



# Capitol Network News

Today's news from Oklahoma's best government information resource

Daily Edition, Tuesday, November 5, 1996

## STATE QUESTIONS WIN VOTER APPROVAL

By Shawn Ashley  
Staff Writer

■(GIT) Oklahoma voters gave their approval Tuesday to six state questions, including all of the three questions developed by a citizens task force charged with examining the need for property tax reform, according to *Legislative Information Network/Capitol Network News* projections.

Computer problems in Oklahoma County made the collection of actual results of Tuesday's election impossible, but with 88 percent of the ballots counted, each of the measures appeared to easily garner more than enough votes for passage.

Voters gave the largest margin of passage — and perhaps an indication of their feelings about crime and corrections issues — to State Question 674, the so-called victims' rights amendment.

State Question 674 establishes constitutional rights for the victims of crime and the family members of victims of crime, including:

- The right to know the status of prosecution and investigation;
- The right to know the location of the defendant from arrest through the serving of a sentence;
- The right to be present at proceedings where the defendant has a right to be present;
- The right to be informed when a defendant escapes or is released; and
- The right to be heard at sentencing and parole hearings.

The question also authorizes the legislature, or the people by initiative or referendum, to enact substantive or procedural laws to define, implement, preserve and protect the rights guaranteed to victims by the constitutional amendment, including the authority to extend any of the rights to juvenile proceedings and, if enacted by the legislature, youthful offender proceedings.

Rep. Wayne Pettigrew, R-Edmond, and Sen. Brooks Douglass, R-Oklahoma City, proposed the question in SJR24.

Voters also gave their approval to State Question 670, which would increase the number of signatures mandated by the state

constitution to call a grand jury. Under the terms of the state question, the number of required signatures will be equal to the number of signatures required to propose legislation by an initiative petition at the county level with the minimum number of signatures increasing to 500 and the maximum number increasing to 5,000.

Additionally, the proposed constitutional amendment requires the legislature to enact laws to prevent corruption in making, filing, circulating and submitting petitions calling for a grand jury.

The proposal was placed on the ballot in  
*See State Questions, page 2*

## SUPREME COURT OKAYS GAMBLING INITIATIVE

By Shawn Ashley  
Staff Writer

■(GIT) The Oklahoma Supreme Court on Tuesday gave its unanimous go-ahead for Oklahoma voters to decide the fate of a casino gambling state question.

Supported by a group known as BOOST — Better Opportunities for Oklahoma Students and Taxpayers — State Question 672, through the creation of a new constitutional section, would make four locations immediately eligible for authorized gaming — the pari-mutuel horse racing facilities at Remington Park in Oklahoma City (Oklahoma County) and Blue Ribbon Downs near Sallisaw (Sequoyah County), as well as anywhere in Love County and a specified tax district in Tulsa County. Until five years following the proposal's approval by the voters, casino gambling would not be allowed in the remaining 73 counties.

The proposal also calls for the establishment of a state gaming commission with the power to provide regulation and enforcement of casino gambling, as well as collection of gaming fees from each licensed gaming facility operator, and for criminal penalties for violation of gaming laws and legalization of obligations incurred in the course of authorized gaming. The gaming commission would

retain a legislatively-approved amount of the fees collected, while the remaining funds would be earmarked for specific computer-related educational purposes, local governments and correctional institutions.

The question was submitted to the Secretary of State for ballot placement after some 202,993 voter signatures were collected, well above the 149,252 needed.

The petition was challenged by Wallace Hughes, who raised questions concerning the petition's constitutionality and form. Specifically, Hughes' constitutional challenge of the petition alleged:

- That it would impermissibly restrict the exercise of Indian sovereignty in violation of the US and Oklahoma constitutions
- That it would violate the 14th amendment to the US Constitution by impermissibly categorizing certain citizens or groups by race and/or national origin;
- That it is contrary to the single-subject mandate of the Oklahoma Constitution; and
- That its gist is misleading and deceptive.

Hughes' challenged the form of the attorney general's substitute ballot title, alleging:

- That the attorney general's use of the word "gambling" instead of "gaming" im-

*See Gambling Initiative, page 2*

### What's Inside

GOP Wins State Congressional Seats .....	3
Elections Change Little in Legislature .....	3
State Paid to Get Rid of Old Plane .....	4
Garrett Pleased with AG's Opinion .....	4
First Step Stopped in Committee .....	5
U.S.-Canada Report Shows Particulate Health Dangers, Acid Rain Progress .....	5
Unofficial Results of General Election .....	6
Calendar .....	11