

# Democracy on the Ballot

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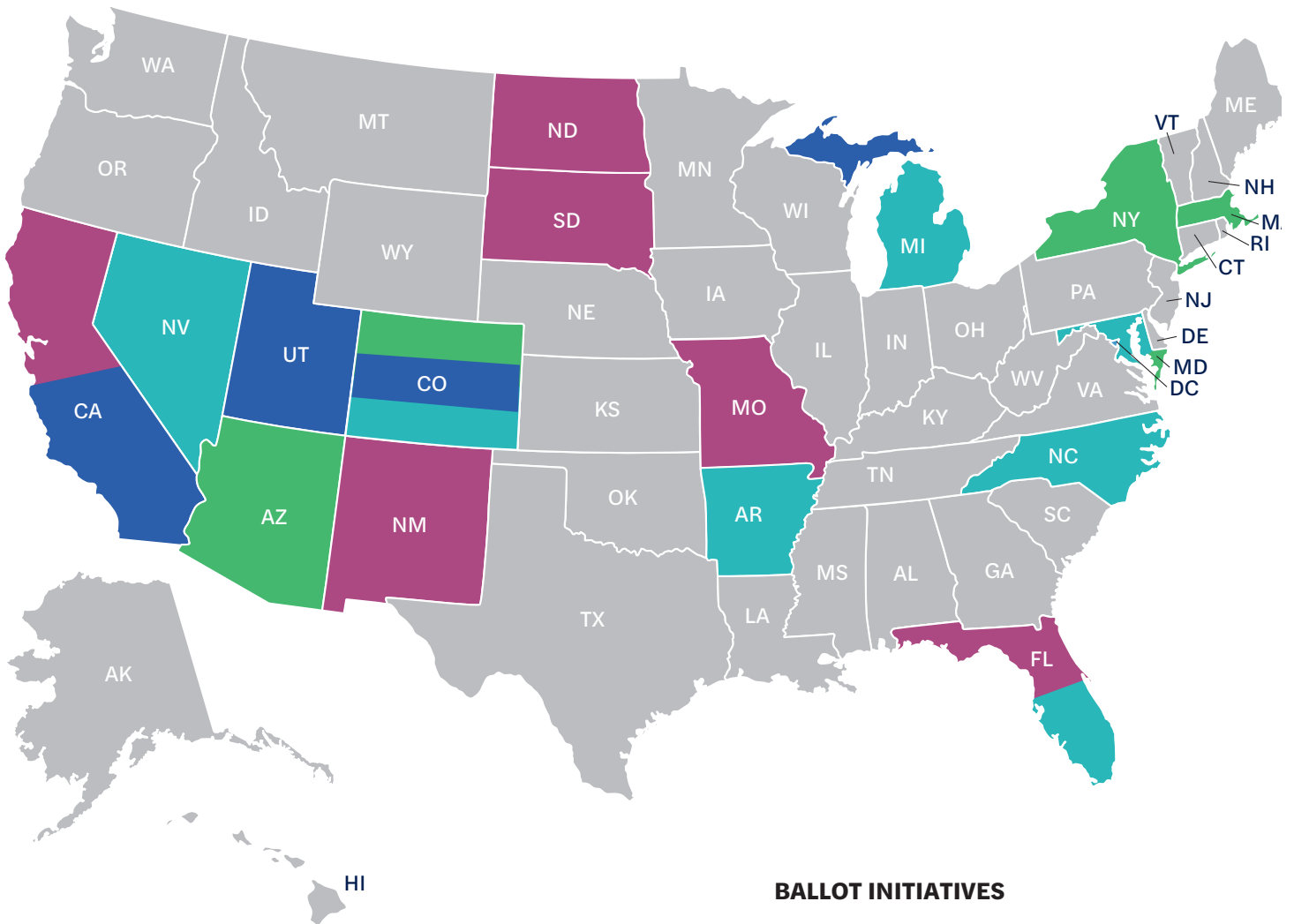


**COMMON CAUSE** is a nonpartisan grassroots organization dedicated to upholding the core values of American democracy. We work to create open, honest, and accountable government that serves the public interest; promote equal rights, opportunity, and representation for all; and empower all people to make their voices heard in the political process.

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**BALLOT INITIATIVES**

- Ethics & Accountability
- Money in Politics
- Redistricting & Representation
- Voting & Elections

# INTRODUCTION

The 2018 election will be a pivotal event in American history. While most people may be focused on who will win control of Congress and how that new Congress will interact with President Trump, there are several important democracy-focused initiatives on the ballots in states and cities across the country. These measures — and the potential for a wave election in congressional, gubernatorial and state legislative races — are a testament to the grassroots citizen-led movement that demands a more representative and equitable system of government.

From California to Massachusetts, voters in over a dozen states will get a chance to vote on ballot initiatives that will determine the structure of democracy in their states. The vast majority of these democracy initiatives are proactive measures that will ultimately move power away from wealthy special interests and partisan politicians and put it in the hands of everyday voters. A few are examples of tired tricks that politicians are trying to enact to keep themselves in power and rig the rules against their constituents.

Common Cause is proud to endorse and lead some of these ballot efforts, which will strengthen democracy by limiting the power of big money in politics, remove politicians' ability to draw their own districts, amplify the voices of everyday people in elections, modernize and secure our voting systems, create stronger ethical rules to hold elected officials accountable and ensure every eligible voter has the freedom to vote.

This election is just part of the ongoing effort to create a democracy that works for all Americans. It is not the beginning, and it is certainly not the end of this effort. In fact, despite the election of Donald Trump, in the November 2016 election, voters approved dozens of local and statewide ballot measures for proactive democracy reform to reduce the undue influence of money in politics, strengthen ethics laws, reform redistricting and improve access to voting. Already this year, voters in several states have passed important democracy reform measures on the primary ballot:

- In Ohio's May primary election, [75% of voters](#) approved a bipartisan congressional redistricting reform measure.
- In Maine's June primary election, [54% of voters](#) approved a measure to protect the state's ranked choice voting reform.
- In Tempe, Arizona, in March, [91% of voters](#) approved a local ordinance to require disclosure of secret money spent in elections.

We are already looking at 2019 and 2020 for more ballot initiatives, including measures aimed at creating small-dollar-donor public financing of elections programs in Albuquerque, New Mexico; Austin, Texas; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

We hope this new report is helpful to voters across the country who are looking at how they can improve our democracy and increase the people's power in government. Most importantly, we hope people will vote in the November 2018 elections and continue to hold their elected officials accountable for the years to come. It is going to take all of us to create a government and democracy that is truly of, by and for the people.

Onward,



Karen Hobert Flynn, Common Cause President



# ETHICS & ACCOUNTABILITY



## Florida: Lobbying Restrictions Amendment (Amendment 12)

**Common Cause Position: Support**

By passing [Amendment 12](#), Florida voters can create a more ethical and accountable government and rein in the revolving door used by state lawmakers and lobbyists. Amendment 12 creates new, important ethics rules for Florida’s elected and government officials and makes strong improvements to Florida’s lobbying rules.

If passed, Amendment 12 would:

- Prohibit state lobbying by legislators and statewide elected officials for six years after leaving office.
- Prohibit legislators and statewide elected officials from lobbying federal and local government agencies while in office.
- Prohibit top state agency employees from any lobbying while working for the state and from lobbying state government for six years after leaving their job.
- Prohibit local elected officials from getting paid to lobby anyone while in office and from lobbying their own governing body for six years after leaving office.
- Prohibit judges from lobbying any branch of state government for six years after leaving the bench.
- Prohibit any elected official or public employee from using his or her position to gain a “disproportionate benefit,” a term to be defined by the state ethics commission.



## Long Beach, California: Ethics Commission (Measure CCC)

**Common Cause Position: Support**

By passing [Measure CCC](#), the people of Long Beach, California, can create a citizen-led watchdog to ensure their local government is working for them. Measure CCC amends the city charter to create an ethics commission of Long Beach residents for the purpose of monitoring, administering and implementing governmental ethics.

Measure CCC will strengthen public trust in government by creating an ethics commission to ensure that Long Beach’s campaign finance and anti-corruption laws are respected. Ethics commissions are a municipal best practice. Most large cities — including Los Angeles, Oakland, Sacramento, San Diego and San Jose — have ethics commissions to protect the public interest.



## Missouri: Clean Missouri Initiative (Amendment 1)

**Common Cause Position:** Support

Missouri voters have a chance to create a more ethical and accountable state legislature by passing the Clean Missouri initiative ([Amendment 1](#)). The initiative includes five provisions to reform the legislature and make Missouri government more responsive and accountable to the people:

- **Require that legislative records be open to the public** by ensuring that the legislature operates under the same open records law as other public entities in Missouri.
- **Require politicians to wait two years before becoming lobbyists** after the conclusion of their final legislative session.
- **Eliminate almost all lobbyist gifts in the General Assembly** by banning any single gift worth more than \$5.
- **Lower campaign contribution limits for state legislative candidates**, which will limit the influence of big money and lobbyists in state government.
- **Ensure that neither political party is given an unfair advantage when new maps are drawn after the next census** by asking a nonpartisan expert to draw fair legislative district maps, which would then be reviewed by a redistricting commission.

To learn more about the campaign, visit [cleanmissouri.org](http://cleanmissouri.org).



## New Mexico: Statewide Ethics Commission (Constitutional Amendment 2)

**Common Cause Position:** Support

[Constitutional Amendment 2](#) would create an independent, statewide ethics commission. While most elected officials in New Mexico are honest, hardworking people, the state suffers because of the few who don't play by the rules. Whether it be elected officials prioritizing pet projects for big donors over the needs of everyday voters, or officials misusing taxpayer money for their personal interests, everyone pays the price when elected representatives do not lead by example.

New Mexico is one of only **six** states without an ethics commission, and Common Cause New Mexico has been working toward establishing an ethics commission for more than 40 years. Finally, in 2017, the New Mexico state legislature passed a joint resolution sending a proposal to create an independent state ethics commission to the voters. In November, voters will have the opportunity to approve a constitutional amendment establishing such an ethics commission.

- The independent state ethics commission would do the following:
- Oversee the conduct of state officers, public employees, contractors and lobbyists.
- Serve as a resource for officials to get guidance on issues and provide ethics training.
- Investigate complaints alleging violations of standards of conduct, campaign finance reporting requirements or other disclosure requirements.
- Adjudicate complaints that are found to have enough evidence to proceed to a hearing.
- Have the authority to issue subpoenas and compel witnesses.
- Impose fines and sanctions where violations are found.
- Forward complaints with potential criminal implications to the appropriate agencies.
- Conduct its work in public to the extent permitted by the enabling legislation.



## North Dakota: Anti-Corruption Amendment (Measure 1)

**Common Cause Position:** Support

The Anti-Corruption Amendment ([Measure 1](#)) would strengthen democracy in North Dakota by increasing transparency and making government more accountable to voters. The amendment is supported by a bipartisan coalition of North Dakota citizens who seek to reform government to better serve all North Dakotans, not just wealthy special interests.

Measure 1 includes several important reform provisions, including:

- **Bans foreign money from elections:** Prohibits campaign contributions and election spending by foreign corporations, foreign countries and foreign nationals.
- **Prevents personal use of campaign money:** Protects the ban on personal use of campaign contributions for personal expenses by enshrining that ban in the constitution.
- **Increases transparency:** Requires that all significant amounts of money raised or spent to influence state elections be fully disclosed and reported online for the public to see.
- **Bans lobbyist gifts:** Restricts gifts from lobbyists to public officials.
- **Closes the revolving door:** Bans elected officials from also serving as lobbyists and makes it illegal for public officials to take jobs as lobbyists for two years after leaving office.
- **Roots out conflicts of interest:** Strengthens conflict-of-interest rules for members of state agencies.
- **Holds public officials accountable:** Creates a nonpartisan ethics commission to receive and investigate ethics complaints, set ethics rules and provide ethics training programs.

To learn more about the campaign, visit [www.ndintegrity.org](http://www.ndintegrity.org).





## South Dakota: Anti-Corruption Amendment (Constitutional Amendment W)

**Common Cause Position:** Support

**The Anti-Corruption Constitutional Amendment (Constitutional Amendment W) would create a more accountable political system in South Dakota, where everyday voters have the final say.** After South Dakota voters passed the first statewide Anti-Corruption Act in 2016, the state legislature quickly moved to protect its power and repeal the voter-approved initiative. Politicians in South Dakota even went to an “[appreciation night](#)” hosted by lobbyists, took photos of themselves mocking their constituents and tweeted about golfing with lobbyists.

In South Dakota, constitutional amendments can't be repealed by politicians. That's why local democracy reform advocates are going back to the ballot in 2018 to make the Anti-Corruption Act a constitutional amendment. To protect voters' intent, the new constitutional amendment even includes a provision that would prevent tampering with future voter-approved laws. Politicians would be barred from repealing laws passed at the ballot without first going back to the voters and getting them to vote again.

Constitutional Amendment W also reinstates the most popular provisions of the Anti-Corruption Act passed in 2016, including:

- Restricting lobbyist gifts to politicians.
- Banning foreign money from South Dakota politics.
- Toughening ethics law enforcement.
- Banning campaign money from unions and corporations to candidates and political parties.
- Stopping politicians from using public office for personal gain.



# MONEY IN POLITICS



## Arizona: Clean Elections Amendment (Proposition 306)

**Common Cause Position: Oppose**

**Proposition 306** would make Arizona's clean elections system less accountable to voters. This initiative would weaken Arizona's Clean Elections Act, which was approved by voters 20 years ago, by eliminating the Clean Elections Commission's independence in rulemaking, instead subjecting their rules to review by the more partisan Governor's Regulatory Review Council. The measure would also prohibit candidates participating in the Clean Elections program from making payments for services of any kind to a political party or nonprofits that work to influence an election.

Proposition 306 is an effort to give partisan politicians and wealthy special interests more control over Arizona's successful voter-approved Clean Elections program. By stripping the Clean Elections Commission's independence, Proposition 306 would make Arizona's electoral system more partisan and less accountable to voters. Plain and simple – this is an effort by wealthy special interests that want to spend more money in politics to rig the rules against voters.



## Baltimore, Maryland: Fair Elections (Question H)

**Common Cause Position: Support**

With charter amendment **Question H**, Baltimore voters can increase their voices and the power of their vote by changing the way local election campaigns are funded. In July, the Baltimore City Council voted unanimously to support the charter amendment for the Baltimore Fair Elections Fund, and on July 30, Mayor Catherine Pugh signed off to let the voters decide. Question H will be on the ballot this November.

The Baltimore Fair Elections program would enable candidates to run for office without relying on large or corporate donors. Similar fair elections programs have proven to amplify the voices of working families by encouraging small-dollar donations and providing matching funds for candidates who abide by stricter ethics and transparency rules, like not taking giant checks from lobbyists, corporations or political action committees. This gets corporate and large donor campaign spending out of our elections and ensures everyone can have a voice in our elections.

To learn more about the campaign, visit [BaltimoreFairElections.org](https://BaltimoreFairElections.org).



## Colorado: Campaign Contribution Limits Initiative (Amendment 75)

**Common Cause Position: Oppose**

**The solution to too much money in politics is not more money in politics.** If passed, [Amendment 75](#) would quintuple the current limits for campaign contributions for all candidates anytime a candidate for a statewide office does one of the following: (1) contributes or loans more than \$1 million to their own candidate committee, (2) contributes or loans more than \$1 million to a committee or other entity for the purpose of supporting or opposing any candidate in the same election or (3) facilitates or coordinates third party contributions amounting to more than \$1 million to any committee or organization for the purpose of influencing the candidate's own election.

Democracy functions best when we all participate and when elected officials are responsive to their constituents. The corrupting influence of money from wealthy special interests can drown out the voices of everyday people. This amendment would allow wealthy individuals to give up to five times the current contribution limits directly to candidates and would increase the opportunity for quid pro quo corruption. It is being pushed without evidence that it will lead to fairer or more competitive elections. If passed, this amendment could also dilute the influence of people who do not have thousands of dollars to give to gubernatorial candidates and candidates running for other statewide offices. Finally, the measure contains confusing language, which could create problems once it is added to the Colorado Constitution.



## Denver, Colorado: Democracy for the People Initiative (Question 2E)

**Common Cause Position: Support**

**Denver's Democracy for the People Initiative, [Referred Question 2E](#), would create a small-donor public financing program, giving voters a big say in politics.** First, it will provide candidates running for city offices in Denver — such as mayor and city council — with a 9-to-1 match on contributions from individuals. This means that if a Denver resident donates up to \$50 to a local candidate, the city of Denver will contribute an additional \$450. Second, the ballot initiative will lower contribution limits to be more in line with limits for other offices in Colorado. Finally, the ballot initiative would ban corporations, LLCs, labor unions and other groups from making campaign contributions to all candidates running for city office.

This type of citizen-funded election helps break down barriers to participating in our democracy, creating a government that looks like us and works for us. Reforms that provide public matching funds to amplify the role of ordinary Americans in financing elections have made it possible for more women, people of color and those of modest means to run for and get elected to public office.



## Massachusetts: People Govern, Not Money Initiative (Question 2)

### Common Cause Position: Support

The people of Massachusetts can take another step toward amending the U.S. Constitution to overturn *Citizens United* and rein in big money in politics by passing [Question 2](#). If passed, Question 2 would establish a 15-member nonpartisan citizens commission to advocate for a new constitutional amendment to deal with the power of big money in politics and overturn the U.S. Supreme Court's 2010 decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, which allowed corporations and special interest groups to spend unlimited amounts to influence elections. The commission would focus on defining inalienable constitutional rights that belong to individual people, not corporations.

Question 2 represents the latest in the movement to overturn *Citizens United*. Nineteen states and hundreds of localities across the country have already called on Congress to pass a constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United*. This grassroots campaign will continue until the people's voice is prioritized and the Constitution is amended.



## New York City: Strengthening Public Financing Program (Proposal 1)

### Common Cause Position: Support

New York City has one of the most successful campaign public financing programs in the country, and now New York voters have a chance to make it even stronger. [Proposal 1](#) would amend the city charter to strengthen the existing campaign public financing program in several ways. Most importantly, Proposal 1 would lower contribution limits for all candidates running for public office, while increasing the public match for those participating in the public financing program. The public match would increase from \$6 in public financing for every \$1 in eligible donations to an 8-to-1 match up to the existing expenditure cap.

In other words, if an eligible donor gave \$5 to their preferred candidate's campaign, that donation would be matched eight times with public funds, making it a \$40 contribution. Proposal 1 would also allow candidates to raise more in matchable funds, further decreasing the need for candidates to chase checks at or near the contribution limit.

Proposal 1 will allow more New York City candidates to run for public office without having to raise big money from wealthy special interests. Instead, candidates will be able to spend more time focusing on voters' needs and raise money from small-dollar donors. By strengthening the New York City public financing program, Proposal 1 would also widen the potential candidate pool and not be limited to candidates who are well connected to big donors.

Simply put, Proposal 1 will increase the power and voice of everyday people in New York City elections.



## Phoenix, Arizona: Secret Money Disclosure (Ordinance S-44549)

### Common Cause Position: Support

**Phoenix voters have a chance to shine a light on dark money in politics this November.** A charter amendment in Phoenix, Arizona ([Ordinance S-44549](#)), would require groups that make expenditures in city elections to disclose their donors to the public. This is a commonsense measure that reflects every voters' right to know who is trying to influence their votes and local politics. A similar measure passed earlier this year in Tempe, with 91% of the vote.

If passed, Phoenix would be the latest in a long list of localities that have passed laws to rein in secret money in politics after the U.S. Supreme Court's 2010 decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*.



# REDISTRICTING & REPRESENTATION



## Colorado: Fair Maps Colorado (Amendments Y & Z)

**Common Cause Position:** Support

**By passing Amendments Y & Z, Colorado voters will end the practice of gerrymandering, in which politicians pick their own voters.** Instead, if passed, Amendments Y & Z will create independent redistricting commissions, which will be made up of everyday Coloradans — not politicians — and will create political districts that fairly and equitably represent the communities in the state.

These measures were recently presented to the Colorado Legislature, where they received bipartisan support and passed both houses of the legislature unanimously. Now Amendments Y and Z must be approved by voters in November.

The goal of redistricting reform should be to draw districts that fairly represent the interests of Colorado communities. Such districts should not be drawn to advantage incumbents or to favor a political party. The best way to accomplish this goal is through an independent commission process that is transparent, accessible to and inclusive of Colorado citizens. Amendments Y and Z will remove the power of drawing congressional and state legislative voting maps from the state legislature and instead create independent impartial citizen redistricting commissions. The amendments also ban the practice of gerrymandering, make competitiveness and fairness a goal of the commission and include strong rules so specific communities are not intentionally disenfranchised. The initiatives also create a more transparent redistricting process: It ensures that maps are drawn in meetings open to the public, and the redistricting commission is subject to Colorado's open records laws.

To learn more about the campaign, visit [fairmapscolorado.com](http://fairmapscolorado.com).



## Long Beach, California: Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (Measure DDD)

**Common Cause Position:** Support

By passing [Measure DDD](#), the people of Long Beach, California, can create a citizen-led redistricting commission to ensure the city council's maps are fair and impartial. Measure DDD would take the process of drawing local voting districts out of the hands of politicians and put it in the hands of an independent commission, similar to California's statewide independent citizens redistricting commission. The measure establishes a transparent process and criteria that prioritize keeping neighborhoods and communities intact.

Measure DDD will establish one of the strongest independent local redistricting commissions in the nation. Redistricting should be in the hands of the citizens, not elected officials. California's statewide redistricting commission has proven that when the people draw the lines, communities are better represented and political gerrymandering can be stopped.

More than a dozen California local governments have established independent redistricting commissions to promote better and fairer redistricting, including Los Angeles County, Oakland, Sacramento and San Diego. Long Beach should join this movement to put voters first.



## Michigan: Voters Not Politicians Initiative (Proposal 2)

**Common Cause Position:** Support

The Voters Not Politicians initiative ([Proposal 2](#)) would put Michigan voters in charge of the redistricting process by creating an impartial and independent citizen-led redistricting commission. Instead of giving politicians — who ultimately stand to benefit from their decisions — the power to draw voting districts, Proposal 2 creates an Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission of registered Michigan voters to draw voting districts using guidelines that ensure fairness to all.

Proposal 2 will eliminate political influence and bias in the redistricting process through a fair, transparent and nonpartisan solution. The Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission that would be created if Proposal 2 passes would be made up of four Democrats, four Republicans, and five voters who affiliate with neither party, with representation from across the state. To ensure the commission is impartial, politicians, lobbyists and political consultants would not be allowed to serve on the commission. The initiative will also require the commission to conduct its business in public meetings that are open to voters, who could submit their input. It also will require the commission's map-drawing work to be submitted as public records. To ensure fairness, the final district maps must have the support of a minimum of two Democrats, two Republicans, and two voters who affiliate with neither party on the commission. This prevents one political party from controlling the process.

The effort to end gerrymandering in Michigan has been led by a grassroots group of voters from across the political spectrum. By passing Proposal 2, Michigan voters can take redistricting out of the backroom and end the conflict of interest that festers when politicians have the power to choose their voters. The Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission will ensure voters choose their politicians, so that all Michigan votes count and Michiganders' voices are heard.

To learn more about the campaign, visit [www.votersnotpoliticians.com](http://www.votersnotpoliticians.com).



## Santa Barbara, California: Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (Measures G & H)

**Common Cause Position:** Support

**Santa Barbara voters can create a nonpartisan commission to ensure that district maps are fair.** Measures G and H present Santa Barbara County voters with alternative versions of an independent redistricting commission. Both measures create a citizens commission with the power to adopt new county supervisorial districts following fair redistricting criteria and using a transparent process. The primary difference between them is in the number of commissioners and how they are selected.

Measure G creates an 11-member commission: the first five members are selected at random, including one from each district. Those initial five members select the final six members, ensuring that the commission as a whole reflects both the demographics of the county and that commissioners' party affiliations match the county party registration rate.

Measure H creates a five-member commission. The members are chosen at random, one from each district. The commission must have a balanced party affiliation, including two Democrats, two Republicans, and one member not registered with either major party.

Because both measures represent an improvement over the status quo, Common Cause is supporting both measures.



## Utah: Better Boundaries Initiative (Proposition 4)

**Common Cause Position:** Support

**By approving the Better Boundaries initiative (Proposition 4), Utah voters can end gerrymandering and ensure fair and impartial voting maps.** After a bipartisan coalition of community leaders, democracy advocates and citizens collected over 190,000 signatures in support of redistricting reform from across the state, Utah voters will finally get a say over the state's redistricting process.

Proposition 4 addresses the problem of gerrymandering in two ways. First, it creates a seven-member independent redistricting commission. Second, the initiative creates a set of commonsense standards to stop gerrymandering. The initiative also forbids drawing districts to unduly favor or disfavor any incumbent, candidate or political party; allows Utah voters to challenge a map enacted by the legislature that violates the legal standards; and establishes new requirements to make the process more transparent.

Under Proposition 4, the state legislature continues to play a role in the redistricting process. The independent redistricting commission created under the initiative provides recommended maps to the legislature, subject to an up or down vote.

To learn more about the campaign, visit [betterboundaries.org](https://betterboundaries.org).





# VOTING & ELECTIONS



## Arkansas: Voter Photo ID Amendment (Issue 2)

**Common Cause Position: Oppose**

**Issue 2 would make the process of voting for Arkansans more burdensome by establishing strict requirements to show a photo ID in order to vote.** If passed, Issue 2 would add Arkansas to a list of states that intentionally are trying to stop eligible voters from casting a ballot with onerous and unnecessary requirements. Arkansas has a history of trying to enforce various voter ID laws, but these laws have been struck down in the courts.

[The American Civil Liberties Union of Arkansas notes](#) several problems with Issue 2:

- 1. Issue 2 is far more restrictive than current law.** Issue 2 would amend the Arkansas Constitution to require an Arkansas or U.S. government photo ID from all voters — including those who vote at the polls and those who vote absentee. Under the proposal, an ID must be presented or a ballot will not count.
- 2. Issue 2 will disproportionately affect low-income and minority voters.** An estimated 11% of all Americans do not possess a valid government-issued ID, including 18% of Americans over the age of 65 and 25% of African Americans. Voters earning less than \$35,000 per year are more than twice as likely to lack current government-issued photo ID as those earning more than \$35,000.
- 3. Obtaining so-called “free” ID cards burdens vulnerable communities.** While “free” ID cards are available from county clerks, potential voters often face issues with travel, time and money in obtaining one. Many rural clerks’ offices are difficult to access and make getting one of these “free” IDs difficult for many Arkansans.
- 4. Issue 2 is a solution in search of a problem.** Voter impersonation is so rare that it is virtually nonexistent. In considering a challenge to the current voter ID statute, a trial court has already found that the state failed to present any evidence of voter fraud. All of us want to make our elections more free, fair and secure, but Issue 2 will do the opposite by disenfranchising thousands of eligible voters.



## Colorado: Age Qualification to Serve in the State Legislature (Amendment V)

**Common Cause Position: Support**

**By passing [Amendment V](#), Colorado voters can give young people the opportunity to have a seat at the table in the state legislature.** Amendment V seeks to lower the age requirement to serve in the Colorado Legislature from 25 to 21. Although a small change, this measure will open up the opportunity for younger Coloradans to run for public office and serve their communities.

If 21-year-olds can fight and die for their communities and country in the military, they should be able to serve their communities in the state legislature. This is a commonsense initiative that will bring more voices into the political process and make the Colorado Legislature reflect the communities it represents.



## Florida: Voting Restoration Amendment (Amendment 4)

**Common Cause Position: Support**

**By passing [Amendment 4](#), Florida voters can strengthen democracy and restore the eligibility to vote to over a million citizens.** Nearly 1.4 million people in Florida with a prior felony conviction, who have served their time and paid their debts, are permanently excluded from voting. Florida is one of only four states with a lifetime ban on voting. Amendment 4 brings Florida in line with other states, including Texas, Georgia and South Carolina. Floridians who've completed their full sentence — including parole, probation and restitution — have earned the opportunity to participate in and give back to their communities.

The Second Chances Initiative (Amendment 4) would return the eligibility to vote to people who've earned a second chance. The law excludes those individuals who have committed murder or a felony sexual offense.

To learn more about the campaign, visit [secondchancesfl.org](https://secondchancesfl.org).



## Maryland: Election Day Voter Registration (Question 2)

**Common Cause Position:** Support

By passing [Question 2](#), Maryland could enact a commonsense reform that gives eligible Marylanders the right to vote and makes the registration process more convenient and accessible. This commonsense constitutional amendment allows Marylanders who register to vote or update their registration status on Election Day to cast their ballots. Maryland already allows voters to register to vote during the early voting period. This measure expands that process to Election Day.

Similar reforms have already passed or have been enacted in 17 other states, including California, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Maine and Minnesota. A [recent study by Demos](#) found that same-day and Election Day registration have proven to increase voter turnout, create more accurate voter rolls and help community members who often move, such as lower-income citizens, younger voters and voters of color.

To learn more about the campaign, visit [EveryoneVotesMaryland.org](http://EveryoneVotesMaryland.org).



## Michigan: Promote the Vote Initiative (Proposal 3)

**Common Cause Position:** Support

The Promote the Vote initiative ([Proposal 3](#)) ensures every eligible Michigan citizen has the freedom to vote and their votes are secure and accurately counted. The initiative is an amendment to the Michigan Constitution to enact a broad set of voting reforms, including:

- Protect the right to vote a secret ballot.
- Ensure military service members and overseas voters get their ballots in time for their votes to count.
- Provide voters with the option to vote straight party.
- Automatically register citizens to vote at the secretary of state's office unless the citizen declines.
- Allow a citizen to register to vote by mail or in person until 15 days before an election. After that, citizens may register to vote in person with proof of residency up to and on Election Day.
- Provide all registered voters access to an absentee ballot for any reason.
- Ensure the accuracy and integrity of elections by auditing election results.

The initiative includes numerous reforms that Common Cause recommends to ensure our voting systems are secure and accessible, including automatic voter registration, same-day voter registration and use of election audits. Simply put, Proposal 3 will make Michigan's elections more fair and secure, while giving eligible citizens more opportunity to participate in the political process and vote.

To learn more about the campaign, visit [promotethevotemi.com](http://promotethevotemi.com).



## Nevada: Automatic Voter Registration (Question 5)

**Common Cause Position: Support**

**Question 5 is a secure and fair solution to make Nevada's election system work for all voters.** By passing Question 5, Nevada will join 14 other states in adopting automatic voter registration, a commonsense solution to make Nevada's voting system more secure and make voter registration more convenient for Nevada's working parents, military families and rural residents.

Question 5 will make the process of voter registration automatic only for eligible citizens who don't opt out of the service when getting a driver's license or completing a transaction with the Department of Motor Vehicles. This initiative will help bring Nevada's election laws into the 21st century and create a more secure and efficient way of registering voters. Automatic voter registration has been a proven success in other states that have already adopted it, leading to an increased number of eligible people registering to vote and making voter rolls more accurate.



## North Carolina: Voter Restrictions Constitutional Amendments

**Common Cause Position: Oppose**

**The North Carolina legislature is trying to rig the rules against voters again with a package of constitutional amendments that would weaken democracy.** Common Cause North Carolina is urging voters to vote against all six constitutional amendments the legislature has referred to the ballot. Included in this is a [package of constitutional amendments](#) to:

- Give the state legislature more control over the state board of elections, which would likely lead to a gridlocked election board that would not properly serve the people of North Carolina.
- Give the state legislature more control over judicial appointments and help partisan politicians pack North Carolina's independent courts.
- Require a photo ID to vote.

**The North Carolina Legislature is asking voters to give them a blank check to decide which citizens get to vote and which citizens have to jump through hoops to do so.** North Carolina voters have an opportunity to reject the latest trick the state legislature is trying to pull on its constituents by rejecting the [voter photo ID constitutional amendment](#). No one knows what forms of ID the legislature will deem acceptable.

Common Cause North Carolina opposes this proposed constitutional amendment because it:

- Hands legislators a blank check to choose what photo IDs are acceptable to vote. The last voter ID law the legislature passed didn't include common forms of ID like student or employee ID. That law was thrown out by the courts for discriminating with "surgical precision" against Black voters.
- Has no protections written into the amendment for seniors without driver's licenses, military service personnel deployed overseas or legally registered college students.
- Could prevent more than 200,000 eligible voters without photo ID from voting, including disabled persons, veterans and elderly voters.
- Creates a permanent voting restriction that could cost taxpayers tens of millions of dollars, at the expense of other needs.
- Makes North Carolina state an extreme outlier. Only Mississippi has a strict photo ID mandate in its constitution. This amendment is worse.

# TOOLS ALL VOTERS CAN USE

Even if you don't live in one of the jurisdictions with these ballot measures, it is good for all Americans to know how other communities and states are innovating. And, even if you cannot vote to strengthen our democracy by voting for these measures, you can still make sure you are voting for candidates who share your values and who will support policies to strengthen the people's voice in our democracy. Here's how:

**OUR DEMOCRACY 2018:** Find out who is running in your area and if they will support policies to strengthen, or weaken, our democracy. Get your candidates on record by using our direct connection tools. We've asked candidates for Congress and in some state races to answer important questions to give all voters a better sense of where they stand on democracy reform. **Visit [democracy2018.org](https://democracy2018.org).**

**COMMON CAUSE VOTING TOOLS:** Verify your voter registration status, sign up for reminders about elections in your area, request an absentee ballot, or register to voter. **Visit [commoncause.org/vote](https://commoncause.org/vote).**


**ELECTION PROTECTION:** Do you want to play an active role in making sure your friends and neighbors have a good voting experience and/or troubleshoot any problems they might encounter? The you should check out the volunteer opportunities with our Election Protection coalition. Each election we work in coalition with dozens of organizations and place thousands of volunteers in states across the country to provide nonpartisan voter support. **Visit [protectthevote.net](https://protectthevote.net).**

## Having Trouble Voting?

Call the nonpartisan Election Protection hotline.

 **English language**  
866-OUR-VOTE

 **Spanish language**  
888-VE-Y-VOTA

 **Arabic language**  
888-844-YALLA-US

 **Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, and Tagalog hotline**  
888-API-VOTE

Or text "OUR VOTE" to 97779





# **Common Cause**

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