



League of Women Voters of Montezuma County

## THINK BEFORE YOU INK

LWVCO is encouraging the public to be cautious during this period of circulation of initiative petitions.

Voters will be asked to sign a variety of initiative petitions “just to get it on the ballot so people can vote on it”. The League is telling voters: “**Your signature is very valuable**, considering that far fewer signatures are required to qualify a petition for the ballot than voters to pass it on the ballot. **Only sign an initiative petition that you believe belongs on the ballot.**”

In 2006 the largest number of initiatives, 14, appeared on the ballot. This number could go even higher in 2008, a presidential year.

Consider six questions voters can ask themselves to help determine whether or not to sign an initiative petition:

**Is it complex?** Some issues can be decided by a simple **yes** or **no** vote. Complex issues may need to be thoroughly examined and debated in a legislative arena.

**Is it confusing?** Some initiatives are not well written or contain conflicts that may require court resolution or interpretation. This costs the taxpayers additional money to resolve these issues.

**Does it belong in the Constitution?** If an initiative amends the Constitution, consider whether it really belongs there. Is it a fundamental law that should be protected from change? Correcting a constitutional amendment requires another constitutional amendment – another vote of the people – and is cumbersome and costly.

**How will it be funded?** Is it an “unfunded mandate” that would require the Legislature to take funds from other essential programs? Consider the effect on the overall flexibility of a government budget with already limited revenue. An initiative should generally create its own revenue source, and not earmark, restrict or obligate a specific percentage of the General Fund revenues.

**Who is behind it?** You can find out who are the real sponsors and opponents of a petition drive. Contribution and expenditure reports are available through the Election Center at the Secretary of State’s Office at 303-894-2200 or at <http://www.sos.state.co.us>.

**Before you sign, ask to see identification of the signature gatherer.** All signature gatherers are now required to wear a badge that identifies them as a “volunteer circulator” or a “paid circulator”. If the signature gatherer is a paid circulator, his/her badge should also give the name and phone number of who hired him/her. If the petition signature gatherer is not wearing a badge, do not sign the petition.

The League of Women Voters of of Montezuma County is a grassroots, nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government in order to build better communities statewide. More information can be found on the website at [www.lwvcolorado.org](http://www.lwvcolorado.org) or [www.lwvmontezuma.org](http://www.lwvmontezuma.org)