



Center for Transportation Excellence

Key Trends in Ballot Initiatives

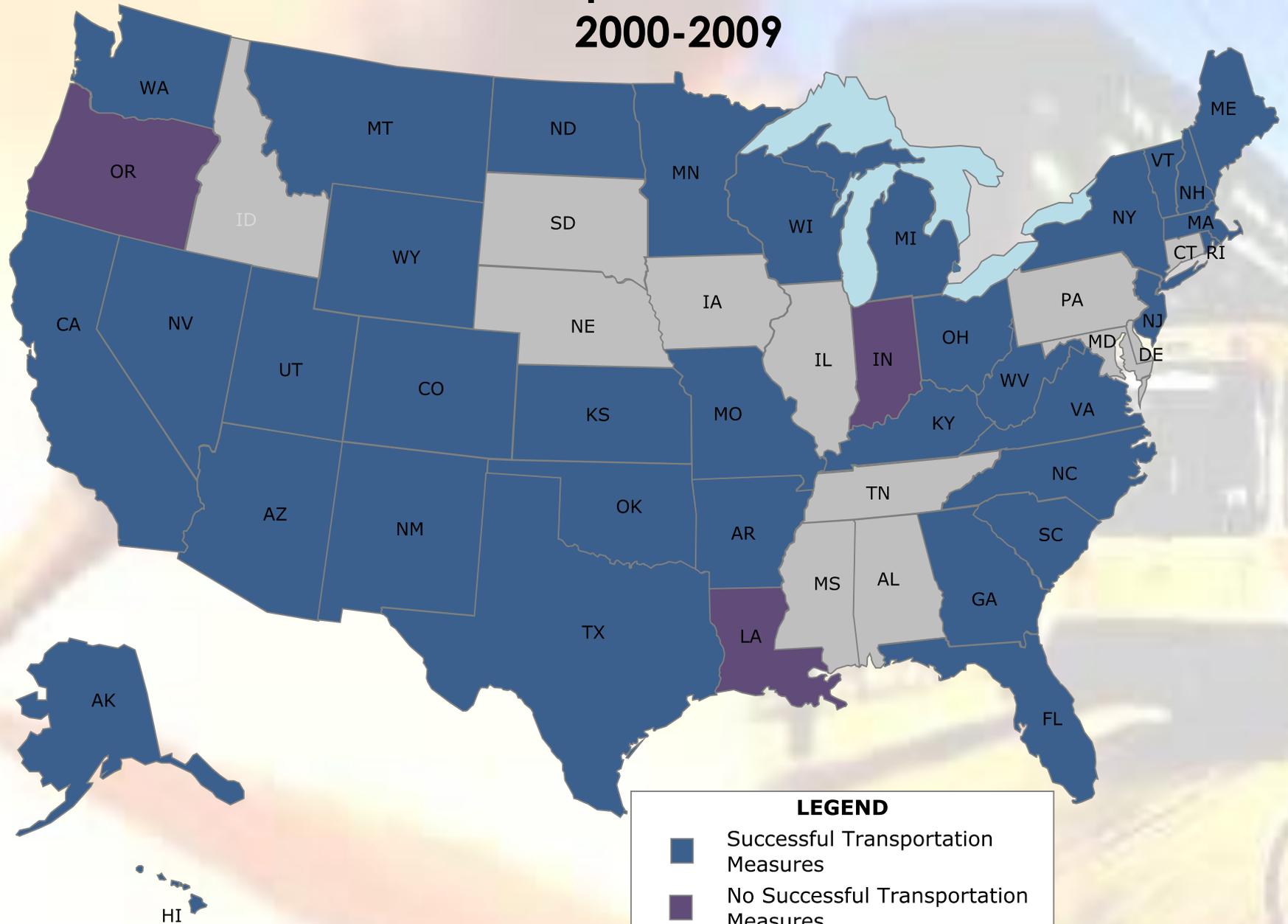
October 20, 2010

Why Ballot Measures?



- The Legislative Process
- Fiscal Pressures ... Tight Resources, Growing Demands & Costs
- Local Match
- “Up Ballot” GOTV
- Political Strategy: Counterbalance Other Ballot Measures, Legislation
- Local Political Culture

States with Transportation Ballot Measures 2000-2009

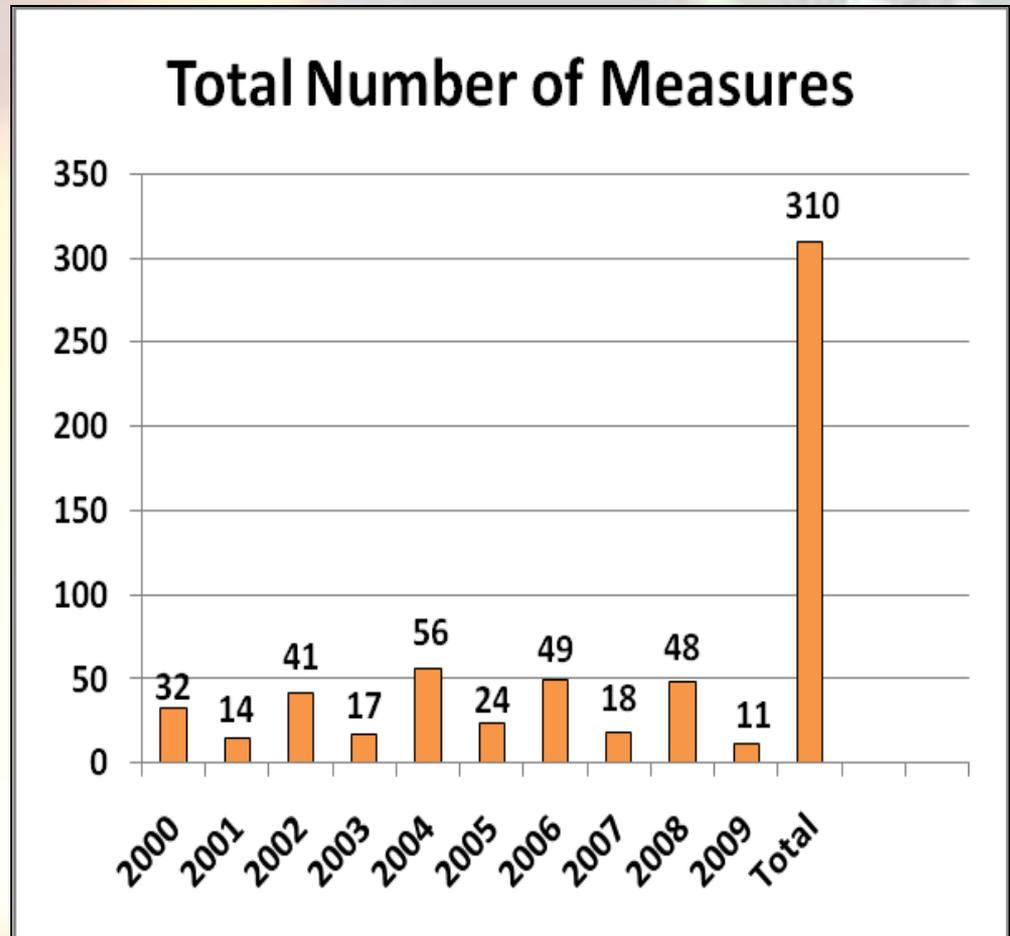


LEGEND

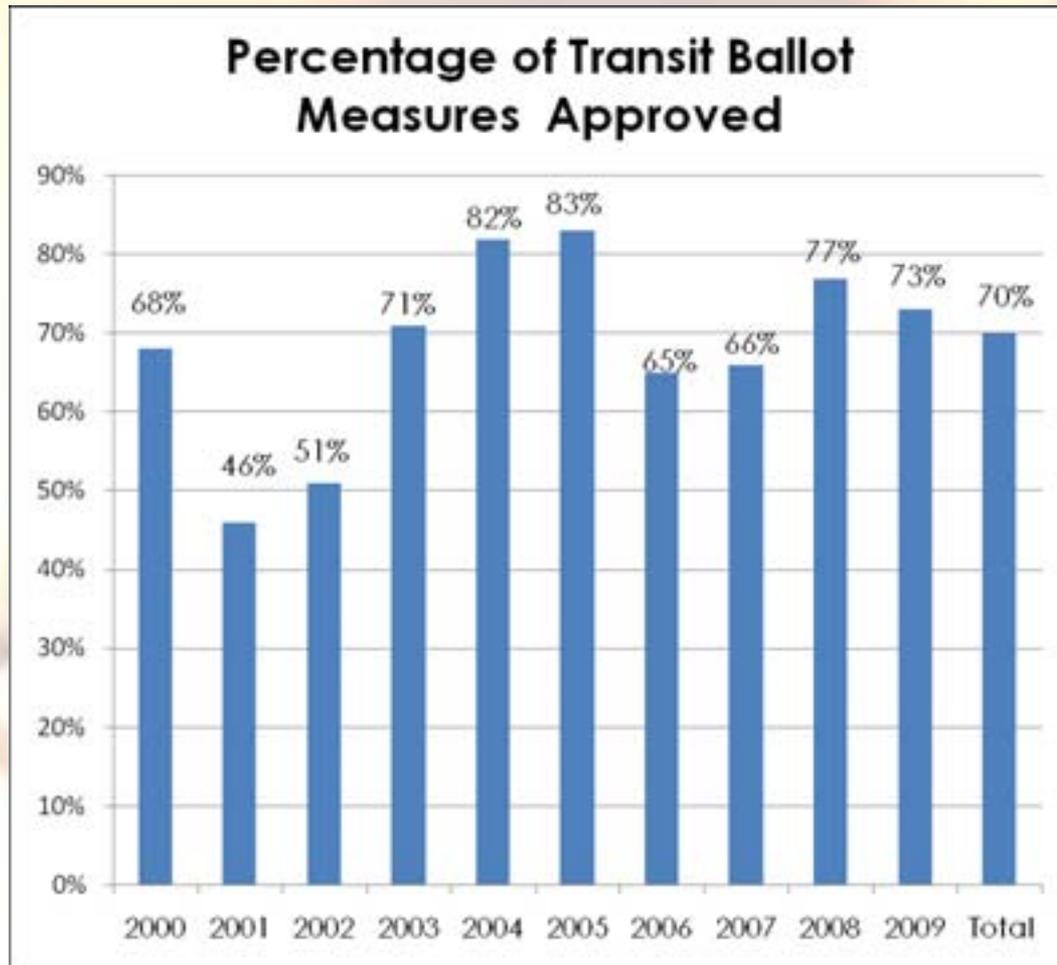
- Successful Transportation Measures
- No Successful Transportation Measures
- No Transportation Measures

Public Transportation Measures Win at the Polls

- More transportation measures are placed on the ballot in election years
- The willingness of communities to go to the ballot was affected by the recession in 2009
- There are close to 40 measures being monitored for 2010



Public Transportation Measures Win at the Polls

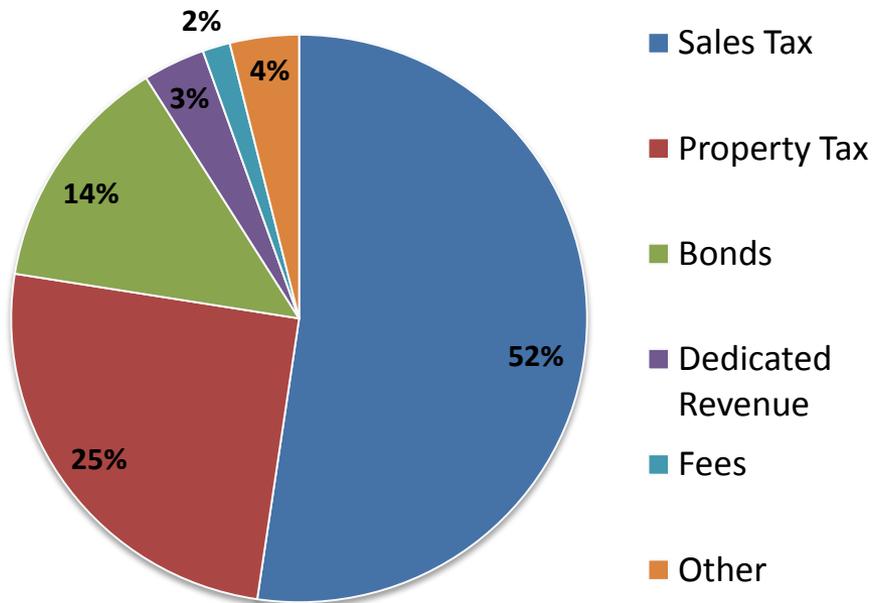


- 70% Approval Rate for Transportation Measures
- Twice the Approval Rate of All Ballot Measures
- Success Across Region, Population, Party Affiliation

2000-2009

Public Transportation Finance Measures

Types of Finance Measures



- 258 finance measures on ballots between 2000-2009
- 83% of all transportation-related measures are finance
- Sales tax increases or renewals are most common type
- Bonds are most successful with 84% approval—but are far more common on statewide ballots than local and regional
- Property tax measures are more successful than sales tax measures, with 81% approved vs. 59%

Ballot Trends



- Highly Specific Ballot Language
- Inclusion of Multiple Infrastructure Projects
- Plan & Project Funding Approval Measures
- Aggressive Public Education & Outreach
- Multiple Elections

Hallmarks of Successful Campaigns

Early Steps...

- **Polling**—identify voters' concerns; level of funding they can support
- **Timing**—Make sure timing is appropriate to have a local election
- **Clear Benefits**—Make sure there are clear benefits to the voters. "What's in it for them?"
- **Fundraising**—start early!
- **Identify a Champion**—well-known, public or private sector figure
- **Campaign Management**—consult with professionals

...Keep Going

- **Strong Coalition**—organize support from like-minded groups, grassroots and the business sector—they will help celebrate your success!
- **Respond to Critics**—Be prepared for criticism and address it directly
- **Stay on Message**—Don't let criticisms distract voters
- **Under Promise, Over Deliver**—Don't "lowball" project-cost estimates, it will likely backfire



Tough Times for Transit

The Impact of the Recession on Transportation Campaigns

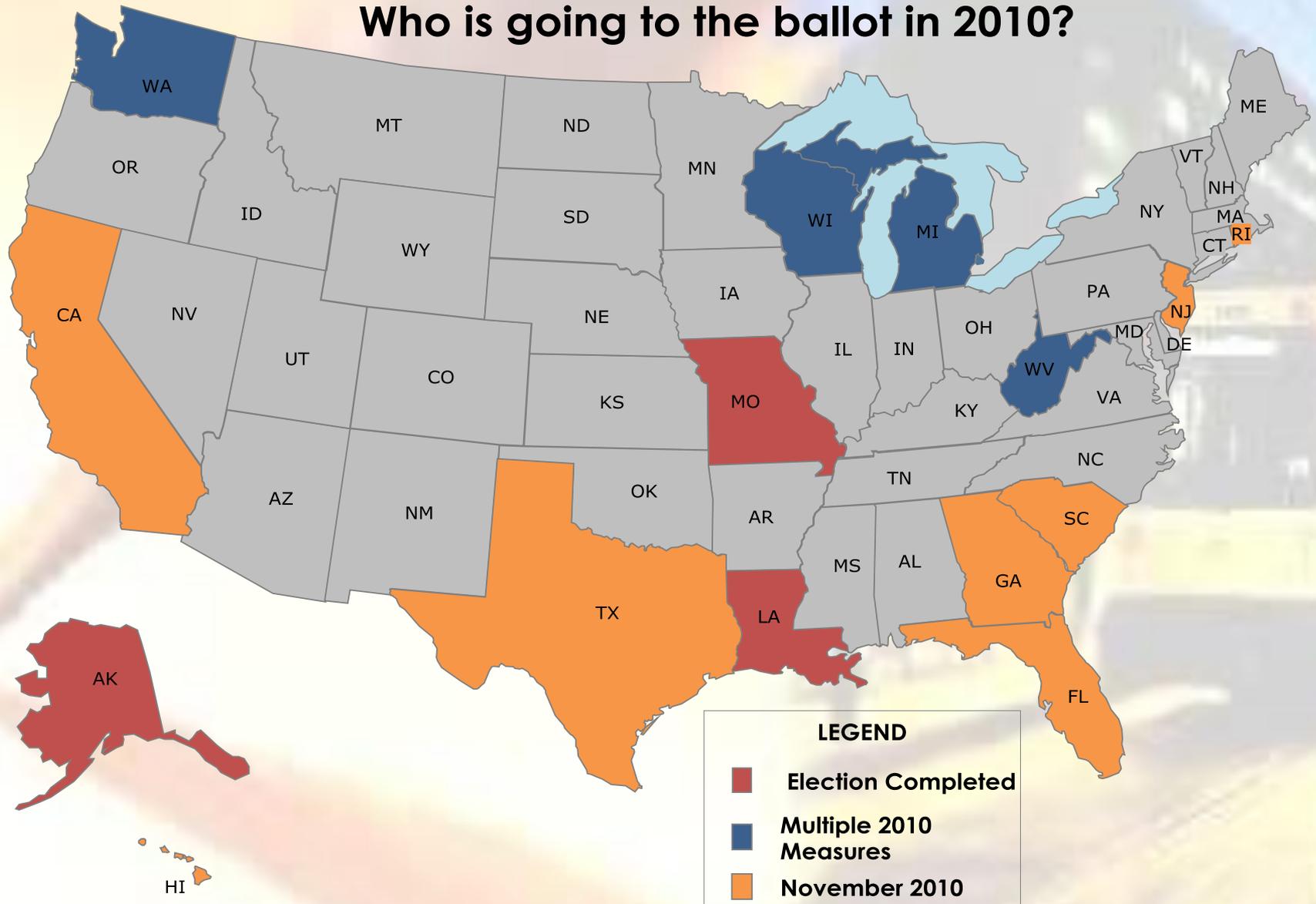
Impact at Local Level

- Home foreclosures and unemployment ↑, property and sales tax revenue ↓
- Communities forced to go to ballot just to prevent service cuts—harder to get enough \$ for system growth
- Budget gaps increased by limits on use of federal funding for operating

State Support Declines

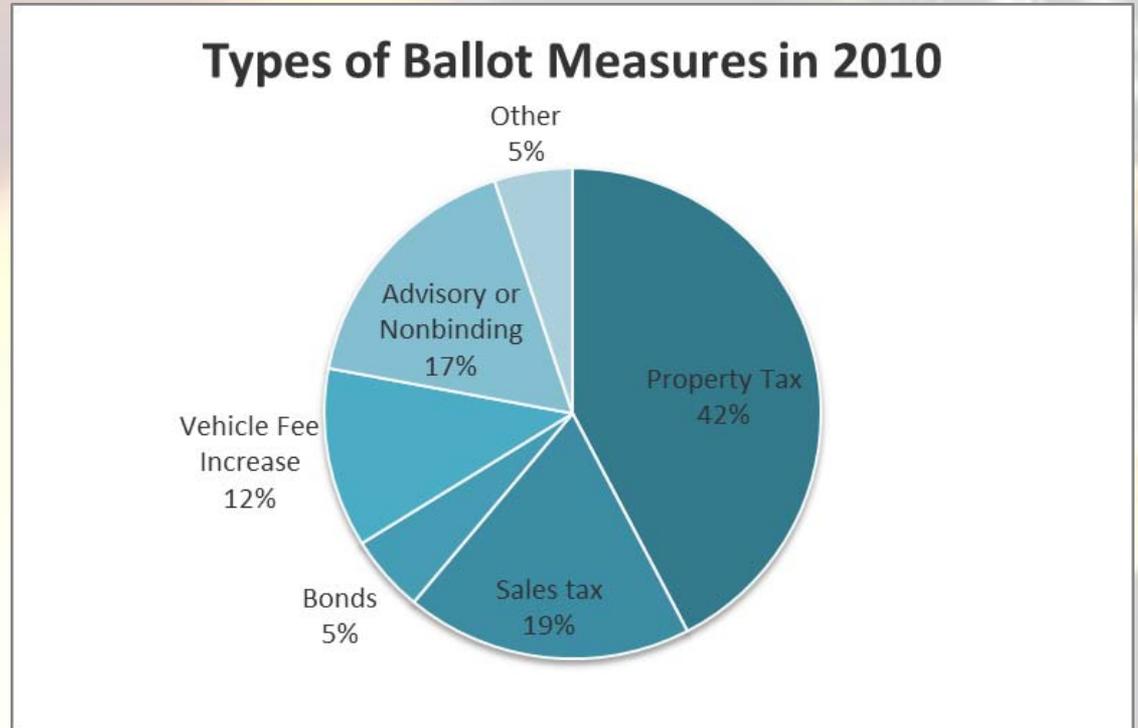
- States struggle to balance budgets—transit funding grabbed to fill the gaps
- States provide authorization for regional or local ballot measures (e.g., GA and CA)

Public Transportation Measures Who is going to the ballot in 2010?



Trends in 2010

- CFTE is monitoring over 55 measures for 2010
- Advisory measures are more common this year than in previous years—communities testing the recession waters
- In the past, sales tax measures have typically been more common than property tax measures



Completed 2010 Elections

February - May: 4 out of 7 wins for transit!

WINS

- **Walla Walla, WA**
Sales Tax Increase
Approved, 76%-24%
- **Cabell County, WV**
Property Tax Renewal
Approved, 70%-30%
- **Huntington, WV**
Property Tax Renewal
Approved, 62%-38%
- **St. Louis, MO**
Sales Tax Increase
Approved, 63%-37%

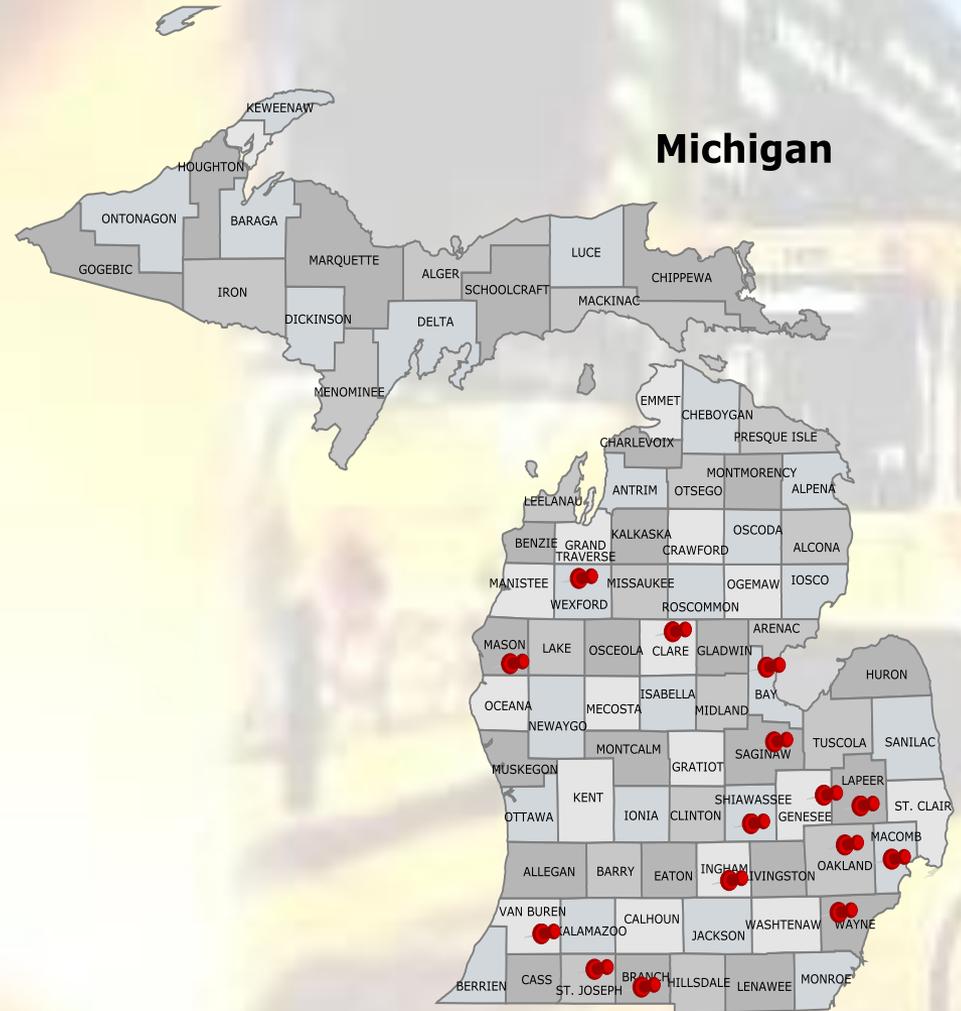
LOSSES

- **Anchorage, AK**
Transportation Bond
Failed, 47%-52%
- **Glen Dale, WV**
Property Tax Increase
Failed, 49.75%-50.25%
- **Bellingham, WA**
Sales Tax Increase
Failed, 49.1%-50.9%

Completed 2010 Elections

Michigan Elections on August 3
15 out of 16!

- On August 3, 15 public transportation millage requests were approved in Michigan!
- Voters in the counties of Bay, Branch, Clare, Genesee, Ingham, Lapeer, Mason, Saginaw, Shiawassee, St. Joseph, Van Buren, Wayne, Oakland, Macomb and Wexford came out to the ballot box on August 3 to support transit.
- Eaton County did not achieve the level of voter support necessary to pass their measure, but they will be back on the ballot in November.
- Major win for Detroit area public transit! Voters in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties approved a 0.059 mill renewal for SMART!



Completed 2010 Elections

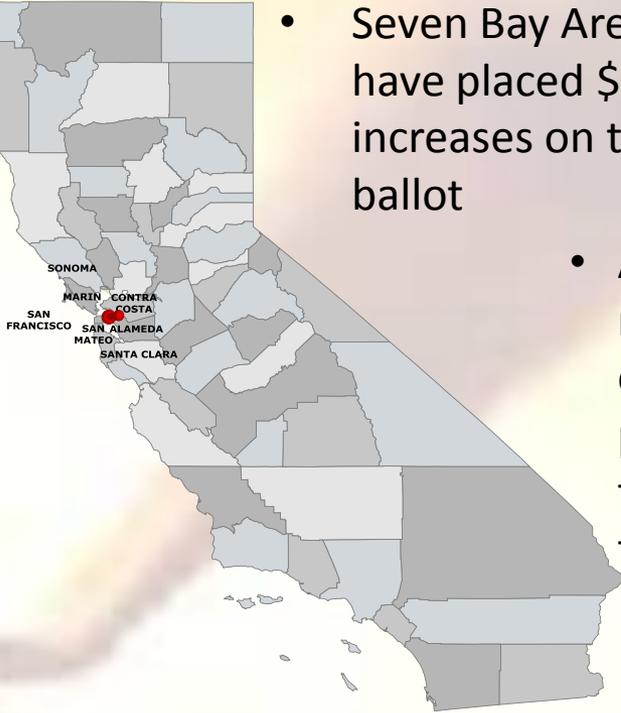
21 out of 26 wins for public transit!

- Success rate as of September 1: **81%**
- **26** transportation measures have appeared on ballots around the country
- Michigan has had the most measures (**16**) and the most successes (**15**)
- Remainder of measures will appear on November ballots

Key Elections in November 2010

California

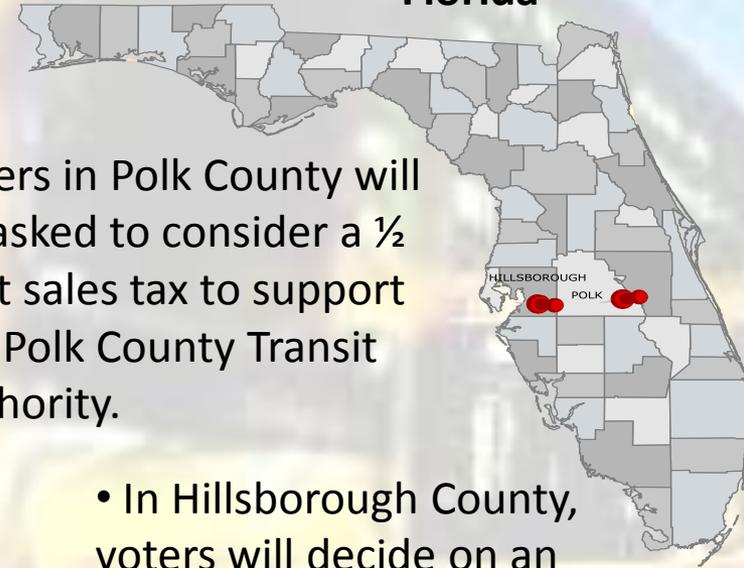
- Seven Bay Area communities have placed \$10 vehicle fee increases on the November ballot
- A statewide measure seeks to close loopholes to prevent the state from raiding local funding for transit



Hawaii—Oahu voters will determine whether the city should create a semiautonomous Public Transit Authority to oversee Honolulu's planned \$5 billion rail transit system.

Florida

- Voters in Polk County will be asked to consider a ½ cent sales tax to support the Polk County Transit Authority.
- In Hillsborough County, voters will decide on an additional 1 % sales tax for transportation projects

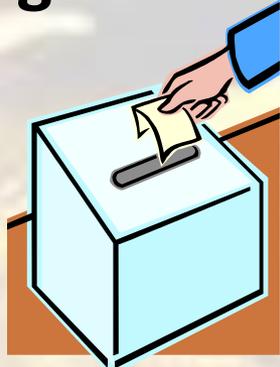


Rhode Island—A statewide ballot measure will ask voters to approve the issuance of \$80 million in bonds to improve highways, roads and bridges and \$4.7 million to purchase and rehabilitate buses.

Post-Election Webinar

**Trends and Results from
2010 Transportation Ballot Measures**
Friday, November 5 at 1:00pm Eastern

Register today for this free webinar at cfte.org!



2011 Transit Initiatives and Communities Conference

St. Louis, Missouri

Hilton St. Louis at the Ballpark

June 20 – 22, 2011

