

CITIZENS LEAGUE
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Approved:
Board of Directors

October 9, 1974

CITIZENS LEAGUE URGES 'YES' VOTE ON STATE
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS NOV. 5

We also recommend support for the three proposed amendments to the Minnesota constitution, placed on the Nov. 5 ballot by the Legislature at the urging of the Constitutional Study Commission.

All three deal with issues of procedure, and present essentially questions of principle with respect to the process of making state policy and to the process of amending the constitution itself.

- * The first proposes to remove a number of out-dated provisions, and to reorganize the remaining provisions. No consequential change is proposed or intended.
- * The second would change the requirement for adoption of a proposed constitutional amendment. At present, passage requires a majority of those voting at the election. The proposed amendment would provide that an amendment could also be adopted on a 55 per cent majority of those voting on the question.
- * The third would adjust the procedure for determining the policy to be followed in the taxation specifically of railroad property--moving this from essentially the process of constitutional change (legislative action plus voter referendum) to the legislative process (action by the House and Senate with approval by the governor). No substantive change in railroad tax policy is proposed by this amendment.

The Citizens League has dealt with these questions of process and procedure principally in the context of local government, and the amendment of local government charters.

In 1959, during discussion of the state procedure for the amendment of home-rule charters, the League's board of directors recommended (January 7, 1959) that the required majorities be of those voting on the question. In a series of reports, the League has also made plain its view that tax policy should be established through the legislative process.

These principles apply to the issues presented by the state constitutional amendments now proposed, and we recommend their approval by the voters.