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door meeting to have a discussion that should be held in public, according to state law. Then, after sparking public outcry, they backpedaled and canceled the executive session.

EDITORIAL

We encourage residents to use this Saturday's event to chime in on the way the city's leaders conduct themselves.

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idea or an anti-business measure. And they can taint their reputations by scheduling closed meetings about what are essentially political debates.

But it's clear from recent headlines city leaders are willing to re-think a foolish decision when their constituents raise a stink.

Saturday's meeting is a chance to remind them that Longmont residents value open government and smart decisions about economic development.

7S FROM THE LD'S PRESS

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ties of poachers.

These are weighty concerns. Yet there is a good case for allowing the sale, under the auspices of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. CITES has undertaken to scrutinize the sales in Japan and China to ensure that legal shipments of ivory are not mixed with contraband. ...

The sales of ivory are of stockpiles; they do not endanger existing elephant populations. And the proceeds will go to elephant conservation projects. Safeguarding biodiversity is an essential cause. But effective management of the environment is crucial to it. Closely monitored sales of ivory pass that test.

The Times, London

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Amendment 48 will affect all areas of state law; Vote no

By Patricia Schroeder
Special to the Times-Call

My very first job after graduating from Harvard Law School was as a part-time lawyer for Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains in Denver. I was working on cases related to expanding access to birth control to all couples regardless of their marital status. At the time, the birth control pill was recently approved as safe, but it was not yet legal in all states for all women. The Supreme Court in 1965 established basic privacy rights to birth control but only for women who could produce a marriage license.

Fast forward to 2008, 40 years later. In my worst nightmare, it never crossed my mind that voters in Colorado would be considering a constitutional amendment that could outlaw birth control pills. Emergency contraceptives could also be illegal under Proposition 48, a form of birth control that, if taken up to 72 hours after intercourse, can prevent an unwanted pregnancy, especially used by rape and incest victims.

If you need more reasons to vote No on 48, chances are you or your own family will be affected if this crazy proposal passes. Like thousands of living women in Colorado in the 1970s, I struggled with difficult pregnancies. I lost twins during my second pregnancy and almost died during childbirth. It was a painful time for my family, as it is for all families. I can only imagine how devastating it would have been if government officials had shown up on my doorstep asking questions about what had happened, was it really a miscarriage? Yet, couples could face that kind of unthinkable government in-

vestigation if Colorado voters allow Amendment 48 to pass.

If you don't believe it could happen, just take a look at the plain language of the amendment. It would amend the Colorado Constitution to grant, for the first time, inalienable rights, equality of justice and due process of law to fertilized eggs. Even the proponents of the amendment admit they don't know all the possible ramifications.

Would couples struggling to get pregnant be allowed to use in vitro fertilization, which depends on fertilizing more eggs than a woman can carry to term? Would common birth control methods such as the pill, IUDs, the patch and the ring be outlawed because they operate by preventing fertilized eggs from implanting in the uterus?

Could child welfare agencies be called to investigate abuse of a fertilized egg? Would a fertilized egg have standing to sue a woman for getting chemotherapy for cancer because it might be harmed? Amendment 48 would open more than 20,000 statutes and regulations to re-interpretation by the courts and lawyers. Almost every area of the law would be affected, including criminal law, family law, trusts and estates, elder law, tort law, juvenile law, health law and business law.

In this presidential election year, Coloradans will decide one of the most competitive Senate races in the country, several strongly contested congressional races and as many as a dozen statewide ballot initiatives. There are a large number of questions on the ballot this fall, and many of the issues are complicated. But it doesn't take a constitutional scholar, a medical

ethicist or a genius to see that Amendment 48 is ridiculous. Coloradans have rejected these extreme positions before and must do so again.

Amendment 48 is not a homegrown initiative. National groups such as the American Life League, Lifeguard and the Thomas More Law Center are carrying out a multi-state strategy with the ultimate goal of overturning Roe v. Wade. In addition to Colorado, they tried to get similar amendments on the ballot in Georgia, Montana and Oregon but failed. These outside groups are hoping in Colorado that the amendment will sneak through the clutter of a crowded ballot. They are counting on you to be distracted and not to focus on the full implications of Amendment 48.

Well, they are forgetting that Coloradans are independent thinkers. Coloradans believe that they and their neighbors should have the ability to plan when they want to start a family, decide when they are ready to become parents and make other important life decisions. By establishing constitutional rights from the moment of fertilization, Amendment 48 would eliminate a woman's right to make personal, private decisions about her own health care, in consultation with her doctor and her family.

Years ago, when I was asked how I could be both a mother and a congresswoman, I replied, "I have a brain and a uterus and I use both." On Nov. 4, I urge Coloradans to use their brains and protect women's uteruses. Vote no on Amendment 48.

Patricia Schroeder represented Colorado's 1st Congressional District from 1973 to 1996.

Vote no on 1B and just donate on your own

By Brian Schwartz
Special to the Times-Call

Voters should oppose ballot issue 1B, the "Worthy Cause" tax, no matter how worthy the causes are. The sales tax for Boulder County nonprofits is wrong and should end.

It's wrong for the taxpayers forced to "donate." It's wrong for a community that benefits from a marketplace of accountable and effective charities. And it's wrong for the very people these organizations are supposed to help.

Giving to a charity can be virtuous. It's a form of self-expression that promotes your values. Donors can feel pride and integrity by taking action to support causes important to them. But the Worthy Cause tax forces taxpayers to donate to charities — that other people choose. There's no virtue or compassion in taking someone's money by force, even if you donate it to charity. That's the essence of Ballot Issue 1B.

Ballot issue 1B is unfair. Every dollar you're forced to donate to political-favored charities is one less dollar for other charities that must earn your donation.

Compare such voluntary fundraising with the political fundraising by "Citizens for a Worthy Cause," who have spent thousands of dollars promoting Issue 1B so government can collect mandatory "donations." These aren't "citizens" but the very charities that have received or could receive the Worthy Cause tax revenue.

Just as we object when businesses use government to gain unfair advantage over their competitors, we should also object when nonprofits do the same.

While we do not often think of charities competing in a marketplace, it's essential for ensuring that nonprofits are accountable. Donors want their donations put to good use. There's no such accountability when government officials choose which nonprofits receive your money. The organizations get your money regardless of whether you think they're doing a good job, hence the disengaged attitude of "I guess the government's taking care of it." By empowering government, you disempower yourself.

Paraphrasing LendingTree, "when charities compete, we all win." Diligent donors use online resources such as CharityNavigator or GuideStar, which evaluate charities' performance. GuideStar explains how we win: "donors seek out and compare charities, monitor their performances, and give with greater confidence; nonprofit organizations pursue more effective operating practices, embrace greater accountability, and enjoy lower fund-raising costs; and society benefits from a more efficient, generous and well-targeted allocation of resources to the nonprofit sector."

Supporters of the tax claim that the nonprofits couldn't raise the money without it.

This year's Boulder County budget includes \$3.5 million in the "Worthy Cause Fund." Assuming the same voter turnout as the 2004 election, 1B needs about 80,000 votes to pass. That's a \$43 donation per "yes" vote. And it's tax-deductible, so it's more like \$30.

Are we so two-faced in the voting booth? Would a majority vote to force others to donate to charities that they wouldn't support themselves? Is that the Boulder County you want?

If you plan to vote for 1B, realize that it forces your neighbors to donate to charity.

Instead, donate your own money and encourage others to do the same. I've made it easy: Go to www.wakalix.com and click on the "voluntary donations" link on the right side. You'll see a list of charities with links to their donation Web pages.

Decide for yourself which causes are worthy, and donate your own dollars. And remember, your neighbors' dollars are not yours to give. Vote no on Ballot Issue 1B.

Brian Schwartz is a research associate at the Independence Institute in Golden.

If you plan to vote for 1B, realize that it forces your neighbors to donate to charity.

OPEN FORUM

deliver a message to our politicians that we want real leaders working for our communities and not for their own self interest.

I know Betsy Markey. She is smart, modest, honest and has worked hard for our community and the better good of our state. Vote for Betsy Markey for Congress.

ELDON MAST
Longmont

Democrats are to blame

Why such anger at George Bush and the Republicans? The United States economy grew at a robust rate following the horrors of 9/11. Then came the election of 2006, which gave a congressional majority to the Democrat Party. Today, all the Democrat candidates refer

to the "Bush" deficit budgets and economic policies that caused this current economic crisis. The news media conclude that, if they say it, then it must be true, so it is reported as fact. Spending bills come from Congress. I agree that President Bush signed the spending bills, but who passed these bills and sent them on to the president's desk? The Democrat-controlled Congress.

Then came the failures of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the catalyst for the financial systems meltdown. Whose fingerprints are all over the no-regulation policies and the granting of mortgages to unqualified borrowers? (I believe they referred to this as "affordable housing.") If you look at the record, those fingerprints belong to Barney Frank, Nancy Pelosi,

Chris Dodd and Harry Reid, the congressional leadership. Democrat candidates say that it is the failure of the policies of George Bush. The news media? If they said it, it must be true, so report it as fact.

Now we are expected to elect as our president a candidate who has no record of accomplishment and a very questionable history of associations with radical organizations like ACORN and people such as Bill Ayres, just because he says we cannot afford four more years like the past eight. How about a different question: Can we afford four years that look like his past eight?

I ask: Is your anger pointed in the right direction?

ED SWANTON
Longmont