



Five Reasons Issue 1 Must Be Defeated

Issue 1 on the November ballot, funded by George Soros and Facebook billionaire Mark Zuckerberg, purports to be about getting treatment for drug users. But it's much more than that. It will also reduce even major drug possession offenses to the equivalent of traffic violations, it usurps the power and flexibility of Ohio's judges and drug courts, it will levy huge costs on our counties with no funds to pay them, and it will endanger our families and children by flooding our streets with drugs – all at a time when opioid deaths in Ohio are exceeding the death toll from the Vietnam War. Issue 1 is a danger to Ohio. Here is what Issue 1 really does, and why it must be defeated:

- 1. Issue 1 makes possession of any amount of deadly drugs (including fentanyl) nothing more than a misdemeanor, and forbids jail sentencing for the first two offenses, no matter what quantities of drugs are involved.**
- 2. Issue 1 significantly damages Ohio's economy and our job development efforts. Ohio would be alone among states in our region with ultraliberal Issue 1 drug laws – at a time when Ohio employers already complain that they can't find workers who can pass drug tests. Issue 1 will drive jobs from Ohio.**
- 3. Issue 1 puts Ohio drug law in the Constitution where it can be changed only through lengthy process and vote of the electorate. Ohio will be unable to respond rapidly to any new drug threat.**
- 4. Issue 1 will flood Ohio's streets with drugs. With all deterrent gone except for traffic-violation level fines, possessors of drugs will laugh at police knowing they cannot be jailed.**
- 5. Issue 1 enables the immediate release of as many as 10,000 felony offenders from Ohio prisons into our communities.***

BOTTOM LINE:

Despite claims from supporters, experts including judges, prosecutors, and treatment professionals agree this issue will result in less people in treatment, not more.

*Proponents of Issue 1 say fourth and fifth degree non-violent felony offenses are "minor" and those in prison for them should be eligible to be released. But the fact is the vast majority of such offenders are in prison because of plea bargaining down from more serious offenses. Judges in Ohio do not imprison people they believe are not a threat to society.