

Ballot offers variety of chances to make your voice heard

Lots of interesting things on the ballot on Tuesday. Here's my take on a few of them.

Amendment 39: Vote yes.

I wish this amendment weren't necessary. School districts all over the country have become bloated with mid-level bureaucrats, precisely because they are tax-supported unnatural monopolies. Once we get vouchers, measures like 39 can go away: Market pressures and the threat of parents taking their money elsewhere will keep schools focusing on what they're supposed to.

Sure, the education establishment opposes 39. It also opposes vouchers, and hates No Child Left Behind. Guess what, guys? By fighting us tooth and nail on the voucher issue, you get NCLB and Amendment 39. I suppose you think anything is bearable, as long as you get your subsidy. We'll see.

Amendment 40: Vote no.

I'm a big fan of term limits for elected officials. It's good for legislators to be drawn from and return to the ranks of society to live under the laws they make. But for the judiciary, it's different. The function of judges is to interpret the law. The judiciary can then serve as a useful counterbalance to legislative excess.

This system of checks and balances can work only if the judiciary is independent, insulated from the political process as much as possible. Yes, the Supreme Court of Colorado is pretty liberal. But this too shall pass. In the meantime, I'd rather live with the imperfections of a liberal court than those of a politically appointed one.



OPINION

BARRY FAGIN

Contributing columnist

nored.

Measures such as Amendment 41 make us feel good about ourselves, but they don't accomplish anything important. They address the symptom but not the disease. They distract us from the real question: Exactly what should government do?

Right now, there's an enormous pile of cheese in the middle of the Statehouse floor. Voters are being called in to do something about the mouse problem. No thanks. Better to ask what all that fermented curd is doing there in the first place.

Amendment 42: Vote no. It's not right to make some people give others more money. Even if there's more of us. Even if they're big bad corporations. Even if we just really, really want them to. Nor do minimum wage laws work. They throw everyone who's worth less than minimum wage out on the street.

For a policy idea to make it into law, it's got to pass the "heart" test (Is it

Amendment 43: Vote no.

This is a "motherhood" amendment. Voting against ethics in government is like voting against motherhood. Who could be opposed? Well, me.

Campaign finance reform, ethics legislation, lobbying regulations, all those eventually become tools for political gamesmanship, or they're ig-

right on principle?) and the "head" test (Will it work?). Amendment 42 fails both.

Amendment 43 and Referendum I. The ACLU tells me I should vote no on 43, but yes on I. Focus on the Family tells me I should vote yes on 43 but no on I. Neither of those positions make sense to me. I'm voting yes on both.

My gay friends will complain about "heterosexual privilege." Sorry, guys and gals, but it takes both to make a baby. Heterosexuality isn't a social construct, it's how human life creates and renews itself. Defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman just makes sense to me. I admit it, I'm a "heterosexist." So sue me.

But why shouldn't gay men and women be encouraged to form monogamous relationships? Anything that encourages responsibility and discourages sexual promiscuity ought to be supported, particularly among gay men.

I know it's a stereotype, but all the research I've seen shows that multiple partners and risky sexual behavior are more prominent among gay men than any other group. I'm thinking that's because they're, well, guys. If Referendum I encourages more people to behave responsibly, I'm all for it.

One last thing: Read your voter information carefully the night before. When you vote, think of your fellow citizens in uniform who help make it possible. Tell 'em thanks if you remember. See you at the polls!

Fagin, of Colorado Springs, is a senior fellow at the Independence Institute. His column appears on alternate Thursdays. Readers may e-mail him at barry@faginfamily.net.