



## Answers to 10 common questions on Props. 107 & 108

### 1. Would this eliminate caucuses?

No. Caucuses would still be used for parties to identify candidates, to advance delegates to assemblies, to select precinct committee workers, etc.

### 2. Why did you decide to make delegates in the presidential primary “winner-take-all?”

To make Colorado a more desirable state for candidates/campaigns, thereby increasing our influence on the national process. For example, on March 15 of this year there were primaries in Florida (D246 delegates/R99 delegates), Illinois (D183/R69), Ohio (D160/R66) and North Carolina (D120/R72). If Colorado (D78/R37) awarded its smaller pool of delegates proportionally, we'd be less likely to draw attention from campaigns and thereby influence the national discussion.

Parties will tell you this binds delegates whose candidates may have dropped out. What they won't tell you is there are rules on unbinding delegates in those circumstances.

### 3. Isn't it already easy for unaffiliated voters to participate?

Easy is a relative term. To participate in a primary they pay for and retain their preferred status, unaffiliateds must affiliate with a party -- which can be done up to and including on election day -- and then change their affiliation back after the election. While it sounds easy, asking someone who views themselves as independent to declare to be something they're not is a barrier to participation.

We know from general-election turnout in Colorado that unaffiliated voters are active and interested. The best -- and most fair -- way to increase participation is to treat unaffiliateds the same as Republicans and Democrats, which is to mail them a ballot.

### 4. Wouldn't this be bad for parties?

The current system is bad for parties, as voters are deciding not to affiliate in the first place. Almost 50% of voters age 40 and under are unaffiliated, and of newly registered voters in 2014 chose not to affiliate with a party.

Involving more than 1 million independent voters in taxpayer-financed primaries can provide parties and campaigns a new way to engage and identify unaffiliated voters whose values match those of the party and to then work to have them affiliate.

An AP poll from May found just 12 percent of Republicans think the GOP is very responsive to ordinary voters, while 25 percent of Democrats say the same of their party.

### 5. Does this increase the likelihood of shenanigans?

There is no data to back up that argument. These measures comply with the law and are modeled after what's being done in a majority of states. Increased turnout is more likely to limit shenanigans than systems that limit participation. We are opening primaries to unaffiliateds, but are not changing the rules on how far in advance Rs and Ds must change affiliation (22 days) to participate in the other's primary.

## **6. What about the charge that this will increase the rate of “invalid” ballots in Colorado?**

Providing an additional 1 million voters who pay for an election the opportunity to participate in that election should be our top priority.

The estimates put forward in the Blue Book are wrong, and are being used by partisans opposed to our measures. (The Blue Book will declare 7% spoilage based on data out of WA, but the actual number is closer to 0.51%.)

Simple instructions to vote in one primary, but not both, are no more complicated than instructions to use a certain color pen, to fill in a bubble or complete an arrow, to use a privacy sleeve, to sign the back of the envelope, and to return it before 7 pm on election day.

## **7. Aren't these too expensive given state budgetary concerns?**

A presidential primary is estimated to cost about \$5 million every 4 years. That's .0004 (four-one-thousandths of 1 %) of the general fund over the next four years. Conservative estimates are that a presidential primary would have a 10x greater economic impact than what is spent to hold it.

If cost is your top concern, why not just ask statisticians to come up with a representative sample of 500 Colorado voters and let them vote? Or, how about saving the state the \$5 million it costs to put on Democratic and Republican primaries every two years and let them select their candidates through assembly or some other means not paid for by taxpayers?

Don't like those choices? Neither do we. Price shouldn't trump participation when it comes to the most fundamental part of the democratic process. Should our measures pass, voters will have said as much.

## **8. Is it true some counties – particularly smaller ones – don't have the machines to handle your combined ballot, and this could force them to buy costly new machines?**

No. The initiative offers clerks the alternative of sending two ballots (with instructions to complete only one) to unaffiliated voters if their equipment can't handle a combined ballot. Second, the state's new Universal Voting System can easily handle the combined ballot, according to the Denver Elections Director, who has tested it.

## **9. Does this make it harder for candidates to get on the ballot?**

No. Parties would still select the candidates for primaries. The current process – where candidates petition onto the ballot or be placed on via caucus and assembly – would be unchanged.

## **10. What if there are unintended, unanticipated consequences?**

These are not constitutional amendments, they are statutory initiatives, which can be changed by a vote of the legislature and signed into law by the governor.