

Osage Minerals Council Press Release

July 4, 2012

Vote Yes

Special Election August 13th

The four amendments to the Osage Constitution being voted on in the August special election are of critical importance to Osage headright holders and non-headright holders alike. When the new Osage Constitution was being formulated, the promise was made that it would continue to vest the Osage Minerals government with the same powers it had always enjoyed over the Mineral Estate.

Because of ambiguous, misleading and confusing wording in our Constitution this promise was not met. When passed, these amendments will be a huge step in correcting that situation.

The problems caused by the current wording of our Constitution are not just political, but very practical as well. Because of the unique partnership between the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Osage people in conducting our minerals business it is critical for efficient minerals management that the U.S. government and our oil & gas producers know which Osage elected body speaks for our people on Mineral Estate related matters.

Recently one of our largest oil producers shared with the Minerals Council that the confusing nature of wording in our Constitution creates a "business risk" that is sometimes unacceptable to financial backers. We cannot allow this situation to continue if the mineral estate is to be properly managed.

Here are some facts about how these proposed amendments came to be and what each is designed to do.

- They were developed by a majority of the Minerals Council working in conjunction with members of Congress with the goal of achieving maximum Minerals Council autonomy while maintaining tribal sovereignty protections for the Mineral Estate.
- Our Minerals Council attorney was involved in developing the wording and concepts of the proposed amendments, and gave his approval to the final passed versions of each.
- They will clarify to the BIA/DOI and all others that the Osage Minerals Council is the elected body of the Osage Nation with the sole authority to develop and administer the Osage Mineral Estate. They will also vest the Council with the autonomy necessary to conduct these duties properly and efficiently.

- They will also ban the Osage Congress from taxing royalty income or any portion of the Mineral Estate production and transportation process.
- They were passed with no dissenting votes by the Osage Nation Congress.

ONCR-11-12

Removes the Osage Minerals Council from being lumped under the Executive Branch with appointed boards and committees, and makes the Council an independent Osage Nation governmental body like other elected officials.

ONCR-11-13

Constitutionally establishes the right of the Minerals Council to conduct their own elections, thus removing the current constitutional necessity for the Osage Congress to pass election codes pertaining to Minerals Council elections.

ONCR-11-14

Establishes the make-up of the Minerals Council and vests them with the sole authority to lease and develop the Mineral Estate and to administer the Mineral duties previously granted to all the Officers of the Tribe by the 1906 act as amended.

ONCR-10-19

Constitutionally bans the Osage Congress from passing any laws that would tax royalty income from the Osage Mineral Estate, or that would appropriate Mineral Estate funds. This proposed amendment also bans any taxes on production and transportation of minerals.

The proposed amendments in their entirety can be viewed on the Minerals Council website, or copies can be obtained from our office. We encourage every Osage to make themselves familiar with these amendments and vote **YES** in the August 13th special election.



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