



# Arkansas Midterm General Election Results



Chris Jones - D



Ricky Harrington - L



Sarah Sanders - R



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## Governor's Race:

### Sarah Huckabee Sanders Elected Governor of Arkansas

By Liv Ogle, Eagle View News Editor

Sarah Huckabee Sanders made history Tuesday night when she was elected the first female governor of Arkansas. The winner of the contest was destined to become the first in one of two categories, either the first woman or the first black man to hold the office of Arkansas governor. The three candidates were Republican candidate Sarah

Huckabee Sanders, Democratic candidate Chris Jones, and Libertarian candidate Ricky Dale Harrington Jr. Sanders is a former White House Press secretary for Donald J. Trump, serving from 2017 to 2019. Sander advised Trump on a wide range of matters, from press and communications strategy to personnel and policy. She was the first mother to ever hold the job of White House Press Secretary. Sanders has previously worked

in leadership roles for U.S. senators, governors, and presidential campaigns. She served in the Department of Education during President George W. Bush's administration, and was campaign manager of the ONE campaign, a global non-profit founded by U2's Bono to act to end extreme poverty and preventable disease - particularly in Africa. Chris Jones, the Democratic nominee, pitched a vision of

achieving Arkansas' promise through "Faith, Hope and Hard Work." Ricky Dale Harrington, Libertarian candidate, made history in the Arkansas 2020 election for senate. He was the first black man to gain 33 percent of a vote in any race nationwide. Current governor Asa Hutchinson reached his term limit and could not seek another term.

## Benton County Election Day Polling Places

### NWACC Hosts One of 12 Polling Sites

By Morgan Nunley, Ken Jeffries, and Lindsey Meraz

Voters cast ballots at 12 polling places in Benton County on Tuesday, including a site on the NorthWest Arkansas Community College campus.

Throughout the day, a steady stream of individuals poured into the Shewmaker Center for Workforce Technologies to the voting location in Walmart Auditorium. Less than three hours into voting Tuesday morning, 239 people had already cast ballots.

Matt Evans, professor of political science at NWACC, said there is a move toward having election stations around Arkansas college campuses. The most important factor to Evans is the ease of access for this large group of people.

"States and localities that make voting easier makes voter turnout higher," he said. Evans said it would make the polling numbers go up if the polling location was more convenient for large numbers of people, like a university community. Melody Kwok, director of communication for Benton County, said the main difference on Election Day was that the voting centers were different from early voting locations. "We advise people to check the list ... for all Election Day vote centers," Kwok said. "We also tell people to expect a line if they are voting on Election Day. Not all locations have lines, but several will."

See "Polling," p. 2

## Religious Freedom on the Ballot

### Voters Indecisive on Religious Freedom Amendment's Fate

By Lilly Orum and Delaney Reaves

Early Wednesday morning, the results on the Religious Freedom Amendment were too close to call. With 89 percent of the State's precincts reporting, 50.4 percent of ballots were against the measure and 49.6 percent of ballots cast favored the amendment.

The Arkansas Religious Freedom Amendment was one of four constitutional questions on the 2022 Arkansas midterm ballot. Early voting started Oct. 24 and ended Nov. 7.

On Election Day (Nov. 8), polls closed at 7:30 p.m. According to the U of A Division of Agriculture Research and Extension, Issue 3 "prohibits state and local governments from burdening a person's

practice of religion unless there's a compelling reason to do so."

The already existing version of state law contains the terminology, "substantial burden," but this proposed version does not. Therefore, if this amendment is passed, a person may claim that their religious freedom has been burdened and the government would have to prove an overriding cause to continue with the action.

A vote for this issue meant that the person agrees that the state should lessen government involvement regarding religious freedoms. The proposed change would give people the access to make a claim against an organization or people, if they felt their beliefs were burdened. However, a vote against the issue means that the person does not agree with these actions being a part of

the law.

In 1874, Arkansas residents voted on one of the original religious freedom amendments, stating that all men have the right to worship and no preference should be given by law within these religious beliefs. The current proposed issue was modeled after an Alabama amendment that was voted on in 1998. The Alabama example is the only religious freedom amendment that is part of a state constitution. If Issue 3 is passed, that would mean that Arkansas would be the second state to have an amendment like this in its state constitution.

Supporters aimed to secure and preserve religious freedom in Arkansas which they feel may disappear if action is not taken.

See "Freedom," p. 2

Type	Title	Subject	Description
LRCA	Issue 1	Legislature	Allows the state legislature to call itself into extraordinary sessions upon (a) a joint proclamation from the Speaker of the House and the Senate President Pro Tempore or (b) upon a proclamation signed by two-thirds of the members in each chamber
LRCA	Issue 2	Supermajority	Requires a 60% supermajority vote of approval for <a href="#">initiated constitutional amendments</a> and <a href="#">initiated state statutes</a> to be adopted
LRCA	Issue 3	Religion	Amends the state constitution to provide that "government shall not burden a person's freedom of religion even if the burden results from a rule of general applicability"
CICA	Issue 4	Marijuana	Legalize marijuana use for residents 21 years of age and older and authorize the commercial sale of marijuana

Chart retrieved 10/31/22 from [Arkansas elections, 2022 - Ballotpedia](#)

## Marijuana Amendment Fails Voter Approval Overwhelming Negative Ballots Defeat Constitutional Amendment

By Halle Roberts Eagle View Staff

The fate of Issue 4, the legalization of recreational use of marijuana in the state of Arkansas, was decided Tuesday.

The proposed amendment's main purpose would be to allow citizens 21 or older to purchase up to an ounce of marijuana without having a medical marijuana card.

Issue 98, or the Arkansas Medical Marijuana Amendment, was passed in the fall of 2016. This amendment allowed patients to purchase marijuana

from regulated dispensaries by prescription. The new amendment would not only allow for citizens 21 and older to purchase marijuana from designated "adult-use" dispensaries but would also allow medical card holders to purchase from these dispensaries as well.

If passed, the amendment would allow licensed cultivators of medically regulated marijuana to grow and sell to the adult recreational-use dispensaries as well. If approved, dispensaries could begin selling to non-medical patients as early as March of 2023.

## Voters Reject Supermajority Requirement for Citizen Ballot Issues

### Voters decided the fate of Issue 2 on Tuesday

By Ken Jeffries, Eagle View Managing Editor

Arkansas Ballot Issue 2 would require a 60% supermajority to pass any citizen-proposed constitutional amendments, state statutes (laws) or referendums on whether to keep or repeal newly

adopted laws from the legislative session.

Under current law, the process for citizens placing an issue on the ballot involves the drawing up by citizens of Arkansas a ballot proposal aptly titled and properly formatted to conform with Arkansas state statutes.

"This citizen-led process involves filing a ballot title with the Secretary of State's Office, collecting signatures from voters in at least 15 counties, and the Arkansas Election Commission approving the ballot title,"

See "Decide," p. 2



Campaign signs greet voters as they arrive at the Walmart Auditorium on SE Eagle Way at NWACC. Photo by Delaney Reaves

Summary Results Report  
2022 GENERAL ELECTION  
November 8, 2022

Statistics	TOTAL	Absentee	Early Vote	Election Day
Election Day Precincts Reporting	117 of	0	0	117
Precincts Complete	0 of 117	0	0	0
Precincts Partially Reported	117 of	0	0	117
Absentee/ Early Precincts Reporting	117 of	117	117	0
Registered Voters - Total	181,382			
Ballots Cast - Total	91,422	1,539	56,499	33,384
Ballots Cast - Blank	17	14	2	1
Voter Turnout - Total	50.40%			

To submit a news item or an event to the Eagle View, email a brief description of the event including the time, date, place and contact information to eagleview@nwacc.edu.



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**Graphic Designer Needed**

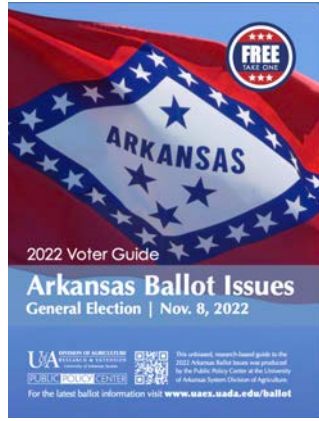
The Eagle View needs someone to create ads to grab the attention of its readers. Graphic design majors are encouraged to apply. Duties include building newspaper pages, house ads and retail ads. Need to know Adobe InDesign and Photoshop. The position is voluntary but is a great portfolio builder.

Contact Editor-In-Chief Samantha McClain at nwacceagleview@nwacc.edu

Eagle View Newsroom Burns Hall 1021



Leslie Wabaunsee, center; Elizabeth Mendez, right, wait to cast their ballots. Photo by Delaney Reaves



**From "Decide," from p.1**

states the [2022 Arkansas Ballot Issue Voter Guide](#), produced by the Public Policy Center at the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture. "The number of voter signatures required to qualify a proposal for the statewide ballot varies depending on the type of ballot issue. Petitions for constitutional amendments must contain voter signatures equaling at least 10% of the number of people who voted for governor in the last election. Petitions for state laws require signatures equaling at least 8% of the number of people who voted for governor. (In 2022, the number of signatures required for constitutional amendments is 89,151.)"

Opponents of Issue 2 pointed out that there is already a high bar to even get an issue on the ballot, and that to raise the approval percentage from a simple majority to the 60% threshold greatly elevates the difficulty to get initiatives passed. Opponents also claim that it would be unfair for the General Assembly — State Legislature — to continue to require only 50% approval while raising the requirement to 60% for acts initiated by the people. They assert that it will "mean more power for lobbyists, more backroom deals, and less power for voters to decide on the issues that matter most," according to the [2022 Arkansas Ballot Issue Voter Guide](#).

The same booklet says that proponents of the measure accuse the current system of making it possible to "amend our constitution in some sort of willy-nilly fashion" and assert that it is too easy to amend our state constitution. Interestingly, they also argue that it "opens the door for big money and out-of-state interests" — a variation of the opponents' argument.

Matt Evans, professor of political science at NWACC, weighed in on these issues. "If it were up to me, I would lower the threshold for statutes and raise it for constitutional amendments. It might also be useful to have state recalls of elected officials in this state." He said that as far as putting statutes on the ballot, Arkansas already has a higher threshold than some other states, and putting it at a lower threshold could help groups that do not have the finances to hire professional canvassers. He also said that constitutional amendments should be "extremely limited and difficult to change."



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**From "Freedom," p. 1**

They also hope to see religious freedom enforcement locally as well as statewide.

Opponents were concerned that by simply stating that something is burdening their religious freedom, this simple act could allow for abuse of power. The difficulty of interpreting without a straightforward way of measuring how much a burden is could impact the people more negatively.

**From "Polling," p. 1**

At approximately 4 p.m. Tuesday, voters waited in a line outside the auditorium door to place their ballots into the machines to vote.

The turnout on Tuesday followed strong early and absentee voting. According to unofficial results from Benton County, 58,038 ballots were cast.

**Two Trustee Races Headed to Runoffs**

**By Patty Rodgers, Eagle View Contributor**

Benton County voters decided three races for the NWACC Board of Trustees and sent two contests to a runoff election.

One incumbent lost to challenger Dr. Carolyn Reeves, while incumbent Mark Scott was reelected to another term. A race between three newcomers ended with no one receiving the majority of votes.

The college is governed by a local Board of Trustees chosen from the Rogers and Bentonville school districts. Trustees elected in the 2022 General Election will draw for staggered terms of office. All nine trustee positions were up for election this year following redistricting of the NWACC board zones.

As of 11 p.m. Tuesday, 91,422 votes had been counted.

In Zone 1, Dr. Carolyn Reeves defeated incumbent Lucas Pointer by capturing 51% of the vote.

In Zone 2, Lori Frank received

49% of the vote in a three-way race with Randy Rice and Dudley Adams. Because no candidate captured a majority of the votes, Frank will face Randy Rice, who polled 29% of the vote, in a runoff. Dr. DeAnne Witherspoon, the current trustee for Zone 2, is not seeking re-election.

In Zone 3, Rachel Harris won the seat with 70% of the vote, defeating Michael Kenninger.

In Zone 4, incumbent Todd Schwartz garnered 47% of the vote while Beverly Grau received 28% and Steven Goodman received 25% of the vote. Grau and Schwartz will face each other in a runoff.

In Zone 6, incumbent Mark Scott defeated challenger Ashley Lewis by capturing 58% of the vote.

Current board members Joe Spivey, Zone 9, and Ron Branscum, Zone 5, were unopposed in their bids for another term. Newcomers Jonathan Woods, Zone 7, and Amber Latimer, Zone 8, also were unopposed.

JAIL FACILITIES BONDS AND 0.125% SALES AND USE TAX					
Vote For 1	TOTAL	VOTE %	Absentee	Early Vote	Election Day
FOR	32,325	36.60%	590	21,007	10,728
AGAINST	55,996	63.40%	835	33,662	21,499
Total Votes Cast	88,321	100.00%	1,425	54,669	32,227
Overvotes	0		0	0	0
Undervotes	3,101		114	1,830	1,157
Contest Totals	91,422		1,539	56,499	33,384

0.25% SALES AND USE TAX FOR JAIL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT PURPOSES					
Vote For 1	TOTAL	VOTE %	Absentee	Early Vote	Election Day
FOR	33,485	37.55%	620	21,825	11,040
AGAINST	55,690	62.45%	837	33,375	21,478
Total Votes Cast	89,175	100.00%	1,457	55,200	32,518
Overvotes	0		0	0	0
Undervotes	2,247		82	1,299	866
Contest Totals	91,422		1,539	56,499	33,384

Screenshots taken from data provided by the Benton County Election Commission

**Voters Reject Jail Taxes for Expansion, Operations**

**By Delaney Reaves, Eagle View News Editor**

Benton County voters rejected two proposals to expand the current jail and to pay for operations of the larger facility.

This year's ballot contained two proposals regarding the jail. The first proposal was an 1/8 cent sales tax to expand the jail's capacity for inmates. The second was a quarter cent sales tax that would have gone toward operations and maintenance for the jail.

The final vote going against the 0.25% sales tax was 62.45%, with only 37.55% voting for it. The second .125% sales tax had 63.40% against and 36.60% favoring the measure.

The overall, combined sales tax would have increased to 1.375%, the current Benton County sales tax is 1%, but would have changed on April 1, 2023 if the measures passed.

The first sales tax would have stopped in 16-18 years when the jail expansion process was finished, but Benton County Judge Barry Moehring hoped to have this done earlier than 16 years. The second sales tax would've started from the day it goes into effect in April and stay unless changed in the future.

Moehring said that when the Benton County Jail was constructed in the 1990s, the growth of the county was not estimated to be what it is today. The jail system now exceeds the capacity level for their inmates, which results in more misdemeanors and low level crimes happening without the offenders facing full consequences. The jail has to use the facilities they currently have for the most serious crimes and charges coming in.

Moehring confirmed that the Benton County Jail houses inmates from state prison and many are held until they are transferred elsewhere. With that being mentioned, he said that this is the part of the problem the jail is having but not the whole problem itself. These felons and state prisoners usually stay here for weeks, awaiting their transfer to state facilities. Judge Moehring said they do also have some federal prisoners from time to time.

Moehring said that the jail tax vote was so the county can make the facility more humane not only for those in custody, but for the staff as well. Plans to add facilities for the jailers had been considered for the expansion.

Jon Comstock, a member of the Arkansas Justice Reform Coalition, a group that opposed the two jail vote proposals, spoke on why the coalition wanted the county to seek other options. He said that the county didn't need the jail expansion and the state should implement other solutions to help the lack of jail space.

Comstock said the people need to observe who is occupying the jail space, including the state prisoners who are filling county beds, he said. Comstock said that the county doesn't need a top level facility for just standard misdemeanors in the county.

He argued that the county should be building sobering centers for citizens who are charged with DUIs instead of sending them to the county jail. They should also have "failure to appear clinics," that advertise to the general public that they are willing to work with them to change court dates and to meet with prosecutors. Comstock said that failure to appear is one of the charges filling up the jail.

**Voters Defeat Issue 1 on Calling Special Session**

**By Chris Davis, Eagle View Contributor**

Arkansas voters turned back a proposed amendment that would have allowed state lawmakers to have the ability to call the legislature (the General Assembly) into special session. Currently, only the governor can issue a special call.

The measure was rejected with 61% of ballots cast against the measure, which had been referred to the ballot by a vote of lawmakers.

According to the University of Arkansas' Division of Agriculture Research & Extension Public Policy Center, under the proposal, the speaker of the House and president of the Senate could jointly decide to convene lawmakers OR two-thirds or more of the members of the Arkansas House of Representatives and Senate could sign a written proclamation calling for the special session. This would equal signatures from 67 of Arkansas' 100 representatives and signatures from 24 of the state's 35 senators.

Some opponents of the proposed amendment had suggested that allowing state legislators to call their own special sessions could be seen as a way for them to exploit that power, and it would end up costing the citizens more money.

The ballot issue was referred to voters by the Arkansas legislature. Proponents have said that Arkansas is simply behind the times due to the fact that it is one of 14 states where only the governor has the power to call a special session.

The main sponsors of the bill to place the proposed amendment on the ballot were Sen. Breanne Davis of Russellville and Rep. Frances Cavenaugh of Walnut Ridge. According to Ballotpedia, Davis had said, "We wanted to ensure through [SJR10] that special sessions remain special by requiring a higher threshold to allow the legislature to call itself into special session. We also wanted to ensure that the legislative branch had the ability to call itself into a special session if necessary."

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