

THE BLACK ROOT PRESS

QUEER CIVIC NOTES

2026 U.S. ELECTION SPECIAL NOVEMBER 3, 2026

Seven ballot measures. Six states. Questions about healthcare, school athletics, privacy, and marriage equality.

An independent, queer-affirming guide to understanding what's on the ballot.

WE HAVE A STAKE IN THIS.

Politics is personal. It shapes protections, medical care, school policies, and how governments recognize our relationships and identities.

The Black Root Press believes queer and transgender people deserve accessible information about the political decisions affecting their lives.

This booklet examines seven ballot measures in six states. We explain what each measure would change, what a yes or no vote means, and why the issue matters to LGBTQ+ communities.

We approach these issues from an openly queer-affirming perspective. Our commitment to that perspective does not excuse inaccurate reporting.

What this guide is

A focused introduction to selected statewide measures with documented connections to LGBTQ+ rights.

What this guide is not

A complete list of every election, candidate, or measure in the United States.

Every summary is based on official ballot information and legislation. Sources and additional voting resources appear at the end.

Published October 18, 2026.

ARIZONA

PROPOSITION 318

Student Athletics and Private Spaces

What is being proposed?

Proposition 318 would expand Arizona's existing sex-based rules for school athletics to private schools and athletic associations. It would require teams to be designated male, female, or coed and prevent students classified as male under the measure from joining female teams.

It would also restrict access to school private spaces, including restrooms, according to sex recorded at birth, and authorize certain lawsuits against schools and athletic associations.

What does your vote mean?

YES: Enacts these additional requirements and restrictions.

NO: Maintains existing Arizona student-athletics law.

Why this matters

The measure addresses both sports participation and the use of private spaces. Its rules would have implications for transgender students whose gender identity differs from their sex recorded at birth.

Supporters frame the proposal around fairness, safety, and privacy. Opponents raise concerns about discrimination and access for transgender students.

SOURCE:



COLORADO

PROPOSITION 134

Participation in School and College Sports

What is being proposed?

Proposition 134 would require school-based athletic teams, from elementary schools through colleges, to be designated male, female, or mixed.

Students would generally have to participate based on the measure's definition of biological sex, though it allows participation on mixed teams and certain exceptions.

The measure does not specify one mandatory method for verifying sex. Schools and districts would establish procedures.

What does your vote mean?

YES: Establishes statewide sex-based eligibility requirements for school athletics.

NO: Leaves schools, districts, and athletic associations able to set policies under applicable law.

Why this matters

The proposal could change opportunities for transgender students to participate in athletics. Its verification requirements could also affect how schools determine eligibility for other students.

Supporters emphasize competitive fairness. Opponents raise concerns about privacy, exclusion, and the potential for inconsistent verification procedures.

SOURCE:



COLORADO

PROPOSITION 135

Surgical Care for Minors

What is being proposed?

Proposition 135 would prohibit certain surgeries on minors when performed to alter biological sex characteristics in response to a minor's perception of sex or gender.

It includes specified medical exceptions and would prohibit government funding and insurance coverage for the surgeries covered by the measure.

It does not establish a general ban on counseling, social transition, or nonsurgical gender-related treatment.

What does your vote mean?

YES: Creates the proposed surgical restrictions and payment prohibitions.

NO: Maintains existing Colorado law concerning access and coverage.

Why this matters

The measure would affect medical decisions involving minors, healthcare professionals, and families. Its wording may also have implications for some procedures involving patients who are not transgender.

Supporters focus on the permanence of surgery and medical consent. Opponents question the breadth of the restrictions and the potential impact on individualized medical care.

SOURCE:



MISSOURI

AMENDMENT 3: Reproductive Rights and Gender-Related Medical Care

What is being proposed?

Amendment 3 addresses two major areas of healthcare in a single constitutional proposal. It would repeal the reproductive healthcare protections approved by Missouri voters in 2024 and allow substantial new restrictions on abortion, with specified exceptions. It would also add constitutional restrictions on gender-transition procedures for minors, including certain surgeries, hormones, and puberty-blocking medications, subject to exceptions.

What does your vote mean?

YES: Approves the proposed constitutional changes affecting abortion and gender-transition procedures for minors.

NO: Rejects those changes and leaves the 2024 reproductive healthcare amendment in place.

An important distinction

Missouri already restricts gender-related medical treatment for minors under a 2023 law. A no vote on Amendment 3 would not automatically repeal those existing statutory restrictions. The 2023 law's restrictions on puberty blockers and hormones expire on August 28, 2027. Its prohibition on specified surgeries does not have that same expiration.

Why this matters

The proposal combines reproductive rights and transgender healthcare in one decision, raising separate questions about constitutional protections, medical regulation, and existing state law.

SOURCE:



NEBRASKA

INITIATIVE 442

Sex-Based School Athletics Requirements

What is being proposed?

Initiative 442 would amend Nebraska's Constitution to require covered schools and educational institutions to classify athletic teams as male, female, or coed. Under the proposal, teams designated for female students would not be open to students classified as male. The measure would apply to public school and college athletics, as well as certain private institutions competing with public institutions.

What does your vote mean?

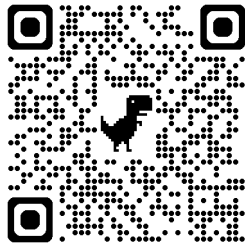
FOR: Adds the proposed requirements to the Nebraska Constitution.

AGAINST: Does not add these requirements to the state constitution.

Why this matters

Unlike a change to an ordinary statute, this proposal would place sports participation rules directly into the state constitution. Supporters describe it as a protection for girls' athletic opportunities. Opponents question its potential effects on transgender students, participation, and privacy.

SOURCE:



WASHINGTON

INITIATIVE IL26-638

School Sports and Medical Verification

What is being proposed?

Initiative IL26-638 would prohibit students the measure defines as biologically male from participating in certain K–12 sports designated for female students. It would also require students seeking to participate in those sports to provide verification of biological sex signed by a personal healthcare provider. The verification would be based on specified biological characteristics.

What does your vote mean?

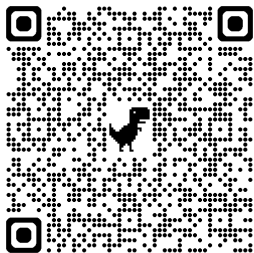
YES: Enacts the proposed sports eligibility restrictions and healthcare-provider verification requirements.

NO: Rejects those proposed changes, leaving the existing state framework in place, subject to applicable law.

Why this matters

The proposal would generally prevent transgender girls from participating on girls' interschool sports teams. It would also introduce a medical verification process for students seeking to participate in female-designated school sports. The debate includes questions about fairness, students' privacy, equal access, and the role of healthcare providers in athletic eligibility.

SOURCE:



VIRGINIA

QUESTION 2

Marriage Equality and the State Constitution

What is being proposed?

Virginia voters will decide whether to remove the state constitution's existing prohibition on same-sex marriage. The amendment would affirm that two adults may marry regardless of sex, gender, or race, and require the state to recognize lawful marriages equally.

What does your vote mean?

YES: Removes the existing constitutional prohibition and establishes the proposed marriage protections in Virginia's Constitution.

NO: Leaves the existing constitutional language in place.

An important distinction

Same-sex marriage is currently protected nationwide under the U.S. Supreme Court's 2015 decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*. Virginia's existing constitutional prohibition is therefore not currently enforceable. The proposed amendment concerns the protections written into Virginia's own constitution.

Why this matters

Constitutional language can matter for decades, especially when state and federal legal protections differ or change over time.

SOURCE:



YOUR STATE. YOUR BALLOT.

This booklet covers selected statewide measures, but elections include many other decisions. Congressional races, state legislatures, governors, judges, school boards, and local ballot measures may all appear on your ballot.

Those elections can affect healthcare laws, education policy, nondiscrimination protections, and how public institutions operate.

Find your actual ballot

Visit **VOTE411.org** to look up candidates and ballot measures by address.

Visit **USA.gov/election-office** to find your official state or local election office.

Confirm:

- Your registration status and eligibility.
- Which contests and measures appear on your ballot.
- Available voting methods and their deadlines.
- Applicable identification requirements.
- Where and when your ballot must be returned.

Voting rules vary by state and jurisdiction. Don't assume the rules that applied in a previous election are still current.

Election Day: Tuesday, November 3, 2026.

SOURCES & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The information in this guide was researched using official state election materials, ballot language, and legislation. **QR codes throughout the booklet link directly to the sources used** for each ballot measure.

Verify Before You Vote

Election information, legal interpretations, and voting requirements can change. We encourage readers to double-check information through official sources before casting their ballots.

Our Editorial Commitment

The Black Root Press approaches these issues from a queer-affirming perspective while remaining committed to factual accuracy, transparency, and correcting errors.

Information reviewed October 18, 2026.

THE BLACK ROOT PRESS

ART. COMMUNITY. INFORMATION.

The Black Root Press is an independent publication dedicated to creating space for trans and nonbinary writers and artists. We publish creative work without requiring it to explain, defend, or justify queer existence.

Queer Civic Notes is a separate public-interest publishing project exploring the laws, policies, and elections affecting LGBTQ+ communities.

Independent publishing. Accessible information. Room for queer voices.

Find the digital edition, additional resources, and corrections:

www.theblackrootpress.com

