



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
DENVER EDUCATION FUND

Denver Ballot Issues Pros and Cons November 6, 2007

This is an all mail ballot. Put your ballot in the mail for receipt by November 6th or take it to any of the drop-off sites. For more information call the Denver Election Division at 720-913-VOTE (8683).

There are two questions on Denver's ballot.

Referred Question 1 has nine parts, each of which will need to be voted on separately. In Question 1, voters may vote for all, against all, or for some and against others.

Initiated Question 100 addresses the priority of enforcing marijuana laws.

QUESTION 1

Question 1-A proposes to increase the mill levy rate, solely dedicated to funding capital maintenance.

Questions 1-B through 1-I are general obligation bonds to provide funding for maintenance, improvements, renovations and expansions that have been deferred. Most of the cost of these new bonds will be covered by the existing mill rate as old bonds close out and make money available. If all of the bond issues are passed the current bonding capacity of \$480 million will be exceeded by \$70,000,000. Additional taxes needed to make up that shortfall are estimated to add \$12 the annual tax bill of an average (\$255,000) homeowner.

All bonds included in Question 1 have a 20 year term. These questions were referred by City Council. State law requires voters to approve all bond projects and tax increases.

1-A Capital Maintenance Mill Levy

Establishes a new property tax at the rate of 2.5 mills solely dedicated to the funding of capital maintenance. The funding would support ongoing maintenance to the infrastructure at an increased level. This mill levy increase is estimated to add \$49 to the tax bill of an average (\$255,000) homeowner.

1-B Health and Human Services System Facilities.

\$48,583,000 for improvements and renovations to several city-owned facilities including Denver Health and Hospital building; building improvements and renovations to child

care and child development centers; replacing the Denver Municipal Animal Shelter; and replacing the Eastside Human Services Facility

1-C Library System Facilities

\$51,883,000 for maintenance on existing libraries and constructing new branch facilities for West Denver, Stapleton and Green Valley Ranch

1-D Streets, Transportation and Public Works System Facilities

\$149,786,000 for repairing streets, structures, and/or increasing road capacity; replacing and/or repairing sound walls; repairing and/or installing new curb and gutter; improving transit stop connections, streetscapes and upgrading street medians; and constructing and expanding the Cherry Creek Solid Waste Facility

1-E Park System Facilities

\$93,387,000 for maintenance, rehabilitation, restoration repair and/or replacement of drainage and irrigation systems; pools; historic structures and features, playground, and building systems; landscapes; trails, roads and parking lots; and, together with acquisition, design and development of land, park and recreation centers

1-F Public Office Facilities

\$10,350,000 for city and county building and the former city permit center

1-G Cultural Facilities –Maintenance

\$60,546,000 for the renovation, reconstruction, replacement and/or repair of the Denver Botanic Gardens buildings and grounds, the Conservatory and Greenhouse; the Boettcher Concert Hall; the Champa Street side of the Quigg Newton Denver Municipal Auditorium; the Temple Hoyne Buell Theatre rehearsal space; and the Denver Museum of Nature and Science

1-H Cultural Facilities – New Construction

\$70,000,000 for classrooms, labs, a teacher education center and other facilities for the Denver Museum of Nature and Science and for the reconstruction and expansion of Boettcher Concert Hall

1-I Public Safety Facilities

\$65,195,000 for construction, renovation or replacement of a police crime lab, firing range, fire stations and police traffic operations facility

Those in favor say:

- As the city has grown, it has fallen behind in basic maintenance and much of its infrastructure is in disrepair.
- The increased mill levy (1-A) provides support to raise the level of ongoing annual maintenance.

- The bond issues (1-B – 1-I) provide funding for projects, identified by a citizens’ task force, as crucial to city needs. These are primarily deferred maintenance projects with some new construction.
- Timely maintenance and upkeep of facilities cost less than deferred maintenance and will reduce the need for future bond issues.
- The cost of this package to the homeowner is modest and Denver has one of the lowest property tax rates in the region.

Those opposed say:

- Taxes should not be raised when the city is not spending wisely what it already has.
- Property taxes disproportionately impact homeowners on fixed incomes.
- The proposed bonds will be issued for 20 years instead of 15 years, adding \$115 million to the cost.
- New facilities included in this package (libraries, for example) will require operating expenses that have not been funded.
- If all the bonds are passed, the total amount will exceed existing bonding capacity, which causes a tax increase.

Initiated Question 100 – Marijuana Low Priority for Police

Shall the voters for the City and County of Denver adopt an ordinance to the Denver Revised Municipal Code that would make the private use and possession of marijuana by persons 21 years of age and older the City’s lowest law-enforcement priority?

Denver voters approved Initiative 100 in November 2005, amending city ordinances to remove all penalties for private adult marijuana use and possession.

Those in favor say:

- Denver’s limited resources should not be wasted on adult marijuana possession, and the city should focus its time and effort on fighting violent crime and property damage.
- Seattle implemented a similar law and the city says they have seen a significant decline in arrests with no evident problems.

Those opposed say:

- If this bill passes it will not affect police policy.
- Marijuana is considered a dangerous drug and its use and possession should be illegal.

Savvy voters make a *DIFFERENCE!*

The League of Women Voters of Denver Education Fund encourages the active and informed participation of citizens in government to increase understanding of major public policy issues. Tax-deductible contributions are gratefully accepted.

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Thank you for your support!