

# Ballot Initiatives Provide Underappreciated Election-Night Victories

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Last week, I [highlighted nine ballot initiatives](#) that were worth watching because of their policy implications and/or their role in showing whether voters wanted more or less freedom. The results, by and large, are very encouraging. Let's take a look at the results of those nine votes, as well as a few additional key initiatives.

1. The big spenders wanted to impose an income tax in the state of Washington, and they even had support from too-rich-to-care Bill Gates. The good news is that this initiative got [slaughtered by a nearly two-to-one margin](#). I was worried about this initiative since crazy Oregon voters [approved higher tax rates earlier this year](#). In a further bit of good news, Washington voters also [approved a supermajority requirement for tax increases by a similar margin](#).
2. Nevada voters had a chance to vote on eminent domain abuse. This is an initiative that I mischaracterized in my original post. The language made it sound like it was designed to protect private property, but it actually was proposed by the political elite to weaken a property rights initiative that the voters previously had imposed. Fortunately, Nevada voters did not share my naiveté and the [effort to weaken eminent domain protections was decisively rejected](#). This is important, of course, because of the Supreme Court's [reprehensible Kelo decision](#).
3. California voters were predictably disappointing. They [rejected the initiative to legalize marijuana](#), thus missing an opportunity to adopt a more sensible approach to victimless crimes. The crazy voters from the Golden State also [kept in place a suicidal global warming scheme](#) that is driving jobs out of the state. The only silver lining in California's dark cloud is that voters did approve a [supermajority requirement for certain revenue increases](#).
4. Nearly 90 percent of voters in Kansas approved an [initiative to remove any ambiguity about whether individuals have the right to keep and bear arms](#). Let that be a warning to those imperialist Canadians, just in case they're plotting an invasion.
5. Arizona voters had a chance to give their opinion on Obamacare. Not surprisingly, they were not big fans, with more than 55 percent of them supporting an [initiative in favor of individual choice in health care](#). A [similar initiative](#) was approved by an even greater margin in Oklahoma. Shifting back to Arizona, voters also strongly [rejected racial](#)

[and sexual discrimination by government](#), but they narrowly [failed to approve medical marijuana](#).

6. Shifting to the local level, San Francisco, one of the craziest cities in America rejected a [proposal to require bureaucrats to make meaningful contributions to support their bloated pension and health benefits](#). On the other hand, voters did approve a proposal to ban people from sleeping on sidewalks. Who knew that was a big issue?

7. Sticking with the ever-amusing Golden State, voters unfortunately eliminated the [requirement for a two-thirds vote in the legislature to approve a budget](#), thus making it even easier for politicians to increase the burden of government spending. The state almost certainly is already on a path to bankruptcy, and this result will probably hasten its fiscal demise. Hopefully, the new GOP majority in the House of Representatives will say no when soon-to-be Governor Brown comes asking for a bailout.

8. The entire political establishment in Massachusetts was united in its opposition to an [initiative to to roll back the sales tax from 6.25 percent to 3 percent](#), and they were successful. But 43 percent of voters approved, so maybe there's some tiny sliver of hope for the Bay State.

9. Louisiana voters approved an initiative to [require a two-thirds vote to approve any expansion of taxpayer-financed benefits for government employees](#). With 65 percent of voters saying yes to this proposal, this is a good sign that the bureaucrat gravy train may finally be slowing down.

At the risk of giving a grade, I think voters generally did a good job when asked to directly make decisions. I give them a solid B.