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Senate Joint Resolution No. 1

submitting to a Vote of the People the Question  
of Selecting a Location for the State Capital.

Be it Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of  
the State of Oklahoma, that the Secretary of State in and for  
the State of Oklahoma, be, and he is hereby instructed to  
prepare and submit in due form and in accordance  
with law, the following question to be voted on at the  
regular election to be held on the first Tuesday after  
the first Monday in November, 1908.

Do you favor the State of Oklahoma's selecting  
and securing a site for the location of a capital city,  
said site to be owned and controlled by, and the vote  
thereon sold for the benefit of the State?

Yes -  
No -

Geo W Bellamy  
President of the Senate

James H. Murray  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Approved May 29<sup>th</sup> 1908  
W. H. Hall  
Governor of the State of Oklahoma.

Bill  
H. P. L...

*Argument submitted for the measure  
by Joint Legislative Committee*

State Question---Referendum No. 4, proposed by the Legislature, is a proposed public policy whereby it is proposed that the state shall select a capital site, by a majority vote of the citizens of the state, at some point centrally located, the state to control the city, own the lands and profit by the sale of the lots therefrom. In support of this policy we submit the following:

First. That no city is entitled to any special privileges over any other city of the state at the hands of the state.

2. That the state is not morally, nor in equity, pledged to assist any city by establishing within its midst a capital site.

3. We have precedent for this policy in that the Constitutional Convention, which framed the Constitution of the United States. The Convention directed the selection of the District of Columbia. The only difference in our plan and that in selecting the capital of the United States is that it is proposed that the state shall be the beneficiary and secure the profits from the sale of the lots; while in the establishment of the capital of the United States individuals and speculators were the beneficiaries of the profits; some of them becoming immensely rich at the expense of the United States. No one can deny that Washington City is one of the prettiest capitals in the world, and the most conveniently arranged, because it was designed with these in view.

The state can select a site near the center of the state with reference to the topography of the country--drainage, health, picturesque grandeur, and supply of pure water. By doing so and profiting by the sale of lots it could be built and beautified without expense to the state, and the term "New Jerusalem," commonly applied to it, would be realized in deed and in truth.

The details of this plan must be worked out by the citizens of the state, but we make these suggestions, which could be adopted or modified, or new ones selected as the people of the state would wish in the selection and building of such a capital. For instance, the state could own the electric lights, telephones, street cars, and all other public service institutions within the city; that no steam railway should be permitted to enter the city and mar its beauty. That a belt steam railway line could be constructed entirely around the city with half a dozen or more depots conveniently located with permission given to any railway to tap this belt line and take on passengers at these depots. A system of electric street railways could be constructed radiating from the capitol building in the center to each of these depots, meandering so that each block would be accessible to street car service. This would insure a handsome price in the sale of the lots. A portion of these lots, say every alternate one, could be sold immediately, the others retained for ten or more years or sold when they would bring an enhanced value. This method would, beyond question, give to the state a profit of from forty to sixty millions of dollars. The city of Lawton (the county seat of Comanche county), without special effort or profit, netted hundreds of thousands of dollars from the sale of their lots. A steel company built a city in one of the northern states out on the prairie and constructed works aggregating a cost of five millions of dollars. The president of that company states they have now sold enough lots to pay for the entire plant.

From this magnificent sum gained without a cent of taxation buildings, boulevards, streets, pavements, public service institutions, and statuary work could be constructed and the capital of Oklahoma become not only the pride of her citizens, but a wonder to visitors. Persons coming to Oklahoma would go to the capital to look upon it. A novel plan we grant

you, but many of our laws, both organic and statutory, are novel and yet have met <sup>not</sup> only the approval of our citizens, but statesmen everywhere.

To our mind one of the strongest arguments in favor of this plan is the beneficial effect it will have on the future policy of the state. Should we follow the plan of establishing in different portions of the state the various public institutions, some twenty-five in all, the members of the Legislature from these twenty-five counties, some counties having more than one member, would attend each session with a view solely of securing appropriations for these several institutions and would be ready, if necessary, to trade off their policies, their politics, or the interest of the public for such appropriations. By establishing the main institutions at the capital we should minimize the baneful effect of this policy; and, unless we establish a site of this character it would cost the state a vast amount of money to buy lands in any city to establish these institutions and hence, aside from the great expense of building the State House the expense of the public institutions would be burdensome upon the tax payer. Doubtless the normal schools and the district A. & M. Colleges should be established in different parts of the state to afford in these several districts some class of high schools; for the reason they are principally supported from public lands or federal funds; while other institutions must secure their support and maintenance direct from the state funds.

The only argument so far advanced against this plan is that it might be open for graft, but that argument is applicable to each and every public enterprise; even to the business of the private citizen. As has been said the farmer who would undertake to store his grain might be told "It is

folly to store your grain because the rats and mice will eat it up; rain may penetrate the walls of your granary and mold it," but the wise farmer will husband his grain rather than give it away to this foreboder of evil, and after supplying the mice and rats will then have more than if he sold it for a song only to buy it back sack at a time. In any great enterprise owned either by the government or the citizen there must be some consideration that the "mice and rats," both in natural history and in political life, may steal and pilfer. All we need is an application of rough on rats, and publicity rat traps on natural and political rats to answer this sophistry presented against this plan as an argument.

We admit there are two sides to this question, as there are to all question---the one side the interest of the public, the whole citizenship of the state; the other the interest of the speculator, townsite boomer, and promoter of city additions of the "lucky town."

Fellow citizens, do you want this plan, or do you want to say by your votes that a few speculators around one particular city shall reap these immense profits at the expense of the tax payers of the whole state? You are given an opportunity on the 3rd day of November to determine this question by your votes.

Respectfully submitted,

(Signed) JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE FIRST LEGISLATURE.

*Bambelle Russell*

Chairman of the committee, and on the part of the Senate.

*John R. McCalla*

*Samuel Murray*

On the part of the House of Representatives.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,  
STATE OF OKLAHOMA,

SS.

OFFICIAL CANVASS OF THE VOTE GIVEN ON STATE QUESTION NO. 4.

Now, on this, the 3rd day of December, 1908, and at the office of the Secretary of the State of Oklahoma, in the city of Guthrie, and State of Oklahoma, I, Bill Cross, Secretary of State, do in the presence of His Excellency, C. N. Haskell, Governor of the State of Oklahoma, canvass the vote cast upon State Question No. 4, the official title of said State Question No. 4, being as follows:

BALLOT TITLE.

State Question number four presents a question of public policy wherein it is proposed that the state shall select and secure a suitable location for a capital city; the site to be owned and controlled by and the lots therein sold for the benefit of the State.

Shall the State select and secure a site for the capital city; said city to be owned and controlled by, and the lots therein sold for the benefit of the State.--Shall it be adopted?

YES

NO

The said question was submitted according to law to the people of the State of Oklahoma at the election held on November 3, 1908, in the State of Oklahoma and the returns of the votes cast therein and thereon as returned and certified to me by the County Clerks of the various counties of the State of Oklahoma show as follows:

Total number of electors voting at such election,	193,233.
Total number of electors voting Yes,	117,441.
Total number of electors voting No,	75,792.
Majority in favor of said proposition,	41,649.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I, Bill Cross, Secretary of State have affixed my hand and the Seal of this office on the day and date first above written.

Bill Cross  
Secretary of State.  
By Leo Meyer  
Assistant Secretary of State.

I, C. N. Haskell, Governor of the State of Oklahoma, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing returns were, by the Secretary of State canvassed in my presence and on the date and in the manner aforesaid.

C. N. Haskell  
Governor.

December 3, 1908.

OFFICIAL CANVASS OF THE VOTES GIVEN IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTIES

For, on this, the 2nd day of December, 1906, and at the office of the Secretary of the State of Oklahoma, in the city of Oklahoma, and State of Oklahoma, I, Will Green, Secretary of State, do in the presence of his Excellency, G. W. Haskett, Governor of the State of Oklahoma, canvass the vote given in the election of the officers of said State for the term ending on the 1st day of January, 1907.

*State Question*

*No 4.*

*Canvass of Vote*

*Proclamation*

*of Governor*

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*General*

STATE OF OKLAHOMA  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Proclamation

WHEREAS, at the general election held on the th ird day of November, A.D. 1908, there was submitted to the qualified electors of the State of Oklahoma, State Question Number Four as follows:

STATE QUESTION NO. 4

**SAMPLE BALLOT.**  
Official Referendum Ballot to be used on Tuesday the 3rd day of November, 1908, issued by order of the Legislature.  
**BALLOT TITLE.**  
State Question number four presents a question of public policy wherein it is proposed that the State shall select and secure a suitable location for a capital city; th site to be owned and controlled by and the lots therein sold for the benefit of the State.  
Shall the State select and secure a site for the capital city; said city to be owned and controlled by, and the lots therein sold for the benefit of the State.  
Shall it be adopted?

YES

NO

NOTE.—The voter is directed to express his will by placing a cross (X) in the square to the right of the word expressing his choice. The cross above indicates a vote for the proposed measure.

WHEREAS, the vote on said State Question Number Four has been counted and returned to the Secretary of State and by him canvassed in the manner provided by law; and,

WHEREAS, it appears from said canvass that the total number of electors voting "yes" on said question were One hundred and seventeen thousand four hundred and forty one (117,441); and that the total number of electors voting "No" on said question were Seventy-five thousand seven hundred and ninety-two (75,792).

NOW, THEREFORE, I, C. N. Haskell, by virtue of the authority vested in me by law, do hereby declare and proclaim that said state Question Number Four not having been submitted and voted upon as a constitutional amendment but indicative of the will of the people expressed thereby.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Oklahoma to be hereunto affixed, this the thirty-first day of December, A.D. 1908.

*C. N. Haskell*  
Governor.

ATTEST:

*Bill Cross*  
Secretary of State.

# ~~518~~ 514 No. 371

Proclamation

M. Dees. 74

Pl. Ad. 74

Behaving  
w/out  
station

Filed Dec. 31, 1914

Recorded in C. Rec. No. 10  
at George No. 149

William D. Harrison

State of Recording: -

Oct 6<sup>th</sup>, 1914

Note: This instrument  
was erroneously filed  
and not properly  
recorded.

Voted on Nov. 3rd 1908.

OFFICIAL PAMPHLET OF  
**STATE QUESTIONS**

Numbers One, Two, Three and Four, referred to the General Election on the third day of November, 1908, by order of the Legislature; also State Question Number Five, referred to the said General Election on said date by order of Initiative Petition Number One.

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Question No. 1.	Yes. 105,392	No. 121,573	Majority No. 16,181
" " 2	" 114,394	" 83,888	" Yes. 30,506
" " 3	" 120,352	" 71,933	" " 48,419
" " 4	" 117,441	" 75,792	" " 41,649
" " 5	" 96,745	" 110,840	" No. 14,095

These returns do not include Cimarron County as that county failed to get their returns canvassed.

**State Question No. 4**

**Legislative Referendum No. 4**

*Submitted by Senate Joint Resolution No. 8, page 775, Session Laws 1907-08.  
The gist of the proposition is as follows:*

The State secure a site for the Capitol, embracing ample grounds and lots in said site to be sold for the benefit of the State.  
Shall the Act be adopted?

Vote: Yes 117,441  
No 75,792

Necessary to carry 124,398

**Amendment Rejected**