



VOTER GUIDE

Your ballot will contain five state questions, several statewide elected offices, and a whole bunch of legislative, judicial, and county races. We'd like to help make it a little easier to understand.

All of the state questions are constitutional amendments (rather than "just" regular law changes), which means each one is a big deal with serious ramifications. Likewise, many of the elected positions affect your daily life and many people aren't even aware that the position exists.

We've tried to present just a very top-level, basic amount of information here. We encourage you to do additional research and reading before you vote on Nov. 6th.

SQ 793

ALLOWING OPTOMETRISTS IN WALMART

SUPPORTERS:

- More convenient
- Less expensive glasses & eye care
- 47 other states are already doing it

OPPONENTS:

- Big chain retailers kill small businesses
- You'll get sub-standard eye care
- Constitutional amendment goes too far

SQ793 would amend the state constitution to allow retailers (e.g. Walmart) to own & operate their own eye care clinics. Currently eye care clinics can be located inside a Walmart, but they must pay rent. This State Question would allow the retailer to own them outright. Because it is a constitutional amendment, it would also limit what the state legislature can do to oversee the industry, which is much different than other states.

SQ 794

MARSY'S LAW aka VICTIM'S BILL OF RIGHTS

SUPPORTERS:

- Crime victims & their families should have the same rights as alleged perpetrators.

OPPONENTS:

- They already have the same rights.
- SQ is too onerous, expensive, and possibly unconstitutional.

SQ794 would amend the state constitution to add several new rights for crime victims and their families, such as the right to be notified of proceedings and to have a voice in any plea bargaining that may occur. Because the measure contains multiple parts, it may violate the single-subject rule already in the state constitution, so expect some legal challenges. Opponents also argue that our court system is already underfunded, and this would add to the strain.

SQ 798

GOVERNOR & LT. GOVERNOR ON THE SAME TICKET

SUPPORTERS:

- Governor & Lt. Governor should run on the same ticket, like the President & VP.

OPPONENTS:

- Having them separate gives the public more say in who is running the state.
- Just do away with the Lt. Gov position.

SQ798 would amend the state constitution to require the Governor & Lieutenant Governor to run as a single ticket, in the same way the President & Vice President do, beginning in 2026.

Supporters say it just makes sense and presents a more unified vision for our state. Opponents say this limits voter's choices and that if we're going to change something, we should just do away with the Lt. Governor because they don't really do anything anyway.

SQ 800

VISION FUND aka ANOTHER RAINY DAY FUND

SUPPORTERS:

- We need a special account to save our oil & gas money for times when the price of oil drops too low.

OPPONENTS:

- We already have two other accounts like this one.
- We can't afford to save more right now.

SQ800 would amend the state constitution to create a trust fund called the Oklahoma Vision Fund. A portion of the tax revenue from oil & gas production (aka the Gross Production Tax, or GPT) would go into this fund, and then a small portion of the fund would flow back into the General Revenue Fund each year to be appropriated for state services. Funds could also be invested in stocks.

SQ 801

ALLOW SCHOOLS TO SPEND BUILDING MONEY ON OTHER STUFF

SUPPORTERS:

- School districts should be allowed to spend property tax money on more than just buildings.

OPPONENTS:

- Schools need MORE money, not just reallocated money.
- Only benefits rich districts.

SQ801 amends the state constitution to allow schools to spend property tax dollars on more than just buildings. Supporters say this would help districts use money to pay teachers more and attract new teachers. Opponents say that this only benefits big, wealthy districts who have more property tax income and that the real issue is that education is underfunded overall. They argue that this is just a way for the legislature to "pass the buck" and avoid properly funding education.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

The Attorney General is the head law enforcement officer for the state. The AG's office prosecutes crimes that violate state law, whether the offense be by an individual or an organization. How rigidly the AG decides to enforce certain laws can have a big effect on how people behave and how certain businesses operate. Very important.

STATE TREASURER

The State Treasurer manages the state's money, within the confines and requirements of state law. This includes managing the state's investment portfolio, the Oklahoma 529 College Savings Plan, unclaimed property, and other duties.

STATE AUDITOR & INSPECTOR

The State Auditor & Inspector is responsible for auditing the financial records and practices of the State Treasurer and county treasurers, as well as that of all the state agencies, boards, and commissions and of all the District Attorneys. The position can also do investigative audits when wrongdoing by a state entity is reported or suspected.

CORPORATION COMMISSIONER

There are three (3) Corporation Commissioners for the state. Their primary responsibility is to oversee the energy industry - that includes oil & gas and renewable sources such as wind and solar production. Because Oklahoma is so dependent on oil & gas, this is regarded as a rather powerful position.

LABOR COMMISSIONER

The Labor Commissioner is responsible for overseeing workplace safety within the state, labor relations between employees and employers, professional licenses, and the often joked about safety inspections of elevators and amusement park rides,

INSURANCE COMMISSIONER

The Insurance Commissioner is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the insurance industry, including health, auto, life, liability, and other types of insurance. Since everyone has insurance - likely multiple types - this position is more important than most people realize.

STATE SUPERINTENDENT

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction is the head of the State Department of Education. The position serves as the face of education for the state and helps shape the policies and focus of education in our state. As you might have guessed, this is also an important position that impacts the lives of hundreds of thousands of teachers & students.

Most Oklahoma voters will see one or more county officials up for a vote this election. Many people forget the importance of the county government. Each county is governed by eight elected officials plus a District Attorney. Counties are responsible for the court, law enforcement, jails and other county property, roads, highways, and bridges, your property taxes, and a whole bunch of other stuff. Below is a brief description of each of the county offices that you may see on your ballot.

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS	Every county in the state has three (3) County Commissioners who serve staggered nine-year terms. They are responsible for managing the business of their county - county roads, highways, and bridges, buildings (including courthouses and jails), Sheriff's department, etc. In Oklahoma, there is a lot of power at the county level. Very important.
COUNTY TREASURER	Manages the money of the county. Collects taxes and distributes them according to the county budget.
COUNTY CLERK	Serves as the county's bookkeeper; audits and pays the salaries and bills of the county. Also serves as official registrar of deeds.
COUNTY ASSESSOR	Assesses the value of all property within the county. Does not raise or lower the property tax rate, only sets the value of the property.
COUNTY SHERIFF	Responsible for enforcing the law and maintaining the peace everywhere in the county, including within city limits.
DISTRICT COURT CLERK	Responsible for recording, filing, and maintaining records of civil and criminal cases in District Court. Collects fines & fees, handles jurors, etc.
DISTRICT ATTORNEY	Prosecutes crimes within their district, which may include multiple counties. (There are 27 judicial districts in OK.) Not county employees.

OTHER GREAT RESOURCES:



OKPolicy.org



OKVoterGuide.com