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WI CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ON NOVEMBER 3, 2026 MIDTERM BALLOT

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THIS REFERENDUM/AMENDMENT:

GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED

“Shall section 27 of article 1 of the constitution be created to prohibit governmental entities in the state from discriminating against, or granting preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in public employment, public education public contracting, or public administration?”

PLAIN MEANING OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

The title and the first part of this amendment lead voters to believe that Wisconsin’s government cannot discriminate against individuals: Everyone is treated equally. This language is intentionally deceptive since federal law already mandates that governmental discrimination is unconstitutional.

So what is the point of this amendment? The second sentence is the reason this amendment is on our ballots. **It prohibits the state from granting “preferential treatment” to marginalized people.** If this amendment passes, it will eliminate all the equity-based gains Wisconsin has made over the 50 years.

While framed as promoting equality and fairness, this amendment would reduce Wisconsin’s state capacity to address long-standing disparities. It would strip public systems of tools essential for promoting equal opportunity and equitable access to the **underserved and vulnerable in our society.**

IMPACT IF THIS AMENDMENT PASSES

- State and local government programs that allow equal opportunity to succeed will be unconstitutional, eliminating all efforts to address widespread inequality.
 - Who will benefit: White, able, male, US citizens.
 - What will we lose: 50 years of gains for women and minorities
- **Programs and Policies that this amendment will eliminate:**
 - **Health Equity:** “D” grade for WI’s overall racial health disparity with higher rates of chronic illness, disease, maternal mortality for Black women.
 - **Education:** Changes to K-12 accommodations, curriculum; changes to UW admissions, scholarships, grants, courses, textbooks.
 - **Community-Action Programs:** Elimination of programs that assist low-income people to reduce poverty, housing, food insecurity, Headstart, social programs.
 - **Business/Employment:** Elimination of workplace initiatives for women and minority-owned businesses, targeting hiring strategies, promotions; Wisconsin Supplier Diversity Program.
 - **State contracts:** for funding equity-based programs
 - **ADRCs (Aging, Disability Resource Centers):** possibly unconstitutional