



# Ballot Initiative STRATEGY CENTER

## Ballot Bulletin

### Pre-Election 2009

As the political and pundit class in Washington, DC try to use the 2009 elections as a barometer of where the country is at, they may be looking in all the wrong places.

While much of the Beltway focus has been on gubernatorial elections in New Jersey and Virginia, in addition to increasing interest in a special election for a Republican held congressional seat in upstate New York, ballot measures in Maine and Washington could provide political tea leaf readers a much better bellwether of voter attitudes going into the 2010 election cycle.

In both Maine and Washington, right-wing conservatives are working to advance their anti-government and anti-equality agendas. Voters will decide whether to pass rigid revenue and spending caps or TABOR measures, as well as whether to overturn a domestic partnership law in Washington and repeal a marriage equality law in Maine.

If voters line up on Tuesday as editorial boards did across each state, Tuesday could mark a solid rejection by voters of two central tenets of the right-wing agenda. For post election results and analysis, please visit [www.ballot.org](http://www.ballot.org).

Here is a sampling from the editorial boards in Maine and Washington:

### Maine

#### TABOR: Question 4

#### [Bangor Daily News: Editorial: No on Question 4 \(10/22/09\)](#)

“Putting government on a strict diet is an attractive scenario. But the problem with this approach is that what looks like a diet is in fact more like stomach stapling, a radical and risky procedure.”

“Rather than establishing taxpayer rights, TABOR II inflames taxpayer spite — the kind that leads to cutting off a nose to punish a face. Question 4 should be rejected.”

## Marriage Quality: Question 1

### Portland Press Herald: Support Maine families: Vote 'no' on Question 1 (10/18/09)

“Limiting marriage to a man and a woman would not make families led by same-sex couples go away. It would just keep them in a legally inferior position that is inconsistent with Maine's tradition of equal protection under the law.”

“Gay men and women already live together, own property and have children, both biological and adopted. They hold responsible jobs, they volunteer in churches and schools – they are full members of our communities. The only thing they cannot do is form the legal partnership that gives them the advantages and duties that other couples have when they start families. The same-sex couples are not the only losers. This also puts their children at a disadvantage.”

### Boston Globe: Editorial: Uphold equal rights in Maine (10/25/09)

“Supporters of the ballot initiative argue that same-sex marriage erodes heterosexual marriage, but experience has proven them wrong: Since Massachusetts legalized gay marriage five years ago, the state has seen its divorce rate, already the lowest in the nation, decline further. But that hasn't stopped supporters of the initiative from making other wild claims. No, gay marriage is not being taught, alongside spelling and long division, as part of the public-school curriculum in Massachusetts. No, an equal right to civil marriage has not rendered Massachusetts genderless.”

## Washington

### TABOR: I-1033

### Seattle Times: Reject Initiative 1033, the wrong restraint on state spending (10/9/09)

“I-1033 would tend to slowly increase class sizes in public schools and raise tuition at state universities and community colleges. It would leave Medicaid short and put the Basic Health Plan on the chopping block.”

### Yakima Herald-Republic: Editorial Board: I-1033's cost outweighs savings, should be defeated (10/11/09)

“Eyman carries his passion too far in I-1033. The initiative would effectively anchor state revenues to the spending limits of this current recession and would prevent the state from digging itself out of this budgetary hole.”

“It overreaches and puts an unfair shackle on cities and counties, as well as on public services; that is unacceptable.”

**Walla Walla Union-Bulletin: I-1033 puts unreasonable constraints on state and local governments (10/15/09)**

“This proposal, which is co-sponsored by Tim Eyman, puts unreasonable and unnecessary constraints on government. This could -- and likely will -- result in cuts to schools, law enforcement, fire protection and street maintenance that voters didn't expect or want.”

“I-1033 is so rigid in capping revenue that it forces government to run on autopilot. It doesn't allow our elected leaders to use judgment and reason.”

**Domestic Partnerships: Referendum 71**

**Seattle Times: Approve Referendum 71 in the name of fundamental fairness for all Washington families (10/2/09)**

“At the heart of R-71 is an earnest desire to preserve families and equally protect children and adults in all committed relationships — in essence, to better take care of themselves.”

“Inexplicably, opponents are counting on voter confusion to defeat the measure. This could not be more straightforward.”

“Nothing is taken away from one person, one couple or one family and given to another. This is about equal treatment for all Washington residents going about their private lives.”

**Yakima Herald-Republic Editorial Board: Referendum 71-- It's about rights, responsibilities-- Vote yes (10/18/09)**

“It's about granting the same rights and responsibilities of married couples to same-sex couples and to senior domestic partners.”

“That's why we urge voters to approve Referendum 71 and confirm the equal rights that lawmakers passed in SB5688.”

**Walla Wall Union-Bulletin: Approval of Referendum 71 gives same-sex couples important rights, protections (10/14/09)**

“Committed same-sex couples too often have their world turned upside down when the law treats a longtime, committed partner as a stranger in favor of allowing important decisions to be made by a blood relative even if they don't have a close relationship.”

“Ultimately, approving Referendum 71 is upholding fairness and equity.”