

2024 Election Information

The Sentinel's 2024 Voter Guide

Independence Institute 2024 Voter Guide

The following are Independence Institute's voting recommendations based on its review of all ballot measures.

(Editor/GG: Here's the Independent Institute's recommendations.)

STATEWIDE MEASURES

Amendment G – Modify Property Tax Exemption for Veterans with Disabilities

Recommendation: **VOTE YES**

This amendment would increase the number of disabled veterans (by about 3,400) who qualify for a property tax exemption. Currently, the homestead exemption is limited to veterans with service-related disability rated 100 percent permanent. Upon voter approval, the exemption would be expanded to those classified as having "individual unemployability" status. Because this is an amendment to the Colorado constitution, a 55% majority is required to pass it.

Our veterans have put their lives and limbs on the line to secure our freedom. We support expanding property tax exemptions to those veterans who are unemployable due to service-related disabilities.

Amendment H – Judicial Discipline Procedures and Confidentiality

Recommendation: **VOTE YES**

This measure would create a new administrative board to preside over ethical misconduct hearings involving state court judges. The board would be comprised of an equal number of judges, attorneys, and citizens, but they would all be appointed by the Governor and the Colorado Supreme Court. The board would conduct disciplinary hearings and hear appeals of informal remedial sanctions handed down by the Commission on Judicial Discipline. Because this is an amendment to the Colorado constitution, a 55% majority is required to pass it.

The amendment was brought forward due to a string of scandals in the judicial branch and has the potential to be a positive first step in rectifying existing issues and regaining public trust in the judiciary.

Amendment I – Constitutional Bail Exception for First Degree Murder

Recommendation: **NEUTRAL**

This amendment would make persons arrested and charged with first degree murder ineligible for bail if prosecutors could prove they had a strong enough case. The state constitution currently says only those who have committed "capital offenses" can be denied bail.

This has been deemed a problem since the repeal of the death penalty in 2020 because first degree murder no longer meets the "capital offence" criteria without execution as a potential punishment. Because this is an amendment to the Colorado constitution, a 55% majority is required to pass it.

Amendment J – Repealing the Definition of Marriage in the Constitution

Recommendation: **VOTE YES**

It is generally Independence Institute policy not to weigh in on social issues, including same-sex marriage. However, this amendment would simply remove a section of the Colorado Constitution that defines marriage exclusively as a union between a man and a woman— language that is no longer valid law—to align the state with rulings issued by the U.S. Supreme Court, the Colorado Supreme Court, and legislation enacted by the federal government. Despite being an amendment to the Colorado Constitution, the fact that Amendment J is repealing a section of the constitution means it only requires a simple majority to pass, rather than the usual 55%.

<https://i2i.org/>
See page 3

This is the Sentinel's take on the ballot. This guide follows the ballot brackets.

Federal Offices:

Presidential Electors:
Donald J. Trump/JD Vance. Republican.

Representative to the 11th United States Congress - District 7: Vote for Sergei Matveyuk. Republican.

State Offices:

Regent of the University of Colorado - At Large: Vote for Eric Rinard. Republican.

State Representative - District 60: Vote for Stephanie Luck. Republican.

District Attorney - 11th District: Vote for Jeffrey D. Lindsey. Republican.

County Offices:

Custer County Board of County Commissioners - District 2: Vote for Paul Raymond Vogelsong. Republican.

Custer County Board of County Commissioners - District 3: Vote for Lucas Epp. Republican.

Judicial Retention Questions:

Colorado Supreme Court Justices: Vote NO on all three. All extreme libs.

Colorado Court of Appeals Judges: Vote NO on all five. Extreme libs.

District Court Judge - 11th Judicial District: Vote NO on Katlin B. Turner. Extreme lib.

State Ballot Measures:

Amendment G (Constitutional): Allow More Disabled Veterans to Access a State Property Tax Exemption. Vote YES.

Amendment H (Constitutional): Setting Up a Judicial Discipline Board. Vote YES.

Amendment I (Constitutional): No Bail for Defendants in First Degree Murder Cases. Vote YES.

Amendment J (Constitutional): Remove the Same-Sex Marriage Ban from the State Constitution. Vote NO.

Amendment K (Constitutional): Earlier Deadlines to Set the Ballot. Vote NO.

Amendment 79 (Constitutional): Enshrine Legal Abortion in the State Constitution. Vote NO.

Amendment 80 (Constitutional): Constitutional Right to School Choice. Vote YES.

SENTINEL GUIDE see page 2

Official Ballot for 2024 General Election
Custer County, Colorado
Tuesday, November 5, 2024

Precinct: 7046014001
Ballot Type: 1
Ballot Style: 001-1

Kelley S. Campen
Clerk and Recorder

WRITE-IN Jane Doe

WRITE-IN Doc: John Smith, Mary

To vote for a named candidate, or for or against a ballot measure, completely fill in the oval to the right of your choice. Use blue or black ink.

If a race includes a write-in line, you may vote for a write-in candidate by completely filling in the oval to the right of the line and printing at least the last name of an eligible write-in candidate on the line.

To make a correction, draw a bold line through the oval and candidate name or ballot measure selection marked by mistake, then fill in the oval next to the correct name. If you voted for the only candidate in a race and want to withdraw that vote, you must request a replacement ballot.

WARNING: Any person who, by use of force or other means, unduly influences an eligible elector to vote in any particular manner or to refrain from voting, or who falsely makes, alters, forges, or counterfeits any mail ballot before or after it has been cast, or who destroys, defaces, mutilates, or tampers with a ballot is subject, upon conviction, to imprisonment, or to a fine, or both. Section 1-7.5-107(3)(b), C.R.S.

Federal Offices	State Offices	Judicial Retention Questions
Presidential Electors (Vote for One Pair) Democratic: Kamala D. Harris / Tim Walz <input type="radio"/> Republican: Donald J. Trump / JD Vance <input checked="" type="radio"/> Approval Voting: Blake Huber / Andrea Denault <input type="radio"/> Libertarian: Chase Russell Oliver / Mike ter Maat <input type="radio"/> Green: Jill Stein / Rudolph Ware <input type="radio"/> American Constitution: Randall Terry / Stephen E Broden <input type="radio"/> Unity: Cornel West / Melina Abdullah <input type="radio"/> Unaffiliated: Robert F. Kennedy Jr. / Nicole Shanahan <input type="radio"/> Write-In: <input type="radio"/>	Regent of the University of Colorado - At Large (Vote for One) Republican: Eric Rinard <input checked="" type="radio"/> Democratic: Elliott Hood <input type="radio"/> Approval Voting: Thomas Reasoner <input type="radio"/> Unity: T.J. Cole <input type="radio"/> State Representative - District 60 (Vote for One) Democratic: Kathryn Green <input type="radio"/> Republican: Stephanie Luck <input checked="" type="radio"/> District Attorney - 11th Judicial District (Vote for One) Republican: Jeffrey D. Lindsey <input checked="" type="radio"/> County Offices Custer County Board of County Commissioners - District 2 (Vote for One) Republican: Paul Raymond Vogelsong <input checked="" type="radio"/> Unaffiliated: Kevin V. Day <input type="radio"/> Write-In: <input type="radio"/> Custer County Board of County Commissioners - District 3 (Vote for One) Republican: Lucas Epp <input checked="" type="radio"/> Unaffiliated: Jordan Hedberg <input type="radio"/> Write-In: <input type="radio"/>	(Vote YES or NO) Colorado Supreme Court Justice Shall Justice Maria E. Berkenkotter of the Colorado Supreme Court be retained in office? YES <input type="radio"/> NO <input checked="" type="radio"/> Shall Justice Brian D. Boatright of the Colorado Supreme Court be retained in office? YES <input type="radio"/> NO <input checked="" type="radio"/> Shall Justice Monica M. Márquez of the Colorado Supreme Court be retained in office? YES <input type="radio"/> NO <input checked="" type="radio"/> Colorado Court of Appeals Judge Shall Judge Stephanie Dunn of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office? YES <input type="radio"/> NO <input checked="" type="radio"/> Shall Judge W. Eric Kuhn of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office? YES <input type="radio"/> NO <input checked="" type="radio"/> Shall Judge Gilbert M. Román of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office? YES <input type="radio"/> NO <input checked="" type="radio"/> Shall Judge Timothy J. Schutz of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office? YES <input type="radio"/> NO <input checked="" type="radio"/> District Court Judge - 11th Judicial District Shall Judge Kaitlin B. Turner of the 11th Judicial District be retained in office? YES <input type="radio"/> NO <input checked="" type="radio"/>

NOTE: EVERY CUSTER COUNTY VOTER CAN VOTE FOR ALL COMMISSIONER DISTRICTS. (IF IT IS ON YOUR BALLOT, YOU CAN VOTE ON IT.)

2024 Election Information

2024 Election: Custer County BOCC Ballot Guide Commentary

by George Gramlich, Commentary

Here's some background on the candidates showing why we backed Vogelsong and Epp.

Local Races:

Board of County Commissioners District 2 Race:

Vote for Paul Vogelsong.

Paul Vogelsong has a lot of management experience, in the service and in the private sector. He knows accounting and finance. Not afraid to get his hands dirty to finish the job. Has worked big jobs and small. He will represent the taxpayers vs. being a shill for big government.

The other candidate on the ballot, Incumbent Kevin Day has been a total disaster. He failed to supervise the Finance Department for two years, allowing all kinds of mayhem to happen. Hired a TOTALLY unqualified person to run it. Pushed to create the unneeded County Manager job (and did it illegally by failing to follow the statutory rules to establish that office.) Then hired the same failed Finance Director to be the County Manager! Put in a morally wrong \$45k separation payment for the County Manager into the contract so that if he was fired or the job eliminated, the CM would get a big payout. He did this, KNOWING that the job would likely be eliminated after the recall election just days away from the decision. That was \$45k of OUR money flying out the door due to Day's arrogance. Day acts like a petty juvenile in his relations with fellow

Commissioner Canda. Being a lifelong government employee, Day always defends the government vs. protection the people's rights on issues. Which invariably costs us taxpayers money. Also Day was elected as a Republican and then abandoned the party to run as Unaffiliated this year, as he knew he would not be nominated again due to his abysmal performance. Thus, not a loyal person. His candidacy is all about Day and not about the people.

There is also a write-in candidate running, Lynn Attebury. Lynn is a Republican and ran for the slot at the Republican Assembly but was beaten out by Vogelsong. Lynn then decided to still run but as a write-in candidate. Lynn was a County Commissioner about ten years ago and did a decent job. But the world, and local government has changed dramatically since then. We invited Lynn in for an interview, but it didn't go well. He avoided discussing many of the current local gov issues. He seemed unprepared. He kept referring back to when he was Commissioner. He failed to present a concrete plan to address our problems. The interview was almost confrontational, which was regrettable. Lynn is a good guy but not the guy we would want now.

We need somebody to represent the people again and that is Vogelsong.

Board of County Commissioner Race District 3:

Vote for Lucas Epp.

Lucas Epp has done a good job. Couple

of little bobbles early on but has spent the time to get things done. He accepted the job of overseeing the Finance Department after Day's epic failing of managing it and has done a great job on maneuvering through this minefield. This was the biggest problem the county has had and Epp voluntarily took it on and he is getting it done. Very organized. Sometimes a little too friendly with our fringe lefties to suit me, personally, but nobody is perfect. And you can definitely say he listens to all the citizens. Epp will put in the time to get the job done. He has demonstrated that he is detail oriented. He schedules the Commissioners various meetings (which Day should be doing.) Epp tries to keep things moving along while Day snores. Vote for Epp.

The other candidate on the ballot, the *Wet Mountain Tribune's* Editor, Jordan "Redbug" Hedberg is probably the most unqualified candidate ever to run for county office in decades. (And folks, we are knocking him because of his attributes and not because he is a competitor. We like having the *Trib* around. Two papers are a good thing. It's a sign of life and a healthy opportunity for all voices to be heard in this small county.)

Hedberg has so many issues we can only touch on a few. Temperament: Hedberg is known for his many public and private outbursts of anger and profanity. We have seen it right here at the *Sentinel* in the middle of the day. Business Acumen: Hedberg apparently has been an employee for this entire life until recently. He tried to run a restaurant in Westcliffe a few years ago and that didn't last long. He borrowed a bunch of money to buy the *Wet Mountain Tribune* and according to an affidavit he filed in his lawsuit against me, the *Trib's* gross income and subscriber numbers have plunged dramatically in the last few years. You don't want him managing our money. Property Taxes: At a BOCC meeting early this year, when the Commissioners were working on dropping the mill rate to save us property owners from the draconian property tax increase caused by our state legislature's refusal to extend the tax breaks. Hedberg called in at the end of meeting. He said he was for NOT reducing the huge increase so the county would have the money to do all the things they couldn't do before. Easy for him to say, as he owns no property in Custer County that we're aware of. So

Hedberg is for more taxes (as long as he doesn't have to pay them?)

Public Interaction: Hedberg basically closed the *Trib's* office months ago. Apparently working out of his rental home. The reason given: Threats were made against him because of the *Trib*. So he ran and hid. Dude, you bought a local newspaper, dealing with threats is part and parcel in this business. Put on your big boy pants and act like a man. What are you going to do if you are elected? Have 24 hours police protection? Work from home and attend meetings via Zoom?

Legal System Abuse: Hedberg sued the County over legal notices. Hedberg has sued me personally, apparently trying to put the *Sentinel* out of business. Hedberg filed a criminal complaint against Commissioner Canda that the DA had to spend money to investigate, and the DA eventually deemed it totally bogus. Hedberg filed an ethics complaint against our ex Public Health Director which was declined. Hedberg threatened to sue the BOCC if they voted to hold a voter integrity seminar. And just recently, Hedberg sued our County Sheriff to get a Temporary Restraining Order citing a rather bizarre reason. This necessitated retaining a criminal lawyer for the County to defend the lawsuit. Yet another County legal expense due to Hedberg's lawfare. You get the picture, instead of resolving disputes person to person like a man, he appears to prefer using the legal system to get his way.

Use of Extreme Profanity in Public: Tons of examples but maybe the worst was Hedberg using EXTREME profanity in various people's discussions on some of our local Facebook community pages when the discussion was very courteous. The posters were often mature, local ladies who were having a chat about something and then—wham---Hedberg drops in with vulgarity out of nowhere.

You get the picture. Not the guy you want at the helm of a \$9 million a year operation requiring a lot of personal interaction, thick skin, and financial wisdom. Why he is running for Commissioner is unknown. Probably just another ego trip thing with him. It's a shame. Hedberg's got half a brain, but it is just wasted due to his personality issues. Suggest Hedberg read Andrew Murray's "*Humility*". It is a good place to start....

SENTINEL GUIDE from page 1

Proposition JJ (Statutory): Allow the State to Keep All of the Taxes It's Collected from Sports Betting. Tough Call. Vote NO.

Proposition KK (Statutory): A New Excise Tax on Gun and Ammunition Sales. Vote NO.

Proposition 127 (Statutory): Ban the Sport Hunting of Big Cats. Vote NO.

Proposition 128 (Statutory): Parole Eligibility for People Convicted of Crimes. Vote YES.

Proposition 129 (Statutory): Creating the Position of Veterinary Professional Associate. Tough call. Vote - Your Call.

Proposition 130 (Statutory): \$350 Million in State Funding for Law Enforcement. Vote YES.

Proposition 131 (Statutory): All Candidate Primaries and Ranked Choice Voting. Vote NO.

FREMONT County Republican Committee Recommendations

Federal Offices:

Presidential Electors:

Donald J. Trump/JD Vance- Republican.
Representative to the 11th United States Congress
- District 7: Vote for Sergei Matveyuk. Republican.

State Offices:

State Representative - District 60:
Vote for Stephanie Luck. Republican.
District Attorney - 11th District:
Vote for Jeffrey D. Lindsey. Republican.

County Offices:

Fremont County Board of County Commissioners
- District 1: Vote for Kevin Grantham -Republican.
Fremont County Board of County Commissioners
- District 3. Vote for Dwayne McFall- Republican.

State Ballot Measures:

Amendment G (Constitutional): Modify State Property Tax Exemption for Veterans with Disabilities. Vote YES.

Amendment H (Constitutional): Setting Up a Judicial Discipline Board. Vote YES.

Amendment I (Constitutional): No Bail for Defendants in First Degree Murder Cases. Vote YES.

Amendment J (Constitutional): Remove the Same-Sex Marriage Ban from the State Constitution. Vote NO.

Amendment K (Constitutional): Earlier Deadlines to Set the Ballot. Vote NO.

Amendment 79 (Constitutional): Enshrine Legal Abortion in the State Constitution. Vote NO.

Amendment 80 (Constitutional): Constitutional Right to School Choice. Vote NO.

Proposition JJ (Statutory): Retain the Taxes Collected from Sports Betting.. Vote NO.

Proposition KK (Statutory): New additoinal Firearms and Ammo Tax. Vote NO.

Proposition 127 (Statutory): Prohibit Bobcat, Lynx and Mt. Lion Hunting permits. Vote NO.

Proposition 128 (Statutory): Parole Eligibility for People Convicted of Crimes. Vote YES.

Proposition 129 (Statutory): Creating the Position of Veterinary Professional Associate. Vote - YES.

Proposition 130 (Statutory): \$350 Million in State Funding for Law Enforcement. Vote YES.

Proposition 131 (Statutory): All Candidate Primaries and Ranked Choice Voting. Vote NO.

Independence Institute 2024 Voter Guide

Amendment K – Modify Constitutional Election Deadlines

Recommendation: **VOTE NO**

This amendment would move the deadline up by one week for citizen initiatives to file their petition signatures. The changes would give the Secretary of State and county clerks extra time to finalize content of ballots before they must be printed and sent to voters. Because this is an amendment to the Colorado Constitution, a 55% majority is required to pass it.

While extra time to finalize content of ballots might be beneficial to the Secretary of State and county clerks, those benefits should not come at the expense of citizens wishing to make their voices heard at the ballot. Amendment K would reduce the time for citizens to gather and submit petition signatures to get a proposed initiative on the ballot, an already difficult and extremely costly procedure. As such, we recommend a no vote.

Amendment 79 – Constitutional Right to Abortion

Recommendation: **VOTE NO**

It is generally Independence Institute policy not to weigh in on social issues, including abortion. This amendment, however, goes beyond questions of morality surrounding abortion to include the potential for future taxpayer-funded mandates for public health insurance plans.

This amendment would explicitly protect access to legal abortion via the constitution. It also would remove Colorado’s 40-year-old ban on the use of public funds for abortion services. This would allow Colorado to cover more abortions under Medicaid and state and local governments to add abortion coverage to their employee health insurance plans. Because this is an amendment to the Colorado Constitution, a 55% majority is required to pass it.

Abortion is already legal without any gestational limits in Colorado. The failure of this measure at the ballot would not change that. It would, however, prevent the Colorado General Assembly and local governments from creating new public health insurance coverage mandates, keeping taxpayers off the hook for funding procedures that may or may not violate their conscience.

Amendment 80 – Constitutional Right to School Choice

Recommendation: **VOTE YES**

This amendment would establish the right to school choice in the Colorado Constitution for children in kindergarten through 12th grade and create the right for parents to direct the education of their children. It would also define school choice to include public neighborhood and charter schools, private schools, home schools, open enrollment options, and “future innovations in education.” Because this is an amendment to the constitution, a 55% majority is required to pass it.

As one of Colorado’s original school choice advocates, Independence Institute has long worked toward the expansion of educational opportunities for Colorado kids ranging from charter schools to private schools to homeschool. For that reason, and because we believe the failure of this initiative would send an inaccurate message to already hostile policymakers, we recommend a yes on Amendment 80.

Colorado’s constitution to protect taxpayers from government growth and overreach. Propositions like this seem appealing to many because they only affect a small proportion of the populace and because sports betting is often considered a vice. It is convenient to say “Sure, raise taxes on them because it doesn’t affect me.” But what happens when the government wants to tax you on one of your hobbies?

In this endless cycle of taxation, it is the government who wins and takes more money than it needs for oftentimes wasteful projects. We recommend a no vote.

Proposition KK – Firearms and Ammunition Excise Tax

Recommendation: **VOTE NO**

This proposition would ask voters to impose a new 6.5 percent excise tax on gun and ammunition sales. The tax would be paid by gun dealers, manufacturers, and ammunition vendors, who would then pass the cost on to consumers. The funds would go to behavioral health support

<https://i2i.org/>
See page 4

2024 Election Information

The following ballot recommendations are guided by the mission and strategic priorities of Colorado Christian University. The Centennial Institute at Colorado Christian University is a nonpartisan 501(c)(3) organization that does not endorse or oppose any candidate or political party for public office.

TITLE	ABOUT	RECOMMENDED VOTE
AMENDMENT G <i>Modify Property Tax Exemptions for Veterans with Disabilities</i>	Reduces the property taxes paid by some veteran homeowners by expanding the existing homestead exemption for veterans with 100% service-related disability to include veterans whose disability is rated as making them unemployable. <i>Passes with 55% of the vote.</i>	SUPPORT Our veterans deserve support, and the amendment eases their cost of living. Conservatives also support lower taxes in general.
AMENDMENT H <i>Judicial Discipline Procedures and Confidentiality</i>	Creates an independent adjudicative board made up of citizens, lawyers, and judges to conduct judicial misconduct hearings and impose disciplinary actions. Currently a select panel of judges conducts judicial misconduct hearings and recommends disciplinary actions. <i>Passes with 55% of the vote.</i>	NEUTRAL Accountability and transparency for the judicial branch are important, but conservatives may disagree on the best structure and process for doing so.
AMENDMENT I <i>Constitutional Bail Exception for First Degree Murder</i>	Allows judges to deny bail to a person charged with first degree murder when the judge determines that the proof is “evident” or presumption is “great” that the person committed the crime. Currently, judges must set bail for each person charged with first degree murder. <i>Passes with 55% of the vote.</i>	SUPPORT Christian conservatives value the sanctity of life, including victims and members of our community. This will promote greater public safety.
AMENDMENT J <i>Repealing the Definition of Marriage in the Constitution</i>	Repeals language in the Colorado Constitution that defines a valid marriage as a union between one man and one woman. Same sex marriage is legal nationwide and in Colorado. <i>Passes with a majority of the vote.</i>	OPPOSE Christian conservatives continue to believe that the only valid form of marriage is the union of one man and one woman, regardless of what current law may say.
AMENDMENT K <i>Modify Constitutional Election Deadlines</i>	Makes deadlines one week earlier for citizens to submit signatures for initiative and referendum petitions, and for judges to file declarations of intent to seek another term; and requires that the content of ballot measures be published in local newspapers 30 days earlier than the current 15 days before ballots are sent out. This makes it more difficult for Colorado citizens to gather signatures for initiatives, and the process of verifying signatures can be addressed with better administration and funding. Ballot measure language is also heavily publicized, making this unnecessary. <i>Passes with 55% of the vote.</i>	OPPOSE Conservatives believe that government needs to be accountable to the people, and the increase in public awareness does not outweigh the additional hurdles to citizen initiatives.
AMENDMENT 79 <i>Constitutional Right to Abortion</i>	Makes abortion a constitutional right in Colorado and prohibits state and local governments from “denying, impeding, or discriminating against exercising” that right. This means that no restrictions on abortion can ever be passed in the future, and it denies parents the right to be notified when their minor child seeks an abortion. It also repeals an existing Colorado constitutional provision banning the use of public funds for abortion services. Those who oppose abortion should not be required to fund it under force of law. <i>Passes with 55% of the vote.</i>	OPPOSE Christian conservatives believe strongly in the sanctity of life, and abortion is a clear violation of that. The amendment permanently codifies into state law an unrestricted right to take the life of an unborn child.

Cont’d on page 4

2024 Election Information

TITLE	ABOUT	RECOMMENDED VOTE
<p>AMENDMENT 80</p> <p><i>Constitutional Right to School Choice</i></p>	<p>Creates a constitutional right to school choice for K-12 children and their parents, and specifies that school choice includes public, private, homeschool, and any future innovations in education. It also creates the right for parents to direct the education of their children.</p> <p><i>Passes with 55% of the vote.</i></p>	<p>SUPPORT</p> <p>Parents have a pre-existing natural right and obligation to direct the education of their children. It is good that the amendment recognizes that right, promoting freedom, justice, and high-quality education.</p>
<p>PROPOSITION JJ</p> <p><i>Retain Additional Sports Betting Tax Revenue</i></p>	<p>Allows the state to keep sports betting tax revenue above the amount previously approved by voters, and use this money for water projects, rather than refunding it to casinos and sports betting operators.</p> <p>TABOR requires excess tax revenue to be refunded, and water programs are already fully funded. Excess gambling taxes should be used to fund gambling addiction programs.</p> <p><i>Passes with a majority vote.</i></p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p>Conservatives support limited government and lower taxes. The negative effects of gambling on individuals and their families should be better addressed by those who legalized it.</p>
<p>PROPOSITION KK</p> <p><i>Firearms and Ammunition Excise Tax</i></p>	<p>Creates a new 6.5% tax on firearms, parts, and ammunition; and uses the new revenue to fund crime victim support services, mental health services for veterans and youth, and school safety programs.</p> <p>This would increase state tax revenue by \$39 million in just its first year and makes gun ownership more expensive for hunters and for citizens who wish to protect themselves. The beneficiary programs are already funded by federal and state taxes.</p> <p><i>Passes with a majority vote.</i></p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p>Conservatives support lower taxes, Constitutional rights and limited government, and the right of citizens to defend themselves.</p>
<p>PROPOSITION 127</p> <p><i>Prohibit Bobcat, Lynx, and Mountain Lion Hunting</i></p>	<p>Amends Colorado statutes to prohibit the hunting or trapping of bobcats, lynx, and mountain lions; and to continue to permit the killing of these animals under certain limited circumstances. Killing lynx is already prohibited, and Colorado Parks & Wildlife carefully monitors and manages the population of predators in relation to overall biodiversity.</p> <p><i>Passes with a majority vote.</i></p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p>Conservatives value our natural resources, free markets, and limited government. This is an unnecessary change to existing wildlife management practices.</p>
<p>PROPOSITION 128</p> <p><i>Parole Eligibility for Crimes of Violence</i></p>	<p>Increases from 75% to 85% the amount of prison time a person convicted of certain violent crimes of violence must serve before becoming eligible for discretionary parole or earned time reductions. It also makes a person convicted of a third violent crime ineligible for discretionary parole or earned time reductions (similar to "three strikes and you're out.")</p> <p><i>Passes with a majority vote.</i></p>	<p>SUPPORT</p> <p>Christian conservatives understand that justice means getting what one deserves, and this ensures a more just penal system that benefits public safety.</p>
<p>PROPOSITION 129</p> <p><i>Establishing Veterinary Professional Associates</i></p>	<p>Establishes the new regulated profession of veterinary professional associate as a provider of veterinary care, alongside veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and veterinary technician specialists.</p> <p><i>Passes with a majority vote.</i></p>	<p>SUPPORT</p> <p>This increases job opportunities and small business formation, and extends veterinary care to underserved areas of the state.</p>
<p>PROPOSITION 130</p> <p><i>Funding for Law Enforcement</i></p>	<p>Provides \$350 million in additional funding to local law enforcement agencies to improve officer recruitment and retention; and requires the state to provide a one-time \$1 million death benefit to the family of each state and local law enforcement officer killed in the line of duty. The sum is more than ten times the most recent allocation of state funds to retention and recruitment.</p> <p>This will require the legislature to find \$350 million, either through tax increases, budget cuts, or some combination. It is not clear that such a massive sum is targeted at the real needs of law enforcement across the state.</p> <p><i>Passes with a majority vote.</i></p>	<p>NEUTRAL</p> <p>Crime is a major issue in Colorado, and conservatives support law enforcement recruitment and benefits. However, this greatly expands government and raises taxes. Conservatives may disagree on the wisdom of this proposition.</p>

Independence Institute 2024 Voter Guide

from page 3

for veterans and youth, school safety and gun violence prevention programs, and services for victims of domestic violence and other violent crimes.

The federal government already levies a 10 percent excise tax on handguns and an 11 percent tax on all other firearms and all ammunition to fund conservation efforts. If passed, the new 6.5 percent tax would be additive to the federal government's and would make Colorado only the second state in the country (behind California, of course) to levy a state excise tax on gun and ammunition sales.

To quote Governor Jared Polis, "In effect, when you tax something, you penalize it." Coloradans have a state and federal constitutional right to keep and bear arms. Those exercising that fundamental right should not be "penalized" in order to compensate for crimes they did not commit.

The added tax also risks exacerbating socioeconomic disparities in who has access to the best tools to defend themselves by pricing those with limited economic means out of the ability to purchase and train with firearms.

Proposition 127 – Prohibit Bobcat, Lynx, and Mountain Lion Hunting

Recommendation: **VOTE NO**

This initiative would permanently end hunting seasons for mountain lions and bobcats in Colorado. It would also bar the state from allowing lynx hunting should the species ever be delisted by the Feds as "endangered." The animals could still be killed by state or federal employees for population management, or, with state permission, by ranchers to prevent livestock depredation.

Policymaking by duplicity is no way to govern a state. The proponents of the Proposition 127 ban have compared the lawful taking of mountain lions to "trophy hunting" to give the impression that the animals are merely killed for sport and left to waste. Yet, current Colorado law explicitly requires all successful mountain lion hunters to prepare their quarry for human consumption, and many thousands of Colorado hunters do just that each year.

The measure is also not about the health of Colorado's big cat populations. Colorado Parks and Wildlife biologists estimate that the state's population of mountain lions has grown since the species was classified as a big game species in 1965, as has the state's bobcat population.

Instead, the measure is about using the force of law to take away long-cherished practices of certain residents that offend the sensibilities of urban Colorado, the latest instance of waging culture war at the ballot box. The ban would have both direct and indirect economic impacts by ending the big cat hunting industry. A larger, unmanaged big cat population could damage other big game populations and increase big cat encounters in rural and exurban areas of the state.

We hope that the voters of Colorado have learned their lesson from the reintroduction of wolves about the perils of ballot-box biology and opening new fissures between urban and rural parts of the state. We strongly recommend a no vote.

Proposition 128 – Parole Eligibility for Crimes of Violence

Recommendation: **VOTE YES**

Proposition 128 would require persons convicted of certain violent crimes to serve at least 85 percent of their sentence in prison before being eligible for parole. It would also make a person convicted for the third or more times of certain violent offenses ineligible for parole.

We agree with the idea that violent offenders, particularly those who repeatedly victimize others through violent criminal acts, should remain incapacitated and removed from our communities until they have paid their debts to society.

Voters should temper their expectations about the impact of this measure, in that judges will likely just reduce their sentencing to account for the new requirement. The measure does not create minimum sentences for certain crimes. And judges are fully aware of the percentage of time served behind bars when they order a sentence. The measure also risks taking away a potential tool for encouraging good behavior behind bars. .

On balance, however, it is the

<https://i2i.org/>
See page 5

Cont'd on page 5

Independence Institute 2024 Voter Guide

duty of a well-governed state
to remove violent offenders

from page 4

Proposition 129 –

Establishing Veterinary Professional Associates

Recommendation: **VOTE YES**

This initiative would create a new mid-level position between a vet technician (2-year associates degree) and a veterinarian (8 or more years of education). Functioning similarly to a Physician's Assistant (PA) role in human health care, the position would be for those with a master's degree and given the title of a veterinary professional associate or VPA. VPAs would be licensed and regulated by the State Board of Veterinary Medicine and could diagnose, perform routine surgeries, and order/perform tests and procedures under supervision of a licensed veterinarian.

It is no secret that Coloradans love their pets. Unfortunately, the state is also facing a shortage of veterinarians to care for those pets, particularly in rural Colorado. Creating a VPA position would help ease this problem by allowing educated and highly trained animal medical professionals to enter practice more quickly to help shoulder some of the workload of existing veterinarians.

Ultimately, Proposition 129 is a positive "scope-of-practice" reform for animal healthcare that has the potential to help pet owners get increased access to quality veterinary care at lower costs. We recommend a yes vote.

Proposition 130 – Funding for Law Enforcement

Recommendation: **VOTE YES**

Proposition 130 would direct the Colorado General Assembly to make a one-time \$350 million appropriation from the General Fund to a newly created "Peace Officer Training and Support Fund" administered by the Department of Public Safety (CDPS).

The CDPS would be tasked with distributing that money in grants to local law enforcement agencies to improve officer recruitment, training, and retention. It would also require the state to provide a one-time \$1 million death benefit to the family of each state and local law enforcement officer killed in the line of duty. The state would be required to maintain the benefit even after the initial \$350 million fund is depleted.

It should be noted that the measure does not specify when legislature must make the \$350 million appropriation to create this new fund, meaning lawmakers could put it off potentially indefinitely. It does, however, require the money to come from existing General Fund revenue rather than from a new tax.

Proposition 131 – Establishing All-Candidate Primary and Ranked Choice Voting General Elections

Recommendation: **NEUTRAL**

This initiative would end party primaries in favor of jungle primaries for candidates running for certain offices, including Governor, state and federal legislative seats, Attorney General, and Secretary of State. All qualified candidates, regardless of party affiliation, would be put on the same primary ballot to be voted on by all registered voters. The top four vote getters would then move on to the general election, where a winner would be selected by voters rank-ordering candidates by preference. The winner is then determined by tabulating the ranked votes using a method called instant runoff voting, whereby the candidate with the least number of first-choice votes is eliminated in rounds until a candidate secures more than half of the active remaining votes.

Overall, we like the measure's innovative approach to shaking up a stale system for selecting candidates for office. A jungle primary could force candidates to campaign on issues that appeal to a broader cross-section of voters, rather than just to committed partisans that may or may not be representative of the rest of the state.

However, we have some concerns that ranked-choice voting could add complexity and expense to conducting elections, especially in the short-run. This, in turn, could risk reduced trust in election integrity. The state legislature has also erected a series of benchmarks that must be hit before the measure, even if it is adopted by the voters, can take effect.

Because of the potential upsides as well as the lingering uncertainty surrounding the measure, we remain neutral on Proposition 131.

Please see: <https://i2i.org/election2024/>

Colorado Christian School- Centennial Institute VOTER GUIDE

from page 4

<p>PROPOSITION 131</p> <p><i>Establishing All-Candidate Primary and Ranked Choice Voting General Elections</i></p>	<p>Creates an all-candidate primary election for certain state and federal offices, where the top four candidates advance to the general election; and allows voters to rank those candidates in the general election, with votes counted over multiple rounds to determine who wins the election.</p> <p>Ranked choice voting works better in proportional representation electoral systems. RCV can be confusing, does not guarantee majority support, and it reduces the role that political parties play in aggregating interests and vetting candidates. It would enshrine single party rule in districts that are already non-competitive.</p> <p><i>Passes with a majority vote.</i></p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p>Conservatives prefer tradition and time-tested methods, not novel experiments that are poorly suited to our constitutional government.</p>
---	---	--

This ballot guide was compiled by utilizing information from the Colorado Secretary of State.
For more information, visit: <https://www.sos.state.co.us/>.

CENTENNIAL INSTITUTE

at Colorado Christian University

Vote "No" on Amendment 79: "Right to Abortion"



DIOCESE OF PUEBLO
COLORADO

Amendment 79 intends to increase the attack on the unborn, their mothers, and the family structure and the integrity of the communities of Colorado in three ways:

It bans any limits on late-term abortion. Period.

It eliminates parental notification laws. Period.

It enables and directs taxpayer-funded abortion. Period.

I encourage you to be informed. Go to our diocesan website at diopueblo.org and read the Voter's Guide. Check out the Right To Know website at righttoknowco.com, a coalition of pro-life groups of Colorado. It will also be helpful to review the USCCB website, "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship."

And as always, prayer is the key to hope, healing, and compassion, as we strive for truth, justice and life.

We are called to protect life in all its stages and forms, preborn and living, all God's children.



Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Stephen J. Berg
Bishop of Pueblo

Vote "No" on Amendment 79: "Right to Abortion"

Colorado Freedom Force Ballot Guide

Here are a few different takes from the Colorado Freedom Force that either differ from the *Sentinel's* initial take or add information you might find valuable as you make your choices.

AMENDMENT G: Modify Property Tax Exemption for Veterans with a Disability

Recommended Vote: LEAN NO

Amendment G, which will require a 55% voter majority to pass, seeks to expand the homestead exemption on property taxes to more military veterans. The exemption would expand from those with 100% permanent service-related disabilities to include those who are classified as having "individual unemployability" status from a non service-related disability.

We will always stand tall and salute our veterans, but manipulating our respect for those who served our country will **only lead to bad policy dividing our population and treating different groups of people differently**. Most Coloradans are struggling to cope with property taxes and **we need a solution for everyone and not just a select few**.

Amendment 80: Constitutional Right to School Choice in Colorado

Recommended Vote: NO

The Colorado Freedom Force supports school choice.

Unfortunately, Amendment 80 was **not drafted properly** to be the next, best step towards enhancing school choice in Colorado.

Like other issues we have seen in the past, such as the

repeal of the Gallagher Amendment, sometimes there is a wrong way to do it. (Take a look at your property taxes).

Amendment 80, if passed with 55% of the vote, will not expand school choice options for parents or create any new programs for school choice. What it will do is **set the stage for a series of different lawsuits** on the issue of school choice which **could serve as a barrier for future advancement opportunities**. It's best to reject this option in order to proceed with a clearer path in the near future.

PROPOSITION 131: Move Colorado to a Ranked Choice Voting Election System

Recommended Vote: NO

Proposition 131 would make significant changes to the way we elect our representation here in Colorado. For primary elections, 131 would move us to an all-candidate primary, otherwise known as a "**Jungle Primary**". Then for the general election, the winner would be chosen through a "Ranked Choice" voting system.

On the surface, ranked choice voting seems like a clever way to conduct elections, but it's a complicated system. Other States in the U.S. which were first to test this idea have run headfirst into numerous problems, including seeing top vote-getters be eliminated and weaker candidates be **propped up by the algorithms** of the "instant runoff voting" which decides the winner. Trustworthiness is a major concern.

Additionally, **this particular Proposition is backed by more than \$9M in funding by mega-donors, many of which do not live in Colorado. Their interest in meddling in our elections is sure to benefit them more than it will benefit the average Coloradan.**

For the whole guide see [See https://coloradofreedomforce.com/2024guide/](https://coloradofreedomforce.com/2024guide/)



ELECT PAUL VOGELSONG

Commissioner District 2

- ★ 25 + YEARS AS SUPERVISOR
- ★ FINANCE AUDITOR FOR THE U.S. NAVY
- ★ FINANCE AND BUDGET FORECASTING
- ★ HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
- ★ PROVEN EXPERIENCE
- ★ SOUND DECISION MAKING

Phone: 719-221-8212

Email: vogelsongpaul@gmail.com



ELECT LUCAS EPP

Commissioner District 3

- ★ ELECTRICIAN/PROJECT ENGINEER & LOCAL ENTREPRENEUR
- ★ Electrical Contractor Licenses: Nebraska & Missouri
- ★ Nevada Unlimited C2 -Qualified Individual for both the Electrical as well as Business & Law
- ★ Colorado, Idaho, Utah & Wyoming: Electrical Masters
- ★ New Mexico Electrical Qualifying Party
- ★ Washington General Administrator Electrical
- ★ Texas Journeyman Electrical

Phone: 402-366-4013

Email: lucas_epp@outlook.com

Statewide Ballot Initiatives

The Colorado Republican Committee makes the following voting recommendations for the 2024 Statewide Ballot Initiatives:

VOTE YES!

- AMENDMENT G: Modify Property Tax Exemption for Veterans with Disabilities
- AMENDMENT I: Constitutional Bail Exception for first Degree Murder
- AMENDMENT K: Modify Constitutional Election Deadlines
- PROP. 128: Parole Eligibility for Crimes of Violence
- PROP. 129: Establishing Veterinary Professional Associates
- PROP. 130: Funding for Law Enforcement

VOTE NO!

- AMENDMENT 79: Constitutional Right to Abortion
- AMENDMENT 80: Constitutional Right to School Choice
- PROPOSITION 131: Establishing an All-Candidates Primary Election and Ranked Choice Voting General Election
- PROPOSITION JJ: Retain Additional Sports Betting Tax Revenue
- PROPOSITION KK: Firearms and Ammunition Tax

**IF YOU ARE UNSURE, VOTE NO!
DON'T LEAVE IT BLANK**

PROPOSITION 131 (#310) Concerning the Conduct of Elections (RANKED CHOICE VOTING)

VOTE NO

“Establish top-four primaries and ranked-choice voting (RCV) for federal and state offices in Colorado”

This initiative establishes a top-four ranked choice voting system in Colorado for Congressional, Gubernatorial, Attorney General, Secretary of State, Treasurer, University of Colorado Regent, State Board of Education and Legislative elections.

RCV confuses voters, whose ballots will be discarded if all candidates are not ranked. In extreme liberal Colorado, RCV ensures the most extreme Democrats prevail, and less conservative choices for office end up winning elected offices. RCV is supported by Kent Thiry, whose goal is to eliminate parties and move to a centrist government.

A “yes” vote supports establishing top-four primary elections and ranked-choice voting for U.S. Senate, U.S. House of Representatives, Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, Treasurer, University of Colorado University Regent, State Board of Education, and State Legislature.

A “no” vote on Proposition 131 continues the existing primary election system and the current method of selecting candidates and counting votes at general elections.

Alaska uses an all-candidate primary system where the top four vote-getters advance to a ranked choice voting general election. That system was adopted by voters in 2020 and first used in 2022. There is a measure on Alaska’s November ballot asking voters to repeal the state’s system.

In Alaska a share of general election races in the state this year will pit only candidates from the same party against each other, leaving supporters of the opposite party with no one who aligns with their political views.