

## Governor

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percent undecided.

The poll on R-74 also included a third prediction, based on whether people answered honestly. Barreto said that because sometime people answering poll questions feel social pressure to answer a certain way, results can be skewed. In this poll, they weighted the poll based on how they answered two additional questions: if they lied on the survey and if any topics made them uncomfortable. That third prediction reduced those supporting the refer-

cent of those asked said they would vote yes, compared to 40.8 percent who would vote no. Among likely voters, support drops slightly to 47.1 percent.

Among the ballot measures, the poll showed the strongest support for Initiative 1185, which asks voters to renew the restriction of a two-thirds legislative majority on any new tax. Support for the measure was at 53.6 percent, compared to 31.2 percent who oppose it. Among likely voters, support increases to 54.1 percent and opposition drops to 30.9 percent.

Charter schools was the only ballot measure that didn't get more than 50 percent among either group, with 47.5 percent of voters saying they would vote to support Initiative 1240, compared to the 39.2 percent who are opposed. Among the likely voter group, support increased a bit to 48.8 percent, compared to 40.1 percent opposed. I-1240 would create a public charter school system in Washington. It is opposed by the Washington Education

Association, the state's largest teacher's union.

The poll also showed support for President Barack Obama in Washington state, with 51.8 percent saying they will vote for him, compared to 41.3 percent who said they will vote for Republican Mitt Romney. That number didn't change much among the likely voter group, with Obama holding a 51.9 percent to 42.9 percent advantage. U.S. Maria Cantwell also leads her Republican challenger, state Sen. Michael Baumgartner, 58.3 percent to 34.8 percent. Among likely voters, her support drops slightly, to 57.7 percent, compared to 35.4 percent for

The poll, conducted by the University of Washington, also found voters supporting four ballot measures dealing with gay marriage, legalizing marijuana, approving charter schools and limiting taxes.

endum down to 52.9 percent, and those opposing 46.6 percent.

Barreto noted that in 2009, when voters were deciding on a referendum on the state's so-called "everything but marriage" expansion of the domestic partnership law, his polling showed the measure was up by 17 points, but it ultimately only won by just over 6 percentage points.

"On almost every other race in 2009, we were off by a point, but on that issue, we were off by more than 10," he said.

On Initiative 502, which would legalize possession of up to an ounce of marijuana under state law for those over 21, 50.9 per-

ests that often lobby against tax breaks from being closed.

Eyman said he'll continue to put the two-thirds restriction up for a vote because he sees Democrats in Olympia as too eager to

raise taxes, if there are no restrictions. The restriction was lifted in 2010 when lawmakers were able to do it.

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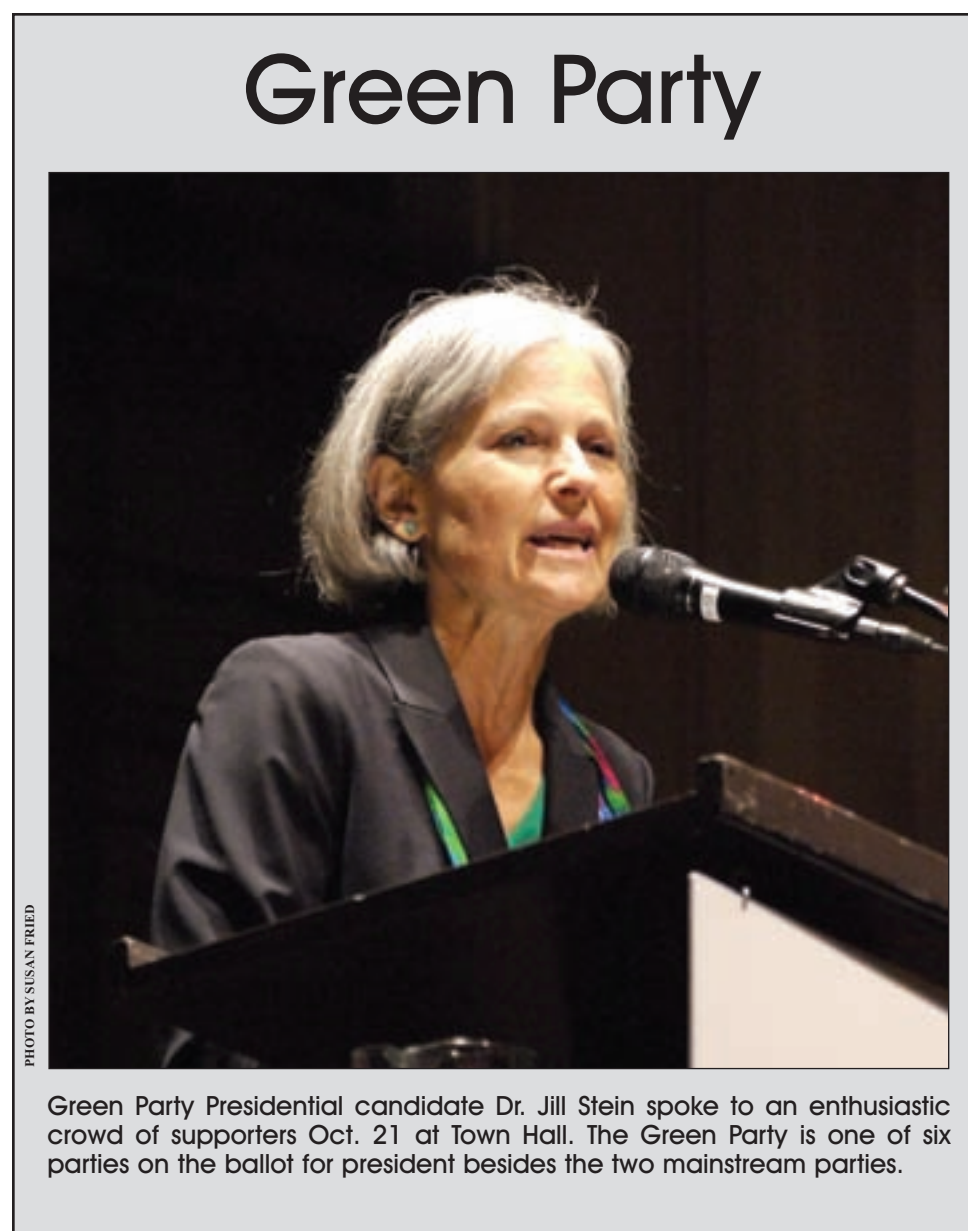


PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

Green Party Presidential candidate Dr. Jill Stein spoke to an enthusiastic crowd of supporters Oct. 21 at Town Hall. The Green Party is one of six parties on the ballot for president besides the two mainstream parties.

Baumgartner.

Barreto said that another poll will be released on Nov. 1, just days before the election. Counties started sending ballots to voters on Wednesday.

"Now that ballots are going out, this marks the frenzied, mad dash of the campaign," he said.

## Tax

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restriction, which they can do with a simple majority vote after two years.

This year's initiative is a repeat of the others.

The measure reinstates that a two-thirds legislative majority for new taxes or a simple majority approval from voters. It also states that new or increased fees must have a simple legislative majority for approval.

In Washington, state lawmakers can suspend an initiative two years after it is passed by a simple majority vote in Olympia.

"We're probably the most boring ballot measure across the board," Eyman said jokingly. "We're not the sexy marijuana, gay marriage, even charter schools. We're just trying to keep the law the way it is today."

It cost about \$1.3 million to put the initiative back on the ballot, according to filings. That money was provided by business inter-

ests that often lobby against tax breaks from being closed. Eyman said he'll continue to put the two-thirds restriction up for a vote because he sees Democrats in Olympia as too eager to

for Olympia to ignore it, that's why we advocate for voting on it over and over again," Eyman said. "Taxes should be the last resort. When the two-thirds is in effect, it is the last resort."

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Backing the campaign against 1185 are a cohort of unions and liberal advocacy groups, as well as a slew of Democratic lawmakers and candidates, including guber-

natorial candidate Jay Inslee.

Thomas acknowledged it's hard to argue against the simple pitch of not raising taxes. She's been using the education funding angle this year.

"My arguments are constitutionality," Thomas said. "It's definitely a harder pitch, especially in the middle of this recession. To get people willing to pay more, it's a hard sell. But it's necessary."

Does Eyman see a year when he doesn't file an initiative on this? He said he'd like to see lawmakers allow for a public vote on a constitutional amendment implementing the two-thirds rule.

For that to happen, two-thirds of both legislative chambers have to OK the amendment.

## Stamps

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ence."

Postage-due ballots are not returned to sender. It's a secret officials don't like to talk about.

"Election officials don't like us to mention that," Swanson said.

Counties can't afford to pay for mailing ballots without voters' help. At the projected ballot return of 81 percent for 3.9 million register voters, the 45-cent stamps will add up to more than \$1.4 million.

"It could become quite expensive," said Moss. "It's not something they would want to be put out there."

But it hasn't been a big issue. "Up to this

point I haven't heard this is a big problem," she said.

In King County, which includes Seattle

'We will deliver to every election office whether they have sufficient postage or not'

and accounts for about one-third of the votes in the Washington, a single stamp is

sufficient postage. The number of ballots without postage averaged about 1,100 each of the past two years, said Sherril Huff,

King County elections director.

Ballots that require two stamps should

have that information in the voting information from the county, Moss said.

In any case, voters should be confident a stamp doesn't stand in their way, said Kitsap Auditor Washington, who also is president of the Washington State Association of County Auditors.

"I can assure you, however, that ALL counties have a level of comfort that all voters will be afforded the ability to cast their ballots timely and have them counted," he said by email in response to a question.

Counties mailed out ballots this week. Voters can fill them out and return them any time up to the Nov. 6 postmark deadline.