signatures.</p>