

FACTS

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LOCAL CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

In the general election on November 3rd the registered voters of Fulton County will vote on five local amendments. These are in addition to the fourteen amendments of state-wide application which are described in the Georgia Voter. The League strongly supports two of the local ones — **Rapid Transit** (Public Transportation) and **Office of Coroner Abolished**. It is important that all voters be informed and **vote** on the amendments as well as the candidates!

The title of each amendment is printed below and a brief explanation of **what it means**. Possible pros and cons of the three amendments, on which the League has no position, are given. The League's reasons for supporting the other two amendments are stated briefly. For more information on these look in the back files. **Inform** others of our stand.

#16 — PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION OF PASSENGERS FOR HIRE IN METROPOLITAN AREA OF ATLANTA (Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb, Clayton and Gwinnett)

Title: for or against "ratification of amendment to the Constitution so as to declare the acquisition, establishment, operation and administration of a system of public transportation of passengers for hire in the metropolitan area of the City of Atlanta and the counties of Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb, Clayton and Gwinnett to be an essential governmental function and a public purpose and to authorize the creation of a public corporation or authority for such purpose."

Explanation: would add a new Article XVII to the Constitution which would state in general:

I—Acquisition, establishment, operation or administration of a system of public transportation of passengers for hire within metropolitan area is an essential governmental function and a public purpose for which the powers of taxation and eminent domain may be exercised and public funds of said counties and municipalities expended.

II—The General Assembly may create a public corporation or authority as an instrumentality of the City of Atlanta and the 5 counties to perform the aforesaid function.

III—The General Assembly may provide that such public corporation shall be exempt from any tax obligation and from regulation by any commission of the State.

IV—The counties and City may contract with such public corporation or authority for performance of such functions and may levy taxes to fulfill the obligation incurred in such contracts.

The Counties and City may pay for the public transportation services and facilities contracted for, including the payment of principal and interest on any obligations issued by such corporation, and may convey to such corporation property or facilities or render services. No county shall have the power to levy any tax on any subject situated within the territorial limits of a municipality which is levying a tax for the same purposes. (Forbids double taxation.)

V—These provisions should be liberally construed and shall not be limited by any existing provision.

This amendment deals with what we call **Rapid Transit**. It will be voted on in the five counties of the metropolitan area. The amendment is **permissive**. It would allow the General Assembly to set up an authority and taxation for this purpose — but it would not be mandatory that they do so.

Why is there a need for **Rapid Transit**? Because, to move the large numbers of people into the city, that the city needs, expressways, buses and automobiles cannot do the job by themselves. If we depended on expressways alone, **many** more lanes would be needed by 1970 — at a cost of ten million dollars per mile.

Why should Rapid Transit be developed with public funds? It is too expensive to **construct** a major system from private capital alone. However, we understand that modern transit systems in Chicago, Cleveland and Toronto are making enough to retire debt service and provide maintenance.

Remember, public transportation is as much a necessity to a stable economy as water, sewers and streets. Make your support on this amendment known. In 1962 a similar amendment failed when voted on **state-wide**. Surely the citizens of this five county area will see how vital this amendment is **now!**

#58 FULTON COUNTY — STADIUM IN CITY OF ATLANTA

Title: for or against "ratification of amendment to the Constitution of Georgia so as to authorize Fulton County to cooperate in the construction of a stadium and related facilities within the corporate limits of the City of Atlanta and to enter into contracts in connection therewith."

Explanation: amends Article XI by adding that — Fulton County can cooperate with Atlanta and pay up to one-third of amount necessary to retire the principal of and interest on obligations issued to finance the stadium and related facilities.

Supporters say: The county must assume its share of the burden — the stadium will benefit residents of the entire county, not just the city.

#59 FULTON COUNTY — OFFICE OF CORONER ABOLISHED

Title: for or against "ratification of amendment to the Constitution so as to authorize the General Assembly to abolish the office of Coroner of Fulton County and create the office of Medical Examiner of Fulton County."

Explanation: In addition to the above the General Assembly is authorized to prescribe the powers, duties and functions of such office, all without respect to uniformity.

The League has long had the position under its CR on Local Elections — Short Ballot, that policy making officials — only — should be on the ballot. Purely administrative officials, who may have definite technical qualifications, cannot be fairly judged by the voter.—It is understood that the Medical Examiner would be appointed by the County Manager with the concurrence of the State Medical Examiner.

The office of coroner has long been an outmoded one in Fulton County. In addition to the Coroner, Fulton has had a qualified medical examiner for some years — out of absolute necessity. The Coroner, whose salary is \$10,000, now appoints the medical examiner whose salary is \$18,000. The League thinks that the examiner should be in charge of and responsible for this office.

We have publicly stated our position on this many times in the past. We are pleased that we can **support** and **vote** on this amendment now!

#60 FULTON COUNTY — RECREATION PROGRAMS, BUSINESS LICENSES, SANITARY LANDFILLS AND TRAFFIC ORDINANCES

Title — for or against "ratification of amendment to the Constitution of Georgia authorizing Fulton County to engage in recreational activities in certain cities; and authorizing Fulton County, in unincorporated areas, to regulate and license business; to operate sanitary landfills, to regulate traffic and parking and to provide for the misdemeanor punishment of violators."

Explanation — Amends Article XI by adding the following:

1-a—The commissioners shall have power to conduct recreational programs in cities of not more than 5,000 population. The city shall bear at least 1/2 of cost — cost to county shall not be more than \$5,000 a year.

b—the Commissioners shall have power, within un-incorporated areas, to:

- (1)—regulate business (except those under State Public Service Commission) and to require any firm or business to pay license fee.
- (2)—operate sanitary landfills for public dump.
- (3)—regulate pedestrian and vehicular traffic — parking, speed, etc., and provide for punishment of violators.

Supporters say: Small towns in Fulton need the help of the County in providing recreation for their youth. A county the size of Fulton must have the authority to regulate businesses and traffic in un-incorporated areas or chaos will result.

Opponents say: Some small businesses can't afford to pay license fees. Towns should provide for their own recreation programs if they want them.

#61 FULTON COUNTY — IMPROVEMENT ETC. OF STREETS AND SIDEWALKS

Title — for or against "ratification of amendment to the Constitution of Georgia authorizing Fulton County, in the un-incorporated area, to construct, pave and improve public streets, roads and sidewalks and assess all or a portion of the cost of same against abutting property and the owners thereof."

Explanation: This amendment would give the commissioners the same power the city now has in regards to assessment of property owners for improvements. There would be uniform rules and regulations and uniform application to all properties of same class.

Supporters say: The commissioners need this authority so that the people in the outlying areas can have better roads and sidewalks.

Opponents say: The people pay enough taxes to pay for all the roads they need without extra assessment.

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

Mrs. L. Glen Parham, Jr., Editor Oct. '64