



Ohio Ballot Issues

November 2009

The Catholic Conference of Ohio encourages voters to carefully consider the three statewide Issues that are on the November 3, 2009 ballot.

Issue 1

To Authorize the State to Issue Bonds to Compensate Veterans of the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraq Conflicts Constitutional Amendment

Issue 1 authorizes the state to issue up to two hundred million dollars of bonds to provide compensation to veterans of the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraq conflicts, and for the administration of this compensation fund.

The state would provide stipends of \$100 a month up to a total of \$1,000 for Ohio veterans who served in the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraq Conflicts.

The state would provide stipends of \$50 a month up to a total of \$500 for Ohio veterans who served elsewhere during the conflicts.

Family members of qualified, deceased Ohio veterans could apply for a \$5,000 death benefit.

Certain survivors will receive the same compensation that the person who served in the armed forces would have received, if that person dies or is designated as missing in action or held in enemy captivity.

Pro Arguments

- Issue 1 extends a much-deserved ‘thank you’ to Ohio’s servicemen, servicewomen, and their families. These bonuses would not only show our state’s veterans that Ohio appreciates their service, but also help them transition from the military back to civilian life once their tours of duty are complete.
- Continues a longstanding Ohio tradition of supporting veterans. Over the years, Ohio voters approved constitutional amendments to give bonuses to soldiers returning home from World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

Con Arguments

- Issue 1 authorizes the government to spend more in bond money. Economic conditions are poor. While this may be a worthwhile and noble endeavor, the state of Ohio should not be going further into debt.

- Authorizes \$200 million in new debt. This money would have to be paid back in the future by Ohioans. Without Issue 1, taxpayers who have suffered during the economic downturn can retain this money.
- Proposes low levels of reimbursement. Bonus levels appear more symbolic than substantive. The federal government should provide better compensation to soldiers.

Church Teaching

Catholic Social Teachings call us to appreciate and honor the sacrifices and contributions made by those who serve in the military. In the *Catechism*, those who are sworn to serve their country in the armed forces are called *servants of the security and freedom of nations*. “If they carry out their duty honorably, they truly contribute to the common good of the nation and the maintenance of peace.” (2310).

The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* states that those who defend the security and freedom of a country, in the spirit of legitimate defense, “*make an authentic contribution to peace.*” (502).

Focus Questions

1. Will passage of Issue 1 promote the value and dignity of the human person and advance the common good of persons in the state?
2. Is Issue 1 needed and well conceived?
3. Is Issue 1 affordable, and will passage sufficiently honor and help servicemen, servicewomen and their families?



Catholic Conference of Ohio Position

A voter’s position on Issue 1 involves a prudential judgment where persons of good will may differ as to the specifics of this proposal.

The bishops truly appreciate the sacrifices made by the men and women who serve our country in defending freedom and peace. Bonus pay can be a worthwhile way to express gratitude and appreciation. We are especially proud of the many Catholic war veterans who have honorably served in the military.

The Catholic Bishops of Ohio are not opposed to passage of Issue 1.