



League of Women Voters 2008 General Election Voters' Guide For Wicomico County

[President and Vice President of the United States](#)
[Representative in Congress – The Office](#)
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Miscellaneous Voting Information

- POLLS are OPEN 7 a.m. - 8 p.m.
- EMERGENCY ABSENTEE BALLOTS may be obtained at your local Board of Elections office in the 7 days prior to and on election day. You may fill out the application form, obtain the absentee ballot and VOTE in one visit.
- POLLING PLACES are usually less crowded between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Try voting on your lunch hour.

[For More Information](#)
(Located at the end of this document)

PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

About the Office

SALARY: \$400,000 per year

TERM: Four years. Limit of two terms.

HOW ELECTED: Every four years political parties nominate candidates to run for President of the United States in a general election that is held on the first Tuesday in November of years divisible by the number four. Although the parties use conventions to nominate their candidates, in most states the Democratic and Republican parties also run state-wide primary elections. The results of the primary influence how the delegates to their respective party's convention will cast ballots for candidates for President. The degree to which the result of the primary election influences the votes of delegates at conventions varies from state to state.

DUTIES: The President is the head of state of the United States of America and is the Chief Executive Officer and the Commander in Chief of all military forces. The powers of the President are described in the Constitution and federal law. The President appoints the members of the Cabinet, ambassadors to other nations and the United Nations, Supreme Court Justices and federal judges subject to Senate approval. The President, along with the Cabinet and its agencies, is responsible for carrying out and enforcing the laws of the United States. The President may also recommend legislation to the United States Congress.

Questions asked candidates for President:

The League of Women Voters of the United States posed questions to the candidates for President in accordance with the following criteria:

- All qualified presidential candidates were invited to provide biographical information and responses to five issue specific questions. Candidates were qualified if they met the following criteria: 1) the candidate must have made a public announcement of her/his intention to run for President; 2) the candidate must qualify for the ballot in enough states to win a majority of electoral votes; and 3) the candidate must meet the Presidential Election Campaign Fund Act's minimum contribution threshold requirements for qualifying for matching funds, based on the most recent data publicly available on the FEC Web site as of August 8, 2008.
- Responses were limited to 50 words and truncated after the 50th word.
- Additional information on presidential candidates is available on the League's voter information Web site, www.VOTE411.org.

In Maryland Write-in candidates are allowed to file, after spending \$50.00 in pursuit of the office, until seven days prior to the election. If they file as write-ins, their names will be posted in each polling place on Election Day and votes for them will be counted. Their names will NOT be on any ballots.

BIOGRAPHY:

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE: What, if anything, do you believe the federal government should do to control global climate change?

COST OF HEALTH CARE: What should be done at the federal level, if anything, to combat the high cost of health care?

ECONOMIC DISPARITY: What, if anything, should the federal government do about the growing economic disparity between the middleclass and the well-to-do?

EDUCATION: What, if anything, should the federal government do to create the world's best educational system for all children in America?

U.S. STRATEGY – RISING GLOBAL POWERS: What should the U.S. strategy be towards rising global powers like Russia and China?

The responses to these questions are copyrighted by the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Vote for One:

Barack Obama (Illinois) -- **Joe Biden** (Delaware)

Party: Democratic

Website: www.barackobama.com

BIOGRAPHY: Obama began his career as a community organizer on Chicago's South Side and headed a voter registration drive. Obama practiced civil rights law and taught constitutional law. He served eight years in the State Senate before his election to the U.S. Senate. He graduated from Columbia University and Harvard Law.

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE: I believe the federal government should pursue multiple paths to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address the threat of global climate change, including implementing aggressive cap and trade requirements to reduce U.S. emissions by 80% from 1990 levels and investing heavily in clean energy and advanced vehicle technologies.

COST OF HEALTH CARE: My healthcare plan will make aggressive investments in cost-cutting technologies and will place more focus on prevention and chronic care management. The net result will be to bring down the costs of healthcare spending by \$2,500 for a typical family, annually, and lower the expense of Medicare's services.

ECONOMIC DISPARITY: I will cut taxes for the middle class and roll back some of the Bush tax cuts for those making over \$250,000 to restore fairness to the tax code. I will make long term public investments in R&D, clean energy, infrastructure, and manufacturing to create millions of good-paying jobs.

EDUCATION: I will strengthen public schools by expanding early childhood education, reforming and funding No Child Left Behind, recruiting and rewarding high-quality teachers, and expanding afterschool and summer learning opportunities. I will create a \$4,000 American Opportunity Tax Credit and expand financial aid to make higher education affordable for all.

U.S. STRATEGY – RISING GLOBAL POWERS: We must enhance our abilities both to collaborate and compete with China, while being vigilant about China's military modernization and respect for human rights. As we seek a future of clear-eyed engagement with Russia, we must ensure Russia acts as a force for progress, not regression to past conflicts.

John McCain (Arizona) -- **Sarah Palin** (Alaska)

Party: Republican

Website: www.johnmccain.com

BIOGRAPHY: John McCain graduated from the Naval Academy and served for 22 years as a naval aviator. He was elected to the House of Representatives in 1982 and the Senate in 1986. He has served as chairman of the Commerce Committee and ranking member of the Armed Services Committee.

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE: I support developing a cap-and-trade system to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 60% by 2050, providing tax credits for alternative energy, promoting zero-carbon nuclear power, reducing the federal government's carbon footprint, funding research into clean-coal technology, and offering incentives for America's automobile industry to develop electric cars.

COST OF HEALTH CARE: Under my plan, American families will receive \$5,000 tax credits to purchase insurance, either through employers or the private market—insurance that can follow them if they change jobs or leave the workforce. I will work for reforms to lower costs and provide coverage to Americans with pre-existing conditions.

ECONOMIC DISPARITY: We must spur growth, create jobs, improve educational attainment, and enhance financial security. My plan will keep income and payroll taxes low, reduce the price of gas, double the dependent exemption, bring down health-care costs, give deserving homeowners new fixed mortgages, slash our high business taxes, and expand trade.

EDUCATION: Our education system must focus on standards, accountability, and choice. My plan calls for recruiting highly qualified teachers in the neediest communities, empowering parents to choose the best schools for their children, expanding online educational opportunities, providing low-income families with access to tutors, and funding professional development for teachers.

U.S. STRATEGY – RISING GLOBAL POWERS: As President, I will work to establish good relations with other nations. At the same time, I will stand up for democratic values and human rights, and I will oppose aggression and international lawlessness that threaten our security.

Cynthia McKinney (California) -- **Rosa Clemente** (North Carolina)

Party: Green

Website: www.mckinney2008.com

Did not meet LWVUS/EF criteria stated above.

Bob Barr (Georgia) -- **Wayne A. Root** (Nevada)

Party: Libertarian

Website: www.bobbarr2008.com

Did not meet LWVUS/EF criteria stated above.

Ralph Nader (Connecticut) -- **Matt Gonzalez** (California)

Party: Independent

Website: www.votenader.org

BIOGRAPHY: Attorney, author, and consumer advocate, named by Time Magazine one of the "100 Most Influential Americans in the 20th Century." Over 4 decades of public service. Helped establish the OSHA, EPA, Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Safe Drinking Water Act, Motor Vehicle Safety Act, and Freedom of Information Act.

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE: The government should stop subsidizing fossil fuels: oil, electric and coal mining interests. Invest in renewable energy that is efficient, sustainable, and environmentally friendly: wind and solar power. Encourage more efficient automobiles, homes and businesses. Ratify the Kyoto Protocol. Create an independent Oceanic Protection Agency. Adopt a carbon pollution tax.

COST OF HEALTH CARE: Adopt a private delivery, free choice of hospital and doctor, single payer public health insurance system. This would save \$350 billion annually by eliminating exorbitant executive pay, advertising, computerized billing fraud and abuse, and apply those savings to comprehensively cover everyone without increasing taxpayer costs. Lower costs through bulk purchasing.

ECONOMIC DISPARITY: Unfair legislation allows the middle class to suffer while the rich entrench their status. To correct this we should enact a living \$10 wage, adopt a fair tax, and provide equal pay for women. We must end corporate subsidies and bailouts. Repeal NAFTA and the anti-union Taft/Hartley Law.

EDUCATION: Increase civic education and decrease standardized testing. Repeal “No Child Left Behind” Act. Do not tie test performance to school funding. Provide full funding for pre-school and nutrition programs. Get product marketing out of the schools. Ensure that the nation's crumbling schools are repaired within 3 years.

U.S. STRATEGY – RISING GLOBAL POWERS: The US should be a humanitarian superpower. Our foreign policy must redefine global security, peace, arms control, an end to nuclear weapons and expand the many assets of our country to assist with major initiatives against global infectious diseases. Stop support of foreign dictators. Human rights come before trade, profit.

Chuck Baldwin (Florida) -- **Darrell L. Castle** (Tennessee)

Party: Constitution

Website: www.baldwin08.com

Did not meet LWVUS/EF criteria stated above.

WRITE-IN CANDIDATES WHO HAVE FILED IN MARYLAND:

Donald K. Allen (Ohio)

Party: Unaffiliated

Website: www.donaldkallenforpresident.com

Lawson Mitchell Bone (Tennessee)

Party: Independent

Theodis (Ted) Brown, Sr. (Missouri)

Party: Independent

James D. Criveau (Virginia)

Party: Non_Partisan

RaeDeen R. Heupel (Montana)

Party: Independent

Website: www.raedeen.com/

Ronald G. Hobbs (Pennsylvania)

Party: Independent

Keith Russell Judd (Texas)

Party: Non-Partisan

Frank Moore (California)

Party: Independent

Website: www.frankmooreforpresident08.com

Lynne A. Starr (Florida)

Party: Independent

Blaine Taylor (Maryland)

Party: Democratic

CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES

About the U.S. House of Representatives:

SALARY: \$169,300 per year.

TERM: Two years, no term limit.

HOW ELECTED: The United States is divided into 435 Congressional Districts that are reapportioned after every decennial census. All seats in the House of Representatives are up for election in every even-numbered year.

DUTIES: Representatives share responsibility with Senators for enactment of the nation's laws as provided for in the U.S. Constitution.

Questions asked candidates for Representative in Congress:

BACKGROUND: What are your qualifications for this office?

IMMIGRATION: What changes, if any, do you support in regard to immigration policy?

CLIMATE CHANGE: Describe Federal legislation you would support to address global climate changes.

ECONOMY: Identify a major challenge to the U.S. economy and how Congress should address it.

EDUCATION: What are your views on the No Child Left Behind legislation?

HEALTH CARE: What plans need to be put into place to meet the country's health care needs?

NATIONAL SECURITY: Identify a national security issue and how Congress should address it.

Vote for no more than one candidate.

REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS – DISTRICT 1

Frank M. Kratovil, Jr.

Party: Democratic

Website: www.kratovil.com

BACKGROUND: As a State's Attorney for Queen Anne's County, I fight every day to protect our families. As President of the Maryland State's Attorney's Association, I've worked with Democrats and Republicans alike to fight for better public safety laws in Annapolis. I'll take that same approach in Washington.

IMMIGRATION: I favor stricter enforcement of our immigration laws, and I firmly oppose granting benefits to anyone who is not in this country legally. We need to secure our borders, fix the legal immigration process, and give employers a more efficient way to verify their employees' immigration status.

CLIMATE CHANGE: I support the use of market-based mechanisms like permit auctions or cap-and-trade programs to reduce the greenhouse emissions from power plants and other polluters. Climate change is a critical issue, particularly for the low-lying coastal areas on the Eastern Shore.

ECONOMY: Reducing the deficit must be a top economic priority. Our out-of-control spending has weakened the dollar. Congress needs to cure its addiction to deficit spending by enacting strict pay-as-you-go rules, balancing the budget, and reforming the broken earmark process. Fighting against wasteful spending will be one of my top priorities.

EDUCATION: No Child Left Behind has failed because of lack of funding and an overemphasis on standardized tests. Real accountability requires us to look at more than just a single test score. We need to reform NCLB and define a more comprehensive standard to measure student achievement.

HEALTH CARE: There's no silver bullet to our current health care crisis. To achieve a goal of universal coverage, we'll need a comprehensive approach that includes an expansion of programs for children's coverage, incentives for small businesses who offer coverage to employees, and cost-reduction programs to slow medical inflation.

NATIONAL SECURITY: Our over-reliance on Middle East oil is a critical national security issue. The answer is a combination of more domestic oil production, increased efficiency standards for cars and buildings, and significant investments in renewable and alternative energies like wind, solar, and biofuels. Only a balanced plan will achieve our goals.

Andy Harris

Party: Republican

Website: www.andyharris.com

BACKGROUND: As a physician at Johns Hopkins, I understand how to address rising healthcare costs. As a veteran of Operation Desert Storm, I understand the threat our nation faces. As a State Senator, I have the experience to be ready to serve in the US Congress on day one.

IMMIGRATION: I oppose all forms of amnesty for illegal immigrants. The United States must give businesses the tools they need to know if the people they are hiring are legal residents. The United States needs to match the number of temporary work visas with need for these workers in our economy.

CLIMATE CHANGE: The United States needs to take common sense solutions to address climate change without hurting the economy. With rising energy prices, the United States must develop a comprehensive energy policy that includes greater production of oil and natural gas, conservation, and developing the next generation of alternative energy technology.

ECONOMY: The United States must lower taxes and decrease wasteful government spending to stimulate economic growth. Rising energy costs are hurting the economy. The United States must develop a comprehensive energy policy including greater production of oil and natural gas, conservation, and developing the next generation of alternative energy technology.

EDUCATION: As a father of five and a teacher at Johns Hopkins, I understand the value of education. The best decisions on education, with the input of teachers and parents, are made at the local level, not by a bureaucrat in Washington. We need to prepare our children to compete in...

HEALTH CARE: As a physician for over 25 years at Johns Hopkins, I look forward to addressing rising healthcare costs. We need to make healthcare more accessible and affordable to all Americans. Tort reform will bring the cost of healthcare down, and attract more physicians to our rural areas.

NATIONAL SECURITY: As a Commander in the US Naval Reserve and a veteran of Operation Desert Storm, I understand the grave threat our nation faces from terrorism. I will continue to support a strong and effective military that adjusts to the threats of the 21st century. I have always fought to expand...

Richard James Davis

Party: Libertarian

BACKGROUND: I run my own business (dental practice), I have read extensively in American history and some in economics, and I have read (and believe I understand) the United States Constitution.

IMMIGRATION: I support a thorough review of immigration requirements and might consider then consider increased legal immigration. I support stricter enforcement of laws regarding illegal immigration. I would require thorough evaluation of prospective immigrants and would have a strict and simple deportation policy for any lawbreakers prior to citizenship status.

CLIMATE CHANGE: I do not support federal legislation regarding climate change beyond a possible tax on excess energy consumption (which would need to be defined). I feel information is insufficient as to exactly what changes are taking place and why and where those changes will actually lead cannot yet be accurately predicted.

ECONOMY: The major challenge is governmental and individual debt. Government spending must be drastically reduced and all taxation on savings and investment should be eliminated. With reduced government spending, any taxation should be on EXCESS consumption (including energy), with generous allowance for individual needs for food, clothing, shelter and energy.

EDUCATION: I believe education should be controlled at local levels, mainly town and county, with minimal involvement at state level and essentially none at federal level beyond the service academies. If other pressing national needs are identified, student loan subsidy/deferment/repayment programs could serve as incentives.

HEALTH CARE: There should be tax exemptions for health care expenses and for health insurance, especially true insurance for catastrophic health events. Actual government involvement should be limited to public health measures that can be clearly shown to prevent (or at least limit) the spread of communicable disease.

NATIONAL SECURITY: Legal immigrants should be more thoroughly screened and illegal immigration should be more thoroughly addressed. There should be more effective enforcement of rules for visitors violating any visa regulations (including overstaying time allowed), with more rapid and efficient apprehension and deportation of violators.

JUDGE OF THE COURT OF APPEALS CIRCUIT 1

About the Office:

SALARY: \$162,352 annual base

TERM: 10 years

DUTIES: The Court of Appeals is the highest court in Maryland (commonly called the Supreme Court in other states and at the federal level). It hears cases almost exclusively by way of certiorari, a process which gives the court discretion to decide which cases to hear. However, the Court of Appeals is mandated by law to hear cases involving the death penalty, legislative redistricting, removal of certain officers, and certifications of questions of law. All seven judges hear oral arguments on each case unless a judge removes him/herself from a case; then a judge from another court, or a retired appellate judge, may be specially assigned to sit in the place of the recused judge.

Questions asked the Court of Appeals candidates:

BACKGROUND: What are your qualifications for this office?

JUDICIAL SYSTEM NEEDS: What is area of greatest need in the Maryland judicial system?

LEGAL ACCESS: What can be done to provide individuals with wider and better access to legal help and the legal system?

Vote "for retention in office: Yes___ No___"

Sally D. Adkins – Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, Worcester

BACKGROUND: Judge for 10 years on intermediate appellate court, writing 1045 appellate opinions; 2 years on trial court; Chair; judicial disciplinary commission (8 years); 20 years general law practice; community service, e.g. Ethics Commission (Wicomico), Coastal Hospice, YMCA, Horizons Student Enrichment Program; initiated Child Custody Mediation Program for Wicomico Courts.

JUDICIAL SYSTEM NEEDS: Impartial, patient, thoughtful, practical, and decisive judges with deep respect for the rule of law. Judges with these qualities will assure an independent and fair judiciary that is essential for democracy.

LEGAL ACCESS: Continue and expand *Access To Justice* initiatives such as People’s Law Library, and design and expand programs to make it easier for self-represented individuals to pursue their legal objective.

JUDGE OF THE COURT OF SPECIAL APPEALS AT LARGE

About the Office:

SALARY: \$149,552. annual base

TERM: 10 years – no term limit

HOW ELECTED: The Governor appoints judges to the Court of Special Appeals. The State Senate must confirm these appointments. At the end of a ten-year term, these judges’ names must appear on the ballot. Voters vote “yes” for retention, or “no” to remove from office. Judges may not be opposed by other candidates in retention elections. Maryland is divided into 7 Appellate Judicial Circuits. One judge is appointed from each of these circuits and six members are appointed from the state at large. There are a total of 13 judges in the Court of Special Appeals.

DUTIES: Judges preside over The Maryland Court of Special Appeals, which is the intermediate appellate court for Maryland. It was created in 1966 in response to the rapidly growing caseload in the Maryland Court of Appeals. The Court of Special Appeals originally could hear only criminal cases. However, its jurisdiction has expanded so it now considers any reviewable action of the circuit court, unless otherwise provided by law. Judges sitting on the Court of Special Appeals generally hear and decide cases in panels of three.

Questions asked the Court of Appeals candidates:

BACKGROUND: What are your qualifications for this office?

JUDICIAL SYSTEM NEEDS: What is area of greatest need in the Maryland judicial system?

LEGAL ACCESS: What can be done to provide individuals with wider and better access to legal help and the legal system?

Vote “yes” for continuance in office or “no” for removal.

Deborah Eyler

BACKGROUND: In 11 years of service as a judge on the Court of Special Appeals, I have authored more than 1,000 case opinions. From that experience, I have gained in-depth knowledge of all aspects of Maryland law and have become skilled at producing case opinions that are thorough, fair, and timely.

JUDICIAL SYSTEM NEEDS: In the criminal justice system, additional "drug court" diversion programs because the vast majority of crimes in Maryland are rooted in the distribution and use of illegal drugs. In the civil justice system, affordable legal representation, especially for parents and children in contested custody cases.

LEGAL ACCESS: More outreach by courts and the judiciary's local pro-bono committees, which exist in each county, to link up, early in a case, a party who cannot afford representation with a pro bono lawyer who can handle the matter for free or at a substantially reduced rate.

Robert A. Zarnoch

BACKGROUND: Before my appointment, I served 30 sessions as the Attorney General's Counsel to the General Assembly. I reviewed 20,000 bills and authored thousands of advice letters. I argued in the Supreme Court and participated in 39 cases in the State's highest court, including one making the Camden Yards stadiums possible.

JUDICIAL SYSTEM NEEDS: A 2008 Harris Poll discloses that only 16% of the public has a great deal of confidence in the courts and the justice system. Such numbers will never be reversed until judges demonstrate by performance that the system is accessible, deals fairly with all, and reaches just results.

LEGAL ACCESS: Studies note that a citizen is more likely to go to court than be hospitalized. Greater support for legal aid and pro bono lawyering is needed. Promotion of pre-paid legal plans and self-help, expanding small claims courts and streamlining legal procedures would also help citizens obtain affordable legal assistance.

STATE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Question 1 - Constitutional Amendment

(Chapter 513, Acts of 2007)

Early Voting; Polling Places; Absentee Ballots

Authorizes the General Assembly to enact legislation to allow qualified voters to vote at polling places inside or outside of their election districts or wards and to vote up to two weeks before an election. This amendment also authorizes the General Assembly to enact legislation to allow absentee voting by qualified voters who choose to vote by absentee ballot, in addition to voters who are absent at the time of the election or who are unable to vote personally.

(Amends Article I, §§1 and 3 of the Maryland Constitution)

- For the Constitutional Amendment
- Against the Constitutional Amendment

Origin of this Ballot Question – Legislation that would allow early voting and “no-excuse” absentee voting was passed by the General Assembly in 2006, but a court decision found the legislation to be in conflict with the Maryland Constitution. Therefore, in the 2007 session, the General Assembly passed SB 1 - Elective Franchise - Early Voting and Polling Places which amends the Maryland Constitution to allow the General Assembly to pass legislation that will establish early voting sites and allow voters to vote by absentee ballot without having to give a reason. All Constitutional Amendments must be passed by a majority of voters statewide.

Present Practice – Article I, Section 1 of the Maryland Constitution states that a voter “shall be entitled to vote in the ward or election district in which he resides.” As currently interpreted, this means that a voter cannot vote at an early voting location outside the voter’s election district and that a provisional ballot cast by a voter outside his or her election district cannot be counted. Article XV, Section 7 of the Maryland Constitution designates the “Tuesday after the first Monday of November” as the date of the general election. This has been interpreted by the Court of Appeals to mean that early voting is not permissible. Absentee ballots are only for use by voters who are absent at the time of an election or who are unable to vote in person at the assigned voting precinct. The absentee ballot application requires a voter to affirm this fact.

Proposed Change – If the amendment passes, the General Assembly may enact laws to establish early voting sites. Early voting would allow registered voters to vote, in person, up to two weeks before a state-wide primary or general election at polling places outside of their normal district or precinct. Early voting sites can accommodate voters from multiple precincts or even from the entire state. However, passing this amendment only allows the General Assembly to establish an early voting process. The details of how many early voting sites will be established and how the locations for them will be determined will come in future legislation. Passage of this amendment will also allow the General Assembly to pass legislation that enables any qualified voter to vote by absentee ballot if they choose to do so. The enabling legislation could remove the requirement to sign a statement telling why the voter wants to vote by absentee ballot.

Pros: Allows for in-person voting by voters who, due to work hours, long commutes or other reasons, are unable to vote during the limited hours on Election Day. Early voting should ease long lines and lengthy wait times at precincts on Election Day and should ease the workload of precinct workers. This measure also increases the likelihood that a voter’s provisional ballot will be counted by allowing a provisional ballot cast outside the voter’s election district to be counted for eligible races.

Cons: There will be increased costs associated with providing polling locations prior to Election Day. Voters who vote during early voting may not have access to late campaign information on which to base their election decisions. By encouraging more voters to use absentee ballots or early voting sites, some of the community interaction that takes place at precinct based polling places may diminish.

Question 2 - Constitutional Amendment

(Chapter 5, Acts of 2007 Special Session)

Authorizing Video Lottery Terminals (Slot Machines) to Fund Education

Authorizes the State to issue up to five video lottery licenses for the primary purpose of raising revenue for education of children in public schools, prekindergarten through grade 12, public school construction and improvements, and construction of capital projects at community colleges and higher education institutions. No more than a total number of 15,000 video lottery terminals may be authorized in the State, and only one license may be issued for each specified location in Anne Arundel, Cecil, Worcester, and Allegany Counties, and Baltimore City. Any additional forms or expansion of commercial gaming in Maryland is prohibited, unless approved by a voter referendum.

(Enacts new Article XIX of the Maryland Constitution)

- For the Constitutional Amendment
- Against the Constitutional Amendment

Origin of this Ballot Question – For several years, efforts to enact legislation that would authorize Video Lottery Terminals (slot machines) as a way to raise revenue for state expenditures failed in the legislature. The governor proposed, and legislators agreed, that the decision of whether to significantly expand gambling in Maryland should be decided by the voters. The Maryland Constitution allows only two ways for citizens to vote on laws. The first is to gather enough signatures on a petition to place a law that has been passed by the General Assembly on the ballot for voter approval. The second is to place a constitutional amendment, approved by three-fifths of the legislators, before the voters in a General Election. In the 2007 Special Session, the Maryland General Assembly passed HB 4, which would add a new article to the Maryland Constitution to authorize video lottery terminal gaming (slot machines) in Maryland. A majority of voters, *statewide*, must vote in favor of the amendment for it to go into effect.

Present Practice – Currently, the annotated code of Maryland prohibits video lottery terminal (slot machine) gambling except certain fraternal, religious or war veterans' organizations in a few counties may operate no more than five individual slot machines, and the revenue from them must be used for the charitable purposes of those organizations. Public education is currently funded through Maryland's General Fund. State funding for primary and secondary education is about \$5.35 billion for this fiscal year. The three main sources of revenue for the General Fund are income tax, retail sales tax and the State Lottery. School construction may be funded by the General Fund but is primarily funded by borrowing through the issuance of State bonds.

Proposed Change – If the amendment passes, Maryland may operate up to 15,000 video lottery terminals in five locations: Baltimore City and Anne Arundel, Allegany, Cecil and Worcester Counties. No more than one gambling facility would be allowed in each of the authorized jurisdictions. Another bill related to gambling, SB 3, was also passed during the 2007 Special Session. It will go into effect contingent on the passage of this constitutional amendment. As defined by SB 3, 33% of proceeds from video terminal gambling would go to the licensed operators, 9.5% to the horse racing industry; and approximately 48.5% to education. The remainder would be used for lottery expenses, local impact grants and administrative costs. Included in the latter is money to fight gambling addiction. The amendment also states that no additional video lottery terminals shall be authorized without another approval by voters.

Pros: In 2007, the Department of Legislative Services estimated 2010 state revenues will increase by approximately \$86 million from video gaming receipt and by as much as \$565 million by 2013. This additional revenue could reduce tax increases that would otherwise be necessary to fund projected education expenses. Maryland residents who gamble in West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Delaware may choose to spend their gambling dollars here instead of taking them out of state. New jobs will be created in construction and the gambling industry. Jobs in the horse racing industry may be saved. Unlike taxation, gambling is a recreational choice and not a mandate.

Cons: In order to generate enough revenue to reach the projected increases to state funding, gamblers in Maryland would have to lose over \$1 billion per year. To generate this level of revenue, the state will have to urge its citizens to frequent slots parlors. Gambling, like other addictions, frequently leads to social (and government) costs associated with lost productivity, increased crime, broken families and even suicide. Disposable income that currently generates sales tax revenue could be spent on gambling resulting in a loss to the General Fund. The referendum would put a specific revenue source, gambling, in the state Constitution. A constitution should be clear, concise and confined to fundamentals of the structure of government.

LOCAL BALLOT QUESTIONS – WICOMICO COUNTY

Question A -- Charter Amendment

Permit Refunding of Obligations

To amend the Wicomico County Charter to permit the County to refund outstanding bonds, certificates of indebtedness, notes and other obligations in accordance with state law.

- For the Charter Amendment
- Against the Charter Amendment

Question B -- Charter Amendment

Extension of Obligation Maturity Date, Clarification of BAN Terms

To amend the Wicomico County Charter to increase the term for which general obligation bonds, certificates of indebtedness, notes and other obligations may be issued from 25 to 30 years and to clarify certain terms for bond anticipation notes.

- For the Charter Amendment
- Against the Charter Amendment

VOTING INFORMATION
To Accompany the On-Line
2008 GENERAL ELECTION VOTERS' GUIDES

General Election: Tuesday, November 4, 2008

Polls open - 7 am to 8 pm

Voter Registration Deadline: Tuesday, October 14, 2008

[Find Your Local Board of Elections](#) – From the Maryland State Board of Elections Website.

[Legislative and Congressional District Maps](#) – From the Maryland Department of Planning Website.

[Absentee Ballot](#) Application Deadline: Tuesday, October 28, 2008

[Emergency Absentee Ballot](#) Procedure:

[Provisional Ballot](#) Procedure:

[The Electoral College](#): An explanation.

THE VOTERS' GUIDE and THE LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization that works to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in public policy debate and governmental decision-making. The League has a long tradition of publishing the verbatim responses of candidates to questions important to voters. The League offers this Voters' Guide to assist citizens in their decision-making process as they prepare for the general election. **The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate.**

The candidates' answers in the Guide appear as submitted. If answers exceeded the word limit, an ellipsis indicates words were cut from the end of the statement. No write-in candidates will appear on the ballot but the list of filed write-ins will be available at each polling place.

In most areas of Maryland, the Local Leagues have been able to have Voters' Guides printed for distribution. For those voters who need On-Line access, this version has been prepared.

The League thanks all candidates who submitted answers to its questionnaires.

VOTER REGISTRATION STATUS and POLLING LOCATION

[Check with your Local Board of Elections](#) to verify your registration status and polling location. The registration deadline is Tuesday, October 14.

COME PREPARED TO VOTE

1. Read your **sample ballot** from Board of Elections mailed the last week of October.
2. Note your polling place location on the front; polling locations change!
3. Use this *Voters' Guide* to become informed on candidates and issues.
4. Mark your candidate selections and ballot question decisions **ahead of time**.
5. Bring your completed sample ballot with you on November 4 to vote confidently and reduce waiting times. Shorter lines are expected from 10 am to 2 pm.

DON'T PANIC IF THERE'S A PROBLEM

1. Check the signs for directions and/or ask the poll workers for assistance.
2. Depending on your jurisdiction, language assistance may be available.
3. If your name is not on the precinct register, you may be directed to another polling place or given the option of a **Provisional Ballot**. Provisional ballots are verified following the election for voter registration accuracy. Votes of verified registrants are included in the final election tally.

POLLING PLACE RESTRICTIONS

No cell phone, pagers, cameras or computers may be used by voters in the polling place.
Up to two children, 13 or under, may accompany a voter into the voting booth.

LONG WORK HOURS? KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

On Election Day, polls are open from 7 am to 8 pm. State Law requires Maryland-based employers to release you with pay for up to two hours **only if** you do not have two continuous hours off during the time the polls are open.

ABSENTEE BALLOT

1. Apply in writing for an absentee ballot if you “will be absent or unable to vote in person in the election.” Applications are available from your local Board of Elections upon request in writing, by telephone, or in person.
2. Return completed application form by 4:30 pm October 28 to the Board of Elections by mail or in person.
3. Absentee ballots are usually mailed approximately three weeks before an election.
4. Return completed absentee ballots by mail, postmarked no later than Election Day, Nov. 4 or in person at the Board of Elections by 8 pm on Election Day.

EMERGENCY ABSENTEE BALLOT

If the need arises from October 29 through Election Day, request an Emergency Absentee Ballot. Apply in person at the Board of Elections:

1. Complete Late Application for Absentee Ballot,
2. Receive an absentee ballot and
3. Vote on the spot or return to the Board yourself by 8 pm on Election Day.

If unable to complete this process in person (e.g. hospitalization)

1. You or someone acting for you must obtain a Late Application for Absentee Ballot.
2. Complete the Designation of Agent section on the Late Application.
3. Your agent then obtains an absentee ballot from the Board of Elections on your behalf, brings it to you to vote, and returns it prior to 8 pm on Election Day.

The Electoral College

The selection of the President and Vice President of the United States is more complicated than simply counting up the number of votes that each candidate receives on Election Day. When the United States Constitution was written, the country’s founders created an institution call the “Electoral College”. Part of the goal of establishing such an institution was to give power to the less populous states and to insure that candidates for President and Vice President had sufficient distribution of support from all areas of the nation to govern.

Each state is allocated one elector for every representative that they have in Congress. In Maryland, we have two Senators and eight members of the House of Representatives so we have 10 electors in the Electoral College. The smallest states have two senators and one member in the House so they have only 3 electors. Even though the District of Columbia has no members in Congress they were given the right to have electors following the ratification of the 23rd Amendment in 1961. California, the most populous state, has 55 electors. No member of Congress may be an elector.

In the beginning, the Electoral College had considerable power in making an independent choice among the candidates for President and Vice President. At one time, their names appeared on the ballot during a Presidential election. Now, only the names of the candidates appear. However, voters are actually casting ballots for electors who are pledged to the ticket they just voted for. The candidate with the highest number of votes in each state will be represented by electors who will all cast their vote for the winning candidate. The exceptions to this “winner take all” practice are the states of Maine and Nebraska. In those states, the winner of the statewide vote gets 2 electoral votes (equal to the number of senators from the state) and the candidate with the highest popular vote in each Congressional District receives the one electoral vote that is allocated for that district.

On the Monday after the second Wednesday in December, all of the electors chosen as a result of the General Election in November meet in their respective state capitals to cast two ballots – one for President and one for Vice President. The Electoral College includes 538 electors (one for every member in Congress plus 3 from the District of Columbia). In order to be elected, the candidates must receive 270 electoral votes. If no candidate for President receives that many votes, the House of Representatives picks the winner from the top three vote getters. Each state receives only one vote, regardless of its size. The Senate chooses the Vice President if no candidate receives 270 votes. Senators cast their votes as individuals, not as states.