

B on the ballot

By TERRY JORDAN

Proposition B Endorsements

Missouri Farm Bureau
Missouri Chamber of Commerce
Associated Industries of Missouri
Missouri State Teachers Association
Taxpayers' Research Institute of Missouri
Missouri National Education Association
Missouri School Boards Association
Missouri Association of School Superintendents
Civic Progress of St. Louis
Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce
Civic Council of Kansas City
Regional Commerce and Growth Association in St. Louis
Missouri State Board of Education
Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education
Business and Education Partnership Commission
Confluence St. Louis
Coalition for Our Children's Future
MU Parents Association
Human Environmental Science Alumni Board
Consumer and Family Economics Advisory Board
Women in Energy
Council of Home Economics Administrators in Missouri
Missouri Veterinary Medicine Association
Missouri Society of Professional Engineers
Cooperative School Districts of St. Louis
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Missouri Association of Elementary Principals
Missouri Association of School Administrators
Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals
MU Business and Public Administration alumni boards, Kansas City and St. Louis
Missouri Learning Disabilities Association



Bob Hill photo

Passage of Proposition B would benefit all Missourians because of its positive effect on virtually every aspect of education, says Gov. John Ashcroft. Shown in the mural behind Ashcroft is James Rollins, the father of the University of Missouri.

An Interview with Gov. John Ashcroft

Q: How will the state be better by the year 2000 if Proposition B passes?

A: It's a question of competitiveness. We have to be strong in the world community to survive. These education reforms address the broad range of issues from pre-kindergarten and early childhood through elementary and secondary education and through undergraduate and postgraduate education.

This package also adds new powers to the Coordinating Board for Higher Education so we won't duplicate programs at the institutions. The enhanced capacity of the coordinating board also will be helpful in making sure we are spending our resources effectively and efficiently.

Q: A lot of people still believe that the lottery money was supposed to go to education. How can we be assured that Proposition B funds will go to education?

A: The proceeds from these taxes go into a trust fund that can only be spent to achieve the specified educational objectives. The lottery money went into the general revenue fund, and that is the proposal that was voted on. At one time there was hope that the lottery money would be spent for education, but in the end the legislature refused that idea.

Proposition B is structurally different. Not only will the money be spent on the educational objectives, but in the specified proportions as well.

Q: What is in the plan for the blue-collar worker who never went to college?

A: The elementary and secondary portions of this item ap-



ply to everyone. People at these levels will have a better school system. Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs are going to supply children of blue-collar families with a far better start in life. The community college program, which will be involved more and more with the kind of training necessary for us to be competitive with technology-intensive industries of the next century, will be available. In addition, a specific fund is set up for \$5.7 million for vocational education and training.

There is no part of this measure

that doesn't in some way benefit every individual in Missouri. If a person doesn't go to college but lives in a state where there is strong higher education, that person benefits from the industries that are attracted by good higher education.

Q: How do you think MU, as the state's premier public research institution, will benefit?

A: MU will benefit first by having better students. The best way to improve higher education is to improve preparation of individuals who come

to it through elementary and secondary education.

Second, the new powers of the coordinating board will help us deploy more effectively our higher education resources. The potential for centers of excellence in certain disciplines is the type of thing the University has been needing. It would have leadership value, not only in the state but nationally.

Q: Many people have expressed concern about the plan's absence of a public school foundation for-

The wording of **B**

Requires greater accountability for education spending, including reports to taxpayers on school performance. Establishes a special fund earmarked for elementary, secondary and higher education reform, including smaller classes, job training, student aid and college improvements, with additional tax revenues. Additional \$385 million generated would be spent on schools, job training and colleges. Increases corporate, tobacco and sales taxes. Provides tax relief for families with dependents. Eliminates some deductions for upper-income individual taxpayers.



Griffin



Mathewson

Principles before politics

Proposition B is for education, and Proposition B money will go to education.

Guaranteed.

That's the word from the Taxpayers Research Institute of Missouri, a government watchdog group that will monitor educational activities if Proposition B passes in November. "We would issue periodic reports, saying whether the money is being spent as it is intended, and whether the reforms are being carried out," says executive director Robert P. Knuth.

TRIM, formerly the Missouri Public Expenditure Survey, is endorsing Proposition B. "The reforms — things like higher admission standards and eliminating duplicate programs — make it a good plan," Knuth says. "We want to help ensure that those reforms are carried out."

Lawmakers who helped shape Proposition B welcome the scrutiny. "The reforms wouldn't be there unless we believed in them," says Sen. James L. Mathewson, D-Sedalia, who introduced the original legislation that resulted in Proposition B. "We also needed to make sure the funding was there to implement the reforms."

In fact, Mathewson adds, the whole idea of Proposition B puts principles before politics. "This is not a partisan issue," he says. "It is a Missouri issue."

That concept is borne out by the process in which Proposition B came to be placed on the ballot. Mathewson, Gov. John Ashcroft and House Speaker Bob Griffin, BS BA '57, JD '59, D-Cameron — politicians who would not agree on many issues — met constantly during the closing days of the 1991 legislative session to hone the details.

"We didn't shape the plan in a vacuum; we had input from many individuals," Ashcroft says. "But it was a non-partisan effort, no doubt about it." Adds Griffin: "Never before have the three of us sat down and rolled up our sleeves to write legislation. Never have all the state's educational leaders bent their individual differences to come together for a common cause. Proposition B is a shining example of the governmental process at its best."

It could only happen because education is critical to the future of the entire state, Mathewson adds. "We've been working on this for three years, and we're finally bringing it to a vote," he says. "Passage of Proposition B is necessary if Missouri is going to remain competitive."

The funding

- 3/8-cent sales tax
- 5-cent increase in the cigarette tax
- 10 percent tax on smokeless tobacco
- Additional 1.5 percent tax on corporations with income over \$100,000
- Limiting state deductions on federal income taxes

mula. How will that be handled?

A: The measure contains a guarantee that all school districts will receive at least as much money as they receive now. Also, there is a prohibition that none of the money collected for a foundation formula be dispersed until we get a new formula. So there will be more than \$150 million in the trust fund in the first year, and it will not be distributed unless the legislature comes up with the right formula. It will be a tremendous incentive for us to move toward an equitable formula that will provide good education at

the elementary and secondary levels.

Q: What will happen if Proposition B fails?

A: It will be quite some time before there's an additional offer to help the educational community improve student performance. I think it is crucial that we pass this measure. 1992 is an election year, and I doubt the legislature will be involved in this kind of arduous enterprise to increase taxes next year. It takes a long time, once the public defeats something, for something else to come up. ☐

The sales and income tax impact on two-earner Missouri families with two dependents

Family Income	Sales Tax Impact	Income Tax Impact	Total Impact	Monthly Cost
\$ 2,500	\$ 6	\$ 0	\$ 6	\$.50
10,000	23	-12	11	.92
12,500	28	-16	12	1.00
17,500	35	-25	10	.83
22,500	42	-36	6	.50
32,500	49	-44	5	.42
37,500	57	-46	11	.92
47,500	69	-48	21	1.75
57,500	77	-48	29	2.42
67,500	82	-48	34	2.83
97,500	113	281	394	32.83
150,000	174	1,124	1,298	108.17

NOTES: 80 percent of the total sales tax increase is paid by resident families. The remaining 20 percent is allocated to businesses and nonresidents. All profiles are for 1992 and do not include the effect of sales tax exemption for food stamps.

The Income Tax Burden component of the chart includes a reduction in income tax impact due to doubling of dependent exemption from the current \$400 per dependent to \$800. The chart also includes the effect on the tax burden due to capping the deduction for federal income tax paid at \$7,500 for individuals and up to \$15,000 for two-earner families who take the standard deduction.

Estimates prepared by the Missouri Office of Administration, Division of Budget and Planning.

Now's the time: VOTE

What can alumni do to help Proposition B? Dick Moore, AB '54, JD '56, of St. Louis, president of the MU Alumni Association, has a one-word answer:

Vote.

"The lawmakers have done their jobs in placing Proposition B on the ballot, and volunteers are doing their jobs in promoting it," Moore says. "Now it's up to us to carry out the most important task, and pass it.

"We have 70,000 alumni in Missouri. If we all get out there, we can make a crucial difference." The referendum needs a simple majority to pass.

In addition to voting, alumni could organize get-out-the-vote campaigns that could include offering rides to the polls, Moore suggests. "If there's a doubt that you'll be able to vote on that day, please request an absentee ballot," he adds. Voters have until Oct. 30 to obtain an absentee ballot from their county clerk, or from the Board of Election Commissioners in St. Louis and Kansas City. Voters must complete and return their ballots by 5 p.m. Nov. 5.

A group opposing the measure is Missourians Against Proposition B. Co-chairman Mark Youngdahl, AB '55, JD '57, of St. Joseph, a former state representative, says the group has two primary objections: the lack of funding for social services and mental health, and a provision that would allow state loans for businesses planning to open new facilities or expand their operations. The loan repayments could count as tax credits, according to the bill. Proponents say the program is designed to boost economic development.

More importantly, though, Proposition B is an education package, says Joe Moseley, AB '71, JD '76, of Columbia, chairman of LINC, the Association's legislative information network committee.

"It's not designed to cure all the state's ills," Moseley adds. "The General Assembly considered a plan like that, and turned it down. If Proposition B passes, however, it increases the chances later for successful social services or mental health proposals."

A total of 56 percent of voters responding to a poll by MU's Media Research Bureau say they would vote for Proposition B. The statewide poll was conducted in late September for the *Columbia Missourian*, KBIA radio and KOMU-TV.

"Proposition B may not be perfect," Moseley says. "But let's look at the alternative. If it doesn't pass, education in this state will regress dramatically. We can't let that happen."