

Vote Faithfully!

The ELCA is a Public Church

As people of God, we believe in promoting faithful and non-partisan voter participation. All members of ELCA congregations are encouraged to use the rich faith-based resources of the church to guide their voting on measures that affect all people.

We Are the People of God

Scripture reveals God's presence in all realms of life, including political life. This church understands government as a means through which God works to preserve creation and build a more peaceful and just social order in a sinful world. The electoral process is one way in which we live out our affirmation of baptism to "serve all people, following the example of our Lord Jesus," and "to strive for justice and peace in all the earth."

As people of God, we have been freed to love our neighbor, seek peace and justice, and care for God's creation. Faith should inform not only our participation but also how we look at public issues and interpret what is happening in political life.



Important Dates

Monday, October 14

Ballots mailed to registered Colorado voters

Tuesday, November 5

Election Day

Thursday, February 27, 2020

Colorado Lutheran Day at the Legislature

Resources to Know

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry-Colorado

www.lam-co.org

More on the ELCA's advocacy work

www.elca.org/Advocacy

ELCA Social Statements & Messages

www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society

Check your voter registration status:

www.govotecolorado.com

"He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?"

Micah 6:8

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Lutheran Advocacy Ministry-Colorado
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Colorado Ballot Measures Voter Guide

Fall 2019



Lutheran Advocacy Ministry-Colorado

Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA

Vote Ballot Measures First!

Direct Democracy

Colorado is a ballot initiative state. This means that eligible voters not only elect representatives to make policy decisions, they also sometimes directly vote on public policy.

This direct democracy element of Colorado's civic structure is unique, and voters need to know the important decision-making role they play in building and maintaining thriving communities. Data from recent elections shows that many voters don't vote all the way to the end of the ballot. This incomplete voting creates an obstacle to realizing the equitable policies and thriving communities we desire.

Ballot Measures Matter Too

Odd-numbered election years can get lost in the shuffle sometimes. This is particularly true with ballot measures, even though they have an important impact on our state policy landscape.

You may have municipal candidates for election on your ballot, and it is important to research candidates for offices governing your area. Regardless, we encourage you to vote on the measures at the bottom of your ballot first. This may include not just statewide measures, but local-, county-, and district-level measures as well.

Your Colorado Ballot Measures

Colorado voters will have two statewide ballot measures to consider this fall. Both measures are statutory and have been referred to voters by the state legislature.

The positions taken in this Voter Guide were adopted by the Lutheran Advocacy Ministry-Colorado Policy Committee on October 4, 2019.

Measure	Title	What it would do	Things to think about	Our position
Proposition CC	Retain Revenue for Education and Transportation	Allow the state government to keep all the money it collects at existing tax rates every year beginning in the 2019-2020 state budget year; and require that any money kept over the existing TABOR limit be spent for public schools, higher education and transportation projects.	<p>As a church body, the ELCA has deliberated on economic issues in our Social Statement, "Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All." This statement is available online at elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Economic-Life. Key selections from this statement that are relevant to Proposition CC include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Through human decisions and actions, God is at work in economic life." (p. 3) • "While autonomy and self-sufficiency are highly valued in our society, as people of faith we confess that we depend on God and are interdependent with one another." (p. 3) • "While economic reasoning assumes that resources are scarce relative to people's wants, we affirm that God promises a world where there is enough for everyone, if only we would learn how to use and share what God has given for the sake of all." (p. 4) • "We call for policies that promote stable families, strong schools, and safe neighborhoods; [and] addressing the barriers individuals face in preparing for and sustaining a livelihood (such as lack of education, transportation, child care and health care). (p. 8) • "Government is intended to serve God's purposes by limiting or countering narrow economic interests and promoting the common good. Paying taxes to enable government to carry out these and other purposes is an appropriate expression of our stewardship in society, rather than something to be avoided." (p. 11) <p>Colorado's TABOR (Taxpayer Bill of Rights) restricts the amount of money the state can keep above a certain mandatory limit that grows only with inflation and population growth, not including any gains in productivity or efficiency. This has resulted in a surplus of revenue in recent years which, per TABOR, would be refunded to individual taxpayers in small amounts (\$25-90 per taxpayer at most).</p> <p>The collective impact of investing the surplus - over \$300 million - in education and transportation, rather than distributing small refunds to individuals, will make a much greater difference in our community. It will benefit services that all Coloradans depend on for strong, healthy communities. These are dollars we collect at existing tax rates, which would not change if the measure passed.</p> <p>We support Prop CC because of our theological commitments to economic justice, our belief that God's purposes can and do work through government, and our belief in supporting the common good through sharing our abundance with one another.</p>	YES
Proposition DD	Authorize and Tax Sports Betting	Legalize and regulate sports betting; authorize a state tax on casinos' revenue from this betting; and use most of the tax revenue to create a dedicated funding source for water projects and obligations	<p>The ELCA's body of social teaching is clear in its opposition to state-sponsored gambling, including state lotteries, as a means of funding public goods that should instead be supported by equitably-collected tax revenue. Proposition DD would legalize and tax sports betting operated by private casinos, giving the state of Colorado the power to tax these activities but not operate them.</p> <p>The negative effects of gambling on the vulnerable or low-income should be weighed against the positive benefits of tax revenue being used for social purposes. We invite voters to consider a number of questions as they deliberate Prop DD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The estimated revenue to be collected in the first fiscal year of legal sports betting is between \$16-29 million • Water resource needs are a critical future-oriented environmental public policy issue for an arid state like Colorado • Gambling is a vice that can become addictive and destructive; making sports betting easier to access could foment those addictions; the total amount allocated from Prop DD for gambling addiction services is just \$130,000 out of up to \$29 million in revenue • Sports betting already exists in an underground economy of bookies and black market sports books; Prop DD would bring that economy into the light and allow the state to tax revenue while providing consumer protections • Some environmental groups oppose Prop DD over concerns that the water projects it funds could harm communities, including hydroelectric dam projects 	Neutral