

Decision 2018: MO voters say no to gas tax, yes to medical pot

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — The Latest on the midterm election in Missouri (all times local):

10:35 p.m.

Missouri voters have turned down a proposal that would have raised the state's gas tax to help pay for road and bridge improvements.

Proposition D, voted down on Tuesday, would have increased the state's 17-cent-per-gallon tax, which is among the lowest in the nation, by 10 cents a gallon. In addition to road and bridge repairs, the money would have helped fund the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

Republican Gov. Mike Parson campaigned in support of the tax increase, saying the state's infrastructure needs are long overdue. SaferMO.com, the group advocating for the gas tax, paid for Parson's tour.

The Republican-led Legislature referred the measure to the ballot this year.

Missouri voters have a long history of saying no to tax increases. Since voters approved a constitutional amendment in 1996 requiring all tax increases over a certain amount to go to a statewide vote, not a single general tax increase has passed.

10:30 p.m.

Minimum wage workers in Missouri will soon get a boost in pay after voters on Tuesday approved a plan to gradually raise the wage to \$12 an hour.

The current minimum wage in Missouri is \$7.85 an hour. Proposition B will require the wage to rise to \$8.60 an hour in 2019 and gradually increase to \$12 an hour by 2023. The organization Raise Up Missouri turned in more than 120,000 signatures to get the measure on the ballot.

The effort got a boost in September when a Washington, D.C.-based dark money nonprofit, The Sixteen Thirty Fund, donated \$3 million to Raise Up Missouri. The Kansas City Star reported it was the largest single contribution in the state in the last two years.

10:15 p.m.

A ballot measure allowing the use of medical marijuana with an emphasis on helping veterans has passed, but two other medical marijuana measures were turned down.

Missouri voters on Tuesday approved Amendment 2, a ballot measure backed by a coalition of patients, doctors and veterans called New Approach Missouri. It was one of three unrelated medical marijuana measures on the ballot.

Under Amendment 2, post-traumatic stress disorder is among the conditions that qualify for use of medical marijuana, along with cancer and other serious illnesses. A 4 percent sales tax will go to a newly-created fund for health and care services for veterans. The sales tax revenue also will be used to administer licensing of medical marijuana businesses.

Voters turned down Amendment 3, which would have included a 15 percent tax to create a new state institute to research "presently incurable diseases." The effort was largely self-funded by Springfield doctor and attorney Brad Bradshaw.

Also defeated was Proposition C, which would have imposed a 2 percent tax on the sale of medical marijuana.

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