

Lawsuit filed today challenges constitutionality of casino-backed “Yes for Schools First” initiative

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JEFFERSON CITY - 8/14/08 - A lawsuit was filed today in Cole County Circuit Court challenging the constitutional validity of the casino-backed ballot initiative, which was certified last week by Secretary of State, Robin Carnahan. The initiative petition seeks to not only remove the \$500 loss limit, but it also seeks to place a cap on the number of casino licenses.

Those two actions, according to the lawsuit, are not only different subjects, but they are also “competing positions with varying purposes.”

Audrey McIntosh, the filing attorney explained, “The Missouri Constitution requires that voters be given a single subject when changes to state laws are proposed by initiative petitions. This lawsuit raises the constitutionality of having numerous subjects placed before voters in the same ballot measure.”

Evelio Silvera, Executive Director of Casino Watch, a St. Louis based watchdog organization, said, “Missourians should have a fair opportunity to vote for a single subject and not be disenfranchised by being forced to chose between multiple subjects. We look forward to the opportunity to engage in the debate and inform the voters of Missouri on the nature of the issues.”

Silvera also commented on the deceptive nature of the casino coalition calling themselves “Yes for Schools First,” as they are entirely funded by the casino industry who is not looking out for schools, but rather their own bottom line.

Silvera explained, “the casino’s have long tried to tie gambling money to education in an attempt to gain support for expanded gambling, but this petition goes beyond what is constitutionally allowed.”

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