PROPOSALS TO AMEND IDAHO'S CONSTITUTION

H.J.R. 4
Authority to Legalize Drugs
Ballot Question

Shall Section 26, Article III of the Constitution of the State of Idaho be amended to provide that only the Idaho Legislature shall have the power and authority to legalize the growing, producing, manufacturing, transporting, selling, delivering, dispensing, administering, prescribing, distributing, possessing, or using of marijuana, narcotics, or other psychoactive substances?

H.J.R. 4 Text

Section 26. POWER AND AUTHORITY OVER INTOXICATING LIQUORS AND PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES. (1) From and after the thirty-first day of December in the year 1934, the legislature of the state of Idaho shall have full power and authority to permit, control and regulate or prohibit the manufacture, sale, keeping for sale, and transportation for sale, of intoxicating liquors for beverage purposes.

(2) Effective immediately upon adoption by the voters of Idaho, only the legislature of the state of Idaho shall have power and authority to legalize the growing, producing, manufacturing, transporting, selling, delivering, dispensing, administering, prescribing, distributing, possessing, or using of marijuana, narcotics, or other psychoactive substances.

Statement of Meaning, Purpose, and Result to Be Accomplished

This proposed constitutional amendment would give the Legislature exclusive authority to legalize marijuana, narcotics, or other psychoactive substances in the State of Idaho.

Statement FOR the Proposed Amendment

Drugs destroy lives, tear apart families, and threaten the safety of our communities. Decisions about legalizing marijuana, narcotics, and other psychoactive substances are too important to be made lightly. The proposed amendment would ensure that any proposal to legalize these dangerous substances would go through the legislative process. Public hearings would be held on the proposal, where law enforcement and people whose lives have been damaged by drugs would be able to testify. Legislators would carefully consider each proposal and would be publicly accountable for their votes.

Statement AGAINST the Proposed Amendment

The Idaho Constitution says that all political power belongs to the people. But the proposed amendment would take power away from the people by getting rid of their ability to pass drug legalization laws on their own through ballot initiatives. The people are as capable of making good, careful decisions about drug policy as legislators are. The amendment is also unnecessary because if the people did ever pass a poorly considered law legalizing drugs, the Legislature would have the power to amend or repeal it.

H.J.R. 6
English as Official State Language
Ballot Question

Shall Article X of the Constitution of the State of Idaho be amended by the addition of a new Section 8, to provide that the English language shall be the official language for the state of Idaho, and to further provide that, except as required by federal law, English shall be used in all public proceedings, public documents, public instruction, and any other public acts of any public institution in the state of Idaho?

H.J.R. 6 Text

Section 8. ENGLISH THE OFFICIAL STATE LANGUAGE. The English language shall be the official language for the state of Idaho. Except as required by federal law, English shall be used in all public proceedings, public documents, public instruction, and any other public acts of any public institution in the state of Idaho.

Statement of Meaning, Purpose, and Result to Be Accomplished

This proposed constitutional amendment would designate English as the official state language. All official speeches, meetings, and other proceedings of state and local governments, such as city council meetings and jury trials, would be conducted in English, and instruction in public schools would be provided in English. All documents of state and local government entities would be published in English. However, the amendment would allow languages other than English to be used when required by federal law.

Statements FOR the Proposed Amendment

The amendment could encourage non-English speakers to learn English to be able to better participate in public life. This could promote unity and create a stronger sense of community and shared identity. Non-English speakers would still have language assistance for critical government services, because that is required by federal law. The amendment could promote social cohesion without endangering anyone.

The amendment could promote cost-efficient government by limiting the resources spent on communications in languages other than English.

Statements AGAINST the Proposed Amendment

The amendment is unnecessary because state law already makes English the official state language. The existing law is better than the amendment because the existing law is much more detailed. For example, the law allows public schools to teach foreign languages to interested students. The amendment, by requiring that all public instruction be conducted in English, might not allow this.

The amendment could create social division by signaling to non-English speakers that they are unwelcome in the state and their communities.