

# AN AMENDMENT

TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE LEGAL VOTERS OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON FOR THEIR APPROVAL OR REJECTION

AT THE

GENERAL ELECTION

TO BE HELD

On Tuesday, the Seventh day of November, 1916,

Proposed by the Legislative Assembly and allowed to become operative without the approval of the Governor, in accordance with Section 1, Article XXXIII of the Constitution of the State of Washington. Filed in the office of the Secretary of State, March 17, 1915, commonly known as Constitutional Amendment Proposed on Qualification of Voters.

(Will appear on the official ballot in the following form)

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AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION PROPOSED BY THE LEGISLATURE

Entitled "An act providing for the amendment of section 1 of article VI of the Constitution of the State of Washington, relating to the qualification of voters."

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FOR the proposed amendment of Section 1 of Article VI of the Constitution, relating to the qualification of voters.....

AGAINST the proposed amendment of Section 1 of Article VI of the Constitution, relating to the qualification of voters.....

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AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION PROPOSED BY THE  
LEGISLATURE; CONCISE STATEMENT.

"An act providing for the amendment of section 1 of article VI of the Constitution of the State of Washington, relating to the qualification of voters."

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PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT RELATING TO THE  
QUALIFICATION OF VOTERS.

AN Act providing for the amendment of section 1 of article VI of the Constitution of the State of Washington, relating to the qualification of voters.

ARTICLE VI.

Section 1. All persons of the age of twenty-one years or over, possessing the following qualifications, shall be entitled to vote at all elections: They shall be citizens of the United States; they shall have lived in the state one year, and in the county ninety days, and in the city, town, ward or precinct thirty days immediately preceding the election at which they offer to vote; they shall be able to read and speak the English language: *Provided*, That no person shall be qualified or entitled to vote in respect to or upon any question or proposition to incur or not to incur any debt or obligation, or to borrow money or issue any bond or obli-

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Washington:*

SECTION 1. That at the general election to be held in this state on the Tuesday next succeeding the first Monday in November, 1916, there shall be submitted to the qualified electors of the state, for their adoption and approval or rejection, an amendment to section 1 of article VI of the Constitution of the State of Washington, so that the same shall when amended, read as follows:

gation, or to ratify or validate any debt, bond or obligation, or to authorize the purchase, sale, mortgage or pledge of property, revenue or income by or of the state, or any municipal corporation, city, town or district, unless in addition to the qualifications above prescribed he or she shall at the date of his or her registration be the separate owner of, or as husband and wife have community title in, property upon the tax roll of the municipal corporation or taxing district in which such question or proposition is to be voted upon, and upon which property a tax has been paid, or shall be payable, during the calendar year in which such question or proposition is to be voted upon. No person shall be denied the elective franchise on account of sex, nor shall this amendment affect the right of franchise of any person who is now a qualified elector of this state except in respect to questions or propositions mentioned in the foregoing proviso. Indians not taxed shall never be allowed the elective franchise. The legislative authority shall enact laws defining the manner

of ascertaining the qualifications of voters as to their ability to read and speak the English language, providing for the registration of voters generally and as property owners, and providing for punishment of persons voting or registering in violation of the provision of this section.

SEC. 2. The secretary of state shall cause the amendment proposed in section 1 of this act to be published for three months next preceding said election in some weekly newspaper in every county where a newspaper is published throughout the state.

Passed the Senate February 27, 1915.

Passed the House March 8, 1915.

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NOTE BY SECRETARY OF STATE.

The above act filed in the office of the Secretary of State March 17, 1915, and allowed to become operative without the approval of the Governor.

I. M. HOWELL, *Secretary of State.*

## Argument in Favor of the Proposed Amendment to Section 1 of Article VI of the Constitution.

The proposed amendment to the State Constitution simply requires that those electors who vote to create a bonded or warrant indebtedness must be taxpayers. This does not mean that he has to be the owner of real estate. Any person who pays either real or personal property taxes, even though the amount is only one cent is eligible to vote on the question of creating an indebtedness.

Is it not fair that those who must pay the debts should have the say as to the creating of such debts.

The total state, county, and municipal indebtedness in Washington amounts to \$101,000,000.00. The total population of the state in 1910 was 1,142,000. The indebtedness based upon the total population is \$87.00 per capita. The interest on the debt now resting upon the people of the state of Washington is over \$6,000,000 per annum, or \$5.30 per annum for each man, woman and child in the state.

This enormous burden has, in large part, under the constitution as it now exists, been placed upon the taxpayers of the state by the votes of those who pay no taxes.

The purpose of the proposed amendment to the constitution is to limit the incurring of further indebtedness to the votes of the people who, as taxpayers, will be called upon to pay the indebtedness.

The constitutions of forty-two states of the Union limit the incurring of bonded indebtedness to the votes of taxpayers affected.

The same principle has already been adopted in this state by legislative enactment with reference to reclamation, irrigation and diking districts with the result that the bonded indebtedness of these districts is limited to actual necessities while in the counties, cities and towns of the state where the bonded indebtedness is imposed upon the people by the votes of

non-taxpayers, the burden has in many cases become almost unbearable, and in individual instances has resulted in the practical confiscation of the property of humble taxpayers.

The proposed amendment should be adopted for the following reasons:

1. It allows debts to be contracted by those who will have to pay them.

2. It prevents the forcing of indebtedness upon the people by those who have no financial responsibility for their payment.

3. It will operate to reduce taxation by preventing unnecessary and extravagant bond issues and will introduce into the matter of incurring public indebtedness the sound business methods now followed in private affairs.

4. It will promote stability of the credit of the state, the counties and the municipalities.

5. It will prevent the depreciation of property values occasioned by extravagant and ill considered expenditures.

6. It will induce investment in real estate and the building up of homes which the present high rate of taxation retards.

Respectfully submitted,

STATE FEDERATION OF TAXPAYERS EFFICIENCY ASSOCIATION,

J. T. S. LYLE, *Secretary.*

Composed of—

Taxpayers League of Seattle,  
Benton County Taxpayers League,  
Taxpayers Association of Pullman,  
Cowlitz County Taxpayers League,  
Taxpayers Association of Tacoma,  
Taxpayers Association of Walla  
Walla County.

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STATE OF WASHINGTON—ss.

Filed in the office of Secretary of State,  
March 20, 1915.

I. M. HOWELL, *Secretary of State.*