The Phyllis Schlafly Report

GOP Should Reject Improper Ballot Initiatives

By John and Andy Schlafly

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The “will of the people,” as expressed by outcomes of heavily funded ballot initiatives, is a canard that should be rejected by Republicans. Direct democracy was feared and opposed by our nation’s founders, who established a representative government for the United States and guaranteed “a republican form of government” to each of its member states.

Yet Republican candidates who participated in last week’s third presidential debate seemed to misunderstand this crucial point, as reflected by their senseless responses to questions about a recent ballot initiative that just passed in Ohio. Ron DeSantis, for example, unjustifiably blamed the pro-life movement for being “caught flat-footed” by Issue 1, the abortion initiative, without mentioning that God-given rights should not be decided by a popular vote.

Republicans should be defending representative government against misuse of the ballot initiative process, which allows out-of-state industries and liberal billionaires to pass laws contrary to the informed decision-making by each state’s elected representatives. Ohio’s Issue 1 will benefit the billion-dollar abortion industry, while Issue 2 will profit the expanding marijuana industry by invading Ohio with a predicted $4 billion worth of pot.

Fortunately, some members of the Ohio state legislature are rising up against this misuse of ballot initiatives to change the culture of the Buckeye State. Ohio’s elected representatives should not take a back seat or bow down to ballot initiatives contrary to what has been the well-established tradition of Ohio and our Constitution.

The passage of the radical Issues 1 and 2 in Ohio are an assault by out-of-state industries and billionaires to transform the state, and its Republican-controlled General Assembly should strongly resist this invasion. Four out of five Republicans voted against Issues 1 and 2, and that is to whom the Republican legislators should be listening, rather than a multi-million-dollar barrage of television ads.

Legislators should not be deterred by chants in the media that “the people have spoken.” Representatives exist to resist tyranny by a misled majority, and Republican officials should not abandon the pledges they campaigned on for the benefit of Ohio.

Caving in to ballot initiatives is a betrayal of representative government, and of voters themselves. By denying the rights of voters to elect representatives to protect their state's way of life, Republicans give residents an incentive to move to Texas and other states that prohibit mob rule through ballot initiatives.

Leftists are giddy about their scheme to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to use the ballot initiative process in about 20 states (40% of our country) to enact laws rejected by legislatures there. Not content with transforming Colorado and the West Coast into havens hostile to families, liberals are exploiting this process to invade the Midwest with failed coastal values.

More Midwesterners will inevitably respond by moving to Texas, where Leftists are not allowed to override the legislature. But families in Ohio and Missouri should not have to move to protect their way of life.

In less than a year, marijuana as enacted by ballot initiative in Missouri has transformed it into a $1.5 billion mecca for pot, with pervasive billboard advertising and retail stores selling it. Child poisonings and motorcycle accidents are sharply higher, while a crisis in fentanyl-related deaths has increased too.

The Republican response to questions about Ohio Issues 1 or 2 should be that some issues are not suitable for popular vote, as most states recognize by forbidding ballot initiatives from bypassing the legislature. We don't allow any type of initiative or referendum at the national level because our Founders who framed our Constitution wisely rejected direct democracy.

Yet the liberal media is misusing ballot initiatives to bully Republican legislators into breaking their own campaign promises on which they were elected. There is no such thing as a particular "will" of the people, and candidates should honor their campaign pledges rather than allow out-of-state billionaires to rewrite their laws in a harmful way.

Republicans reject the call for a National Popular Vote to pick our president, and instead that office is filled by the Electoral College. Republican candidates for president should campaign on defending our republican form of government against the progressive strategy of direct democracy.

Our Declaration of Independence stands entirely against infringement on God-given rights by popular vote or by any other means. That timeless document describes the concept

of unalienable rights as a “self-evident” truth, yet Trump’s rivals for president seem to think everything is fair game for ballot initiatives.

The Ohio legislature, with its Republican supermajority, could immediately overturn the cannabis Issue 2 ballot initiative to prevent Ohio from becoming a decadent culture of pungent weed. The marijuana-saturated states of California and Colorado are hemorrhaging in population, and Midwest legislators should not allow liberal mistakes to transform the middle of our country based on improper ballot initiatives.

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