

BUSINESS REPORT

PAR Releases "Guide to the Proposed Constitutional Amendments"

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PRESS RELEASE

Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana, Inc.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana (PAR) today released its "Guide to the Proposed Constitutional Amendments" for the October 20, 2007, ballot. The "Guide" explains the potential impact of the four amendments that the public will consider in the upcoming election.

"The 'Guide' is designed to help voters understand the propositions and determine for themselves whether to vote for or against each amendment," said Jim Brandt, president of PAR.

Two of the proposed amendments concern the state's supplemental pay program for law enforcement officers and firefighters. Another amendment deals with future retirement benefits for members of state retirement systems. And another amendment provides a property tax exemption for jewelry held on consignment. All of the amendments could potentially affect state or local budgetary flexibility.

The "Guide" provides a background for each amendment, describes the current situation regarding the issue and provides a commentary on each proposed change. Arguments of proponents and opponents of the issues also are provided.

Including the four new proposals, Louisiana voters will have considered 214 amendments since the 1974 Constitution was adopted. To date, voters have approved 148 amendments. No proposed constitutional amendment has been defeated since 2003.

"In order to make an informed decision on these proposals," Brandt said, "voters will have to familiarize themselves with a variety of topics. The good news is that there are only four, fairly straightforward proposals to consider in 2007, as opposed to more lengthy and complex ballots in previous years."

In evaluating each of the current proposals, Brandt urged voters to consider not only the merits of the amendment, but also whether the proposed language belongs in the Constitution.

PAR members will receive a free copy of the "Guide to the Proposed Constitutional Amendments." Others may order copies of the guide for \$3.50 each by writing PAR at P.O.

Box 14776, Baton Rouge, LA 70898-4776 or by calling (225) 926-8414. Special pricing is available for bulk orders. The "Guide" may also be accessed on PAR's web site at la-par.org.