



Good News

September/October 2016

Bringing the Light of Christ to Missouri



Bishops Call for Faithful Citizenship in the 2016 Election and Beyond

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility from the Catholic Bishops of the United States is a statement provided by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) regarding Catholic voters and the 2016 election. You can read the entire text by visiting the bishops website (www.usccb.org).

The statement, according to the bishops, is not meant to tell Catholics for whom or against whom to vote. Instead, the bishops offer reflections on the upcoming election and encourage Catholics to seek out the truth. "Our purpose is to help Catholics form their consciences in accordance with God's truth." The bishops write that the Church has a moral obligation to "participate in shaping the moral character of

society..."

Furthermore, the bishops declare that: "At the center of these truths is respect for the dignity of every person. This is the core of Catholic moral and social teaching." The statement denounces the taking of innocent human life through abortion, euthanasia or human cloning and expresses opposition to other assaults on human life, such as genocide, torture, racism, and the targeting of noncombatants in acts of terror or war.

Throughout this statement, the bishops make clear their central concern. "Our cause is the defense of human life and dignity and the protection of the weak and vulnerable."

Six Ballot Proposals in November

On Tuesday, Nov. 8, Missouri voters will consider six ballot proposals. For the official ballot language, please look to the table to the right. To find more information, please visit the secretary of state election division website (www.sos.mo.gov).

The MCC has not taken a position on any of these proposals.

For purposes of voter education, the MCC provides the following in-depth summary of one of the ballot proposals.

Amendment 2: Establishes Campaign Contribution Limits

Missouri law currently sets no limits on the amount of money individuals and corporations can contribute to political campaigns for state office (e.g. Governor, State Senate, State House, etc.). This November, Missouri voters will be asked to vote on whether to put campaign contribution limits into the Missouri Constitution through a ballot initiative. The proposal, certified as “Amendment 2” by the Missouri Secretary of State’s Office, would amend the Missouri Constitution to put such limits in place.

The proposal would set limits on campaign contributions similar to those provided for under federal law. Individuals would only be permitted to donate \$2,600 to candidates for state public office, and would be prohibited from donating more than \$25,000 to any political party per election cycle.

Corporations and unions would be prohibited from making donations directly to candidates, but could make such donations through political action committees (PACs). PACs would only be permitted to donate \$2,600 to individual candidates, and no more than \$25,000 to political parties per election cycle. PACs would not be permitted under the proposal to make contributions to other PACs.

If Amendment 2 were to pass, Missouri would join forty-four other U.S. states that limit campaign contributions. Amendment 2 would not set limits on independent expenditures made in support of candidates by so-called “Super PACs.” Super PACs are hybrid forms of PACs that were recently made legal by the U.S. Supreme Court’s 2010 *Citizen’s United v. FEC* decision.

Under federal law, Super PACs may not make financial contributions directly to candidates. They can support candidates, however, by making expenditures independent of a candidate’s campaign. They usually

do this through media such as mailers, radio spots, and television ads. Amendment 2 would not curtail these independent expenditures.

One way to measure the potential impact of Amendment 2 on campaign finance is to compare the amount of money raised in the current campaign for one of Missouri’s U.S. Senate seats with the amount raised in the 2016 race for the Missouri Governor’s mansion. As mentioned, federal law limits campaign contributions, Missouri law does not.

According to reports from the Federal Election Commission (www.fed.gov) and the Missouri Ethics Commission (www.mec.mo.gov) effective September 1, 2016, Republican Senator Roy Blunt (R), has raised \$8.7 million for his campaign. His Democratic opponent, Missouri Secretary of State Jason Kander, has raised \$6.4 million. The Senate race is governed by federal campaign finance law. In contrast, Republican candidate for Governor of Missouri, Eric Greitens, has raised \$13.3 million for his campaign. Democratic candidate Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster has raised \$18.8 million. This race is governed by Missouri campaign finance law.

Both races are hotly contested with polls suggesting that they are very competitive. Interestingly, the amount of money raised in the State race for Governor outpaces the amount raised for the U.S. Senate seat. The differences in the amounts raised may reflect the different laws that are in place.

The Missouri Catholic Conference has not taken a position in favor of or in opposition to Amendment 2, and does not intend by this article to suggest how one should vote on this initiative. We are providing this information, however, so that voters can make an informed decision.

November 2016 Ballot Proposals

Amendment 1	<p>A “yes” vote will continue for 10 years the one-tenth of one percent sales/use tax that is used for soil and water conservation and for state parks and historic sites. This will be resubmitted to the voters for approval in 10 years.</p> <p>A “no” vote will not continue this sales/use tax.</p> <p>If passed, this measure will not increase or decrease taxes.</p>
Amendment 2	<p>A “yes” vote will amend the Missouri Constitution to establish limits on campaign contributions by individuals or entities to political parties, political committees, or committees to elect candidates for state or judicial office. This amendment prohibits individuals and entities from intentionally concealing the source of such contributions. This amendment also requires corporations or labor organizations to meet certain requirements in order to make such contributions. This amendment further provides a complaint process and penalties for any violations of this amendment.</p> <p>A “no” vote will not amend the Missouri Constitution to establish limits on campaign contributions.</p> <p>If passed, this measure will have no impact on taxes.</p>
Amendment 3	<p>A “yes” vote will amend the Missouri Constitution to increase taxes on cigarettes each year through 2020, at which point this additional tax will total 60 cents per pack of 20. This amendment also creates a fee paid by cigarette wholesalers of 67 cents per pack of 20 on certain cigarettes. This amendment further provides that the funds generated by these taxes and fees shall be deposited into a newly established Early Childhood Health and Education Trust Fund.</p> <p>A “no” vote will not amend the Missouri Constitution relating to taxes and fees on cigarettes.</p> <p>If passed, this measure will increase taxes on cigarettes.</p>
Amendment 4	<p>A “yes” vote will amend the Missouri Constitution to prohibit a new state or local sales/use or other similar tax on any service or transaction. This amendment only applies to any service or transaction that was not subject to a sales/use or similar tax as of January 1, 2015.</p> <p>A “no” vote will not amend the Missouri Constitution to prohibit such state or local sales/use or other similar tax.</p> <p>If passed, this measure will not increase or decrease taxes.</p>
Amendment 6	<p>A “yes” vote will amend the Missouri Constitution to state that voters may be required by law to verify their identity, citizenship, and residence by presenting identification that may include valid government-issued photo identification. Exceptions to this identification requirement may also be provided by law.</p> <p>A “no” vote will not amend the Missouri Constitution regarding elections.</p> <p>If passed, this measure will have no impact on taxes.</p>
Proposition A	<p>A “yes” vote will amend Missouri law to increase taxes on cigarettes in 2017, 2019, and 2021, at which point this additional tax will total 23 cents per pack of 20. This amendment also increases the tax paid by sellers on other tobacco products by 5 percent of manufacturer’s invoice price. This amendment further provides that the funds generated by these taxes shall be used exclusively to fund transportation infrastructure projects. These taxes are repealed if a measure to increase any tax or fee on cigarettes or other tobacco products is certified to appear on any local or statewide ballot.</p> <p>A “no” vote will not amend Missouri law relating to taxes on cigarettes and other tobacco products.</p> <p>If passed, this measure will increase taxes on cigarettes and other tobacco products.</p>

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Virtue in Political Leaders

St. Thomas Aquinas held up four Cardinal Virtues that he considered important for everyone to strive for, but especially for political leaders. These virtues include moderation, courage, justice and prudence. Most people have a general sense of what is entailed in these virtues, except perhaps in regard to prudence. Prudence is not about being cautious or timid; it is about using good judgment to make decisions in complex situations. Aristotle considered prudence, or practical wisdom, to be essential for the wise leader. The higher the office, the more important it is that a person possess essential virtues. John Adams observed, "Because power corrupts, society's demands for moral authority and character increase as the importance of the position increases." The president of the United States, for example, nominates individuals to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court. The president is also the commander in chief of the most powerful military in the world. In

all leaders, Catholics should look for those who have the courage of their convictions, and at the same time, are willing to work with others, even those they disagree with, to advance legislation that promotes the common good of all citizens. *The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* states: "In this perspective, responsible authority also means authority exercised with those virtues that make it possible to put power into practice as service (patience, modesty, moderation, charity, efforts to share), an authority exercised by persons who are able to accept the common good, and not prestige or the gaining of personal advantages, as the true goal of their work." America is going through troubling times. God's grace is needed. Pray not only at Mass, but daily. Pray that all elected officials will seek to protect human life and the dignity of all persons and preserve our democratic and religious freedoms.