

# CIRULI ASSOCIATES POLL

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## Third-Annual Citizens Poll Shows Few Ballot Issues With Majority Support

In a new statewide poll of likely voters by Ciruli Associates, the most popular of 13 ballot issues tested was Amendment 52 – shifting severance tax dollars collected from gas and oil production to roads – winning with 64 percent support.

### Summary of Ballot Issues

<u>Ballot Questions</u>	<u>Vote For</u>	<u>Vote Against</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Never Vote on Amendments</u>
Amendment 52 – Severance tax for roads	64%	12%	18%	5%
Amendment 53 – Criminal responsibility	58	18	19	5
Amendment 50 – Expanded gaming	55	28	10	4
Amendment 58 – Increase severance tax	51	25	19	5
Amendment 56 – Health insurance for 20 or more employees	48	30	17	5
Amendment 54 – Limit contributions by government contractors	45	22	28	6
Amendment 59 – School fund	45	33	18	5
Amendment 49 – No payroll deduction	44	33	20	5
Amendment 57 – Safe workplace for employees	41	37	18	4
Amendment 47 – Right to work	39	40	17	5
Amendment 55 – Fired for just cause	39	38	18	5
Referendum O – Increase signatures for constitutional amendments	38	26	30	6
Referendum L – 21 to serve in State House	27	55	13	4

*Ciruli Associates, N501, 2008*

*Question: The following proposals are on the November 2008 election ballot. The description of the proposal is taken from the state election blue book mailed by the state to all voters. Please tell me, as of today, will you definitely vote for the proposal, likely vote for the proposal, likely vote against the proposal or definitely vote against the proposal? [Read in ballot order]*

The Third-Annual Citizens Poll of 501 registered voters, conducted Sept. 19-23, 2008, was sponsored by the Economic Development Council of Colorado (EDCC), a statewide consortium of local and regional economic development professionals. The statewide survey was conducted by Ciruli Associates with 501 Colorado voters. The statistical range of error of  $\pm 4.4$  percentage points.

Also gaining majority support was Governor Ritter's severance tax increase initiative (Amendment 58) with 51 percent in favor and one-quarter of voters opposed; an organized labor-sponsored initiative to increase the criminal liability of executives (Amendment 53) received 58 percent of voters' approval; and the casino-sponsored initiative to expand their hours, limits and games (Amendment 50) was winning with 55 percent support.

The right to work initiative (Amendment 47) has more voters opposing it, 40 percent, than those in favor, 39 percent – and will likely lose. Also in a poor position three weeks before early voting is the referendum to drop the age of serving in the State House from 25 years old to 21; barely one-quarter of voters support it (27%), while more than one-half (55%) are opposed.

The remaining amendments tested ranged from the high 30- to the high 40-percent levels in support. A few will likely pass closely due to about one-fifth of voters who are still undecided, but most will likely lose. Referendum O, proposing an increase in the number of signatures to initiate a constitutional amendment, has the highest percentage of undecided – 30 percent.

### **Research Design**

The 501 respondents of the telephone survey were selected from a random sample of Colorado registered voters who regularly vote in presidential-year elections. Voters were then screened to determine their likelihood to vote. This is the third-annual survey for the EDCC on economic development and government issues. Statistical range of accuracy in 19 out of 20 cases is plus or minus 4.4 percentage points for a sample size of 501 – meaning that 95 percent of the time if all voters with telephones in Colorado had been surveyed, the findings would differ from the survey results by no more than plus or minus 4.4 percentage points. Survey results can be affected by other factors, such as question wording and order.

### **Ballot Question Wording**

Amendment 47 is a constitutional amendment that prohibits requiring an employee to join or pay dues or fees to a labor union as a condition of employment. On Amendment 47, will you...

Amendment 49 is a constitutional amendment prohibiting the state or local governments from taking payroll deductions for dues for private organizations and labor unions, except deductions for employee pension plans, saving programs, health care plans, tax withholding and court-ordered liens, and charitable contributions. On Amendment 49, will you...

Amendment 50 is a constitutional amendment to allow residents of Central City, Black Hawk and Cripple Creek to vote to increase their casinos' betting limit, add games and extend hour of operation. Additional gaming revenue would go to Colorado community colleges. On Amendment 50, will you...

Amendment 52 is a constitutional amendment that will require the state legislature to spend a portion of the state's severance tax collection from gas and oil production on highway projects. On Amendment 52, will you...

Amendment 53 is a statutory amendment that would hold a business executive criminally responsible for the business' failure to perform a duty required by law if the official knew of the duty and the business failed to perform it. On Amendment 53, will you...

Amendment 54 is a constitutional amendment that prohibits government contractors holding sole-source contracts that do not use competitive bidding process from contributing to a political party or candidate for the contract's duration or two years after and prohibits contributors to ballot issue campaigns from entering into contracts related to the ballot issues. Prohibition includes labor organizations holding collective bargaining agreements with state or local governments. On Amendment 54, will you...

Amendment 55 is a constitutional amendment that prohibits private-sector employers from firing or suspending full-time employees, except for specific reasons; and allows an employee who believes he or she was improperly fired or suspended to sue the employer. On Amendment 55, will you...

Amendment 56 is a constitutional amendment requiring private employers with 20 or more employees to provide health insurance for employees and their dependents or pay for insurance through a new state authority. Limits the amount an employee must pay for coverage and sets minimum standards for health insurance plans. On Amendment 56, will you...

Amendment 57 is a statutory amendment requiring every private employer in Colorado with ten or more employees to provide a safe and healthy workplace and to allow injured employees to seek damages in court beyond the worker compensation system benefits. On Amendment 57, will you...

Amendment 58 is a statutory amendment to increase the state severance tax paid by gas and oil companies \$321 million dollars annually by eliminating an existing state tax credit for local property taxes paid by gas and oil companies. The increased tax revenue would go to college scholarships for state residents, wildlife habitat, renewable energy projects, and local transportation and water projects. On Amendment 58, will you...

Amendment 59 is a constitutional amendment that eliminates rebates that taxpayers receive when the state collects more money than it is allowed, and spend the money on preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade public education. It eliminates the required inflationary increase for preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade education spending, and sets aside money in a new savings account for preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade education. On Amendment 59, will you...

Referendum L is a constitutional amendment reducing the age to be a member of the Colorado State Legislature from 25 years old to 21 years old. On Referendum L, will you...

Referendum O is a constitutional amendment that decreases the number of signatures required to place a statutory initiative on the ballot, and increases the number of signatures required to place a constitutional initiative on the ballot. It requires that eight percent of signatures for constitutional initiatives be gathered from each congressional district and that drafts of proposed constitutional initiatives be submitted for review earlier in the year. It extends the time period for collecting signatures for statutory initiatives, increases the number of votes required for the legislature to change a statutory initiative for five years after the statute takes effect, and allows

the public and state legislators to comment on initiatives at a public meeting. On Referendum O, will you...

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Ciruli Associates is a non-partisan research firm providing polling, election analysis and political commentary to Colorado and national organizations and media since 1976.