



# BALLOT ISSUES 2005

*The Catholic Conference of Ohio encourages voters to carefully study and consider the five statewide Issues that are on the November 8, 2005 ballot. The Conference has not taken positions for or against these Issues. We believe these issues allow for **prudential judgments** where persons of good will and sound faith may respectfully differ on the value and need for each Issue.*

*We have provided several questions that we hope will be helpful. We encourage Catholic voters to reflect upon our **Catholic Social Teaching Principles** calling for discerning political participation, the defense of human life and promotion of the common good.*

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Will passage of an issue promote the value and dignity of the human person and the common good of persons in Ohio, especially the poor and vulnerable?
2. Will passage of an issue enhance citizen participation in the political process?
3. Is the issue needed and well conceived?
4. Does the issue reflect a change that should be addressed in the state constitution (as opposed to an issue that ought to be addressed through the legislative process)?
5. Will passage of the issue help make Ohio's political system more fair and responsive to the needs of citizens?
6. Do the benefits of an issue outweigh the potential financial costs and/or potential legal challenges?

## COMMUNITY OF CONSCIENCE

"A Catholic moral framework does not easily fit the ideologies of "right" or "left," nor the platforms of any party. Our values are often not "politically correct." Believers are called to be a **community of conscience** within the larger society and to test public life by the values of Scripture and the principles of Catholic social teaching. Our responsibility is to measure all candidates, policies, parties, and platforms by how they protect or undermine the life, dignity, and rights of the human person—whether they protect the poor and vulnerable and advance the common good."

**Faithful Citizenship:**  
**A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility**  
U.S. Catholic Bishops, 2003

## COMMON GOOD

"The Church values the democratic system inasmuch as it ensures the participation of citizens in making political choices, guarantees to the governed the possibility both of electing and holding accountable those who govern them, and of replacing them through peaceful means when appropriate..." (#406) "Being at the service of its citizens, the state is the steward of the people's resources, which it must administer with a view to the common good." (#412)

**Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church**  
Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 3/2005

### **State Issue 1 • Issuance of \$2 B. in Bonds for Job Creation and Economic Growth**

This issue is designed to allow investment in research and development to create jobs and industry throughout Ohio. This includes research for alternative fuels, medical research and greater biotech research to help the state's agriculture. Partnerships between the state's research universities and the private sector to create new products would be encouraged. Funding would also be available for public improvements including the expansion of new business facilities and roads and bridges.

### **State Issue 2 • Early Voting**

- A. Current System  
An individual that wishes to vote before election day must have a qualifying reason such as in the military, ill, out of the country, etc.
- B. Proposed System  
A voter would be permitted to cast a ballot by mail or in person at a county board of elections up to 35 days before an election without stating a reason.

### **State Issue 3 • Reform of Campaign Finance Laws**

- A. Current System  
An individual can contribute up to \$10,000.00 to any candidate.
- B. Proposed System  
Individual contributions would be limited to \$2,000.00 for statewide candidates and \$1,000.00 to candidates for the General Assembly. All contributions must be disclosed. Corporate contributions would be banned.

### **State Issue 4 • Redistricting & Reapportionment**

- A. Current System  
The five-member apportionment board consists of one representative of the two major parties, plus the governor, auditor and secretary of state.
- B. Proposed System  
An independent five member non-partisan redistricting commission would be created to draw legislative districts. The first member of the Commission would be appointed by the state appeals court judge with the longest continuous service. The second member would be appointed by the next senior appeals court judge but must be from a different political party than the first board member. These two commission members would then appoint the other three members of the board. One of these persons could not be affiliated with a political party.

Any individual or group would be eligible to submit a redistricting plan and the commission would choose the plans judged to create the most competitive districts without dividing up counties and cities.

The first districts created under this system would go into effect in the 2008 elections. After this, new plans would be chosen in the year after the 2010 census.

### **State Issue 5 • Election Oversight**

- A. Current System  
The responsibility for administering and managing the election system is the Secretary of State.
- B. Proposed System  
An independent nine member Board of Elections would be created to administer and manage elections. The members of the board are appointed as follows: four by the governor, four by the members of the general assembly affiliated with the political party that is not the same as that of the governor, and one by a unanimous vote of the chief justice and justices of the Ohio Supreme Court. The member appointed by the Supreme Court may not be affiliated with a political party. The governor and members of the general assembly must appoint equal numbers of men and women and take into consideration the geographic regions and racial diversity of the state.