

Ballot proposals examined

Bargaining for troopers, tighter bail

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the fourth in a series on the Nov. 7 state ballot proposals by the League of Women Voters of Troy. The league is a national nonpartisan organization which promotes political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government.)

PROPOSAL G
The issue: Should state police troopers have collective bargaining rights?

The salaries of state police troopers, like those of all state civil service employees, are set by the Michigan Civil Service Commission, a four-member body appointed by the governor.

Each year, after receiving recommendations for adjustments in troopers' salaries, fringe and retirement benefits from the Michigan State Police Troopers Association, the commission considers those recommendations in light of anticipated revenue estimates provided by the State Department of Management and Budget.

The commission then decides the level of salary increase for all state employees, including state police troopers, for the fiscal year.

State police troopers have noted for several years that their salaries are lower than those paid to law enforcement officials in many cities and counties throughout the state. They point out their job is equally as dangerous as that of municipal police officers.

The Michigan State Police Troopers Association believes that with collective bargaining, the troopers will be in a better position to bargain for more adequate compensation and will have a greater voice in determining working conditions.

The association initiated a petition drive to amend the State Constitution by giving troopers

and sergeants collective bargaining rights on compensation, hours, working conditions, retirement, pensions, and all other aspects of employment except promotions and performance.

It would also require compulsory arbitration of any disputes not resolved within 30 days after collective bargaining begins.

Those who oppose the amendment fear greater expenses to the taxpayers if troopers receive a raise in salaries and benefits are inevitable, and that bargaining may lead to strikes or work stoppages which would endanger public safety.

The signatures of the petition were certified, so the voters will decide whether state police troopers should be allowed to bargain collectively and to require compulsory arbitration of their disputes over salaries and benefits. They would still be prohibited from striking.

PROPOSITION K
The issue: Should career criminals be denied bail?

The State Constitution currently provides that all persons, except those accused of murder or treason, are entitled to bail.

Anyone charged with a crime other than murder or treason has a constitutional right to be released

from jail while the case is pending and waiting to be heard in court so long as bail has been posted. Bail is required to assure that the defendant will not leave the state prior to the trial.

Many people believe that those charged with committing a violent crime or have demonstrated a history of violent criminal activity, often referred to as "career criminals", should not be released from jail on bail while their case is pending.

They believe the potential of such criminals to commit another crime while free on bail poses a threat to the community.

Others, however, believe that to deny bail is to presume that the defendant is guilty, thus contradicting our judicial system which is based on the premise of a man being innocent until proven guilty.

The ballot proposal, a joint resolution passed by a two-thirds vote of both houses of the legislature, would amend the State Constitution by denying bail to those who have been convicted of two or more violent felonies in the past 15 years.

It would also deny bail to those who are arrested for violent felony while released on bail, probation, or parole as a result of an earlier arrest or conviction for a violent felony.

City ills is forum agenda

Benjamin L. Hooks, NAACP executive director, will present the keynote address during the Michigan League for Human Services' 66th Annual Conference Thursday, Nov. 9, at the Radisson Cadillac Hotel, downtown.

Twelve workshops and three seminars are scheduled throughout the day-long conference which will focus on the slow economic progress of cities. The sessions will address such issues as solutions for urban problems, national health insurance, welfare and work.

For more information about the conference, contact Mae Derdarian, United Community Services, 833-0822.

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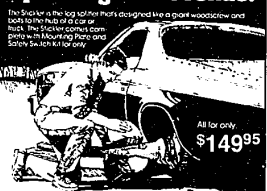
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