



2018 FACT SHEET

SQ 798: GOVERNOR & LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR JOINT TICKET

THE GIST

In 2018, the Legislature approved a measure to put State Question 798 on the ballot by a vote of 69 to 22 in the House and 34 to 9 in the Senate.

If adopted by the people, SQ 798 would amend the state constitution to require the governor and lieutenant governor to run together on one ticket beginning in 2026.

Up to now, Oklahomans have cast separate votes for governor and lieutenant governor.

SQ 798 also requires the Legislature to provide the procedure for the joint nomination and election of candidates for Governor and Lieutenant Governor.

State Question 798
would amend the state constitution to require the governor and lieutenant governor to run together on one ticket beginning in 2026.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The governor and lieutenant governor run on a combined ticket in 26 other states. In 17 states, including currently in Oklahoma, the lieutenant governor is elected separately from the governor. The remaining states either do not have a lieutenant governor position or give that title to the President of the state Senate.

Of the 26 states with a combined governor/lieutenant governor ticket, candidates for governor may pick their running mate in 18 states. The other 8 states hold separate primaries to decide each party's nominees for governor and lieutenant governor.

SQ 798 would leave it up to the Legislature to decide what method Oklahoma uses for party nominations, but once candidates are nominated, they will appear together as one item on the ballot.

...OVER

SUPPORTERS SAY...



Partnering the Governor and Lieutenant Governor will make it more likely that Oklahoma leaders have a unified vision and better coordinated efforts to implement policies.



A combined ticket will make sure that Oklahoma's Governor and Lieutenant Governor always come from the same party, reducing the risk of having executive branch leaders working against each other.



Races for Governor receive far more media attention and scrutiny than races for Lieutenant Governor, so voters will be able to make a more informed vote when these are combined.

OPPONENTS SAY...



Requiring both positions to be elected as one ticket takes away options from Oklahoma voters and concentrates too much power with the Governor.



If a Governor is forced to resign or is impeached due to serious wrongdoing, it will be better to replace that Governor with a Lieutenant who is more independent of the previous administration.



Oklahoma's Lieutenant Governor position has few important powers or responsibilities and should be abolished to save money.

BALLOT LANGUAGE



This measure will add a provision to the Oklahoma Constitution to change the manner in which the Governor and Lieutenant Governor are elected. Currently, voters cast one vote for their preferred candidate for Governor and a separate vote for their preferred candidate for Lieutenant Governor.

Under this measure, if approved, candidates for Governor and Lieutenant Governor for the same party will run together on a single ticket and voters will cast one vote for their preferred ticket.

The measure requires the Legislature to establish procedures for the joint nomination and election of candidates for Governor and Lieutenant Governor. If passed, this new election format will be used beginning in the 2026 general election cycle.

