

## Advance Copy for Elections Officials

North Carolina Department  
of the Secretary of State

### **PRESS RELEASE**

**August 26, 2010**

For Immediate Release  
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**Elaine F. Marshall**  
**Secretary of State**

#### **Constitutional Amendment on November Ballot**

**Raleigh** – When North Carolina voters go to the polls on November 2, they will find more than candidates' names on their ballots. They also will be voting on a constitutional amendment that could affect the names on future ballots.

The 2010 General Assembly approved a measure (Session Law 2010-49) that would ban convicted felons from serving as sheriffs in North Carolina.

The proposed amendment to Article VII, Section 2 of the North Carolina Constitution would add language stating that individuals convicted of a felony in North Carolina or any other state would be ineligible to serve as a sheriff in North Carolina whether or not his or her rights of citizenship have been restored.

The General Assembly also approved the language that voters will see on the ballot this fall as they consider this constitutional amendment:

**[ ] FOR [ ] AGAINST**

**Constitutional amendment providing that no person convicted of a felony may serve as Sheriff.**

The Constitutional Amendments Publication Commission, chaired by Secretary of State Elaine F. Marshall, has approved language for an official explanation of the proposed amendment that can be provided to voters to assist them in understanding the amendment.

Secretary Marshall urges voters to take time to consider the amendment.

“The Constitution of North Carolina belongs to the people of North Carolina. As with every proposed constitutional amendment, the voters have an important opportunity here to carefully consider this proposed change and cast their ballots according to the facts and to their personal beliefs.”

Here is the official explanation adopted by the Commission:

The North Carolina Constitution says that voters must elect a county Sheriff. It does not say who is eligible to serve as county Sheriff.

The proposed Amendment to the Constitution says who is not eligible to serve as a county Sheriff. The Amendment says that convicted felons are not eligible to serve as county Sheriff.

A convicted felon is someone who has been found guilty or who has pled guilty to a serious crime called a felony. A felony is a crime that may lead to imprisonment. A person convicted of a felony may lose certain rights. For example, a person who is convicted of a felony may lose the right to vote, the right to carry a firearm, and other privileges.

**If the majority of voters vote “FOR” for the Amendment,** a convicted felon will not be eligible to be a County Sheriff in North Carolina.

**If the majority of voters vote “AGAINST” the Amendment,** a convicted felon will be eligible to be a County Sheriff in North Carolina.

This explanation is being provided to each North Carolina county board of elections. For copies, people may contact their county board of elections, the North Carolina Secretary of State’s Office, or visit the Secretary of State’s Office online at [www.sosnc.com](http://www.sosnc.com).

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