

# MOUNTAIN MAYORS

## *An Alliance for Cooperation & Action*

October 30, 2008

Dear Fellow Citizens,

Given the historic nature of this year's ballot, The Mountain Mayors would like share our positions and thinking on the ballot questions that we have reached significant agreement upon. For those ballot questions not included in this statement, we either did not discuss or did not reach a consensus position.

**MOUNTAIN MAYORS**  
*Ballot Question Positions*

**Referendum O – Support /Vote YES**  
**Amendment 59 – Support /Vote YES**  
**Amendment 52 – Opposed / Vote NO**

### **Referendum O – Support /Vote YES**

The Colorado Constitution is the guiding document for representative democracy in the state. As such it is the blueprint for the powers, responsibilities, and limits of government in Colorado. Despite the importance of the document, it has been relatively simple to amend. Consequently, rather than a concise workable document, the Colorado Constitution has become a patchwork of contradictory mandates and a focal point for debates over the state budget.

The current approach has not been to the advantage of Colorado residents.

Referendum O raises the bar for changing our state constitution, while simultaneously ensuring that citizens have a direct method of enacting legislation. We believe that the changes proposed by Referendum O are good ones.

Referendum O requires more signatures from throughout the state's congregational districts to place a constitutional amendment on the ballot. This geographical requirement ensures that future proposed amendments will have more than support from just one part of the state before going to a statewide vote. At the same time, the referendum makes it easier for citizens to put statutory or legislative proposals on the ballot with the assurance that, if approved, the newly approved legislation cannot be changed by the legislature for five years without a two-thirds majority vote.

Citizens often go the route of changing the constitution for fear that legislators will amend any approved news laws during the next legislative session. Referendum O makes it harder for the legislature to tamper with such citizen led statutory changes.

Constitutional amendments should be reserved for issues of significant long-term impact; not an ideological response to the issue of the day. They should meet a higher standard before being placed on the ballot.

Referendum O is a reasonable change and sensible adjustment to our state constitution.

MOUNTAIN MAYORS

**Amendment 59 – Support /Vote YES**

State government in Colorado has been hampered for too long by conflicting mandates in the state constitution. Amendment 59, known as Savings Accounts for Education, or SAFE, offers the opportunity to address these conflicts and prepare the state to better address issues in the 21st century.

Currently, amendments such as TABOR and 23 work at cross purposes. While TABOR works to restrict state government spending, Amendment 23 demands additional state spending on education. The resulting conflict is akin to driving a car with both feet simultaneously on the break and the accelerator. Such an approach is counterproductive in a car as well as in state government. The current conflict ensures that legislators are hamstrung in their efforts to address statewide challenges, forced to rob one program to pay for another, and prevented from establishing something as prudent as a rainy-day fund.

Amendment 59 presents reasoned changes to the constitution. By removing TABOR's complicated budgeting formulas, while keeping the requirement that all taxes be voted on by citizens, and eliminating amendment 23's educational funding mandate, and instead putting budget surpluses into an educational saving account, Amendment 59 brings fiscal common sense back to Colorado's constitution.

**Amendment 52 – Opposed / Vote NO**

Amendment 52 is an effort to shore up transportation funding in our state. Unfortunately, amending the constitution to include funding mandates for a particular statewide issue has limited value. We opposed this approach to meeting the state's transportation infrastructure needs.

We are well aware of the funding challenges facing Colorado's transportation infrastructure through the work of the Governor's blue ribbon panel on transportation and the efforts of Colorado Department of Transportation director Russell George. We know that more money is necessary to keep our transportation infrastructure safe and adequate.

Unfortunately, Amendment 52 doesn't give CDOT the tools it needs to address infrastructure and congestion issues. Instead, it puts funding mandates in the constitution for transportation and the same time Amendment 59 proposes taking funding mandates out of the constitution for education. Our state already has experience with budgeting with the ballot box and, although there is nothing wrong with a statutory law about how to spend public dollars, such legislation does not belong in our constitution.

Please be sure to vote on November 4!

Sincerely,

The Mountain Mayors

Frank Breslin, New Castle

Bruce Christensen, Glenwood Springs

Leroy Duroux, Basalt

Michael Hassig, Carbondale

Mick Ireland, Aspen

Keith Lambert, Rifle

Roy McClung, Parachute

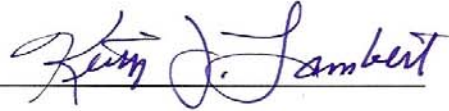
Doug Mercatoris, Snowmass Village

MOUNTAIN MAYORS



Frank Breslin

Mayor, Town of New Castle



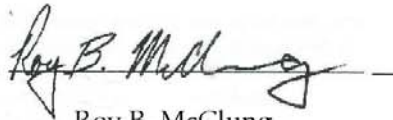
Keith Lambert

Mayor, City of Rifle




Bruce Christensen

Mayor, City of Glenwood Springs



Roy B. McClung

Mayor, Town of Parachute



Leroy Duroux

Mayor, Town of Basalt



Doug Mercatoris

Mayor, Town of Snowmass Village



Michael Hassig

Mayor, Town of Carbondale



Mick Ireland

Mayor, City of Aspen