

11/1/02

Aunt Nina,

Here's my advice on the proposals.

#1, bans straight ticket voting. Voting "no" allows straight ticket voting to continue. It is the Republicans who are pushing this proposal because they think Democrats benefit from it. Is it because Democratic voters are too lazy and/or stupid to make individual choices? I don't know. I don't have any strong feelings about it, so I will vote "no" just because election officials say it will slow the voting process.

#2, \$1 billion in bonds to finance sewer system repairs. Taxpayers will have to pay interest on the bonds, which will amount to \$605 million over 26 years. The Mackinac Center, a conservative think tank, says this is \$160 for every man, woman and child in Michigan. Sounds like a good deal to me, when you consider the benefits to the environment. I will vote "yes".

#3, collective bargaining with binding arbitration for state employees. It could be costly for the state, and state employees are already well paid. I am against all collective bargaining. I think employers alone should decide how much to pay their employees, and be responsible for the consequences. Employees should only be able to choose whether to take/keep the job or to look elsewhere. I will vote "no".

#4, allocation of tobacco settlement money. Your instincts are correct here. This type of thing should not be in the constitution. Taking it out of the control of the legislature is anti-democratic. Spending it on health care seems like a better idea than spending it on merit scholarships, but I'm against turning over control of the money to the health care industry. I'd like to see the industry die and be replaced by a national health care system. I will vote "no".

Steve