

## Judge orders 2 initiatives to be blocked from ballot

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A Spokane County judge stopped two controversial ballot measures from appearing on November's ballot Friday, saying they fell outside the scope of the initiative power.

Superior Court Judge Maryann Moreno sided with a coalition of government and business interests, which argued that the initiatives attempted to create regulations and protections that were not within the

city's power to enact. They also said the initiatives would hurt local government and business.

Moreno said that while she admired the "passion and advocacy" of the initiatives' sponsors, the provisions within the measures either conflicted with state and federal law or infringed on the powers of local government to set policy.

She ordered county Auditor Vicky Dalton to keep the two initiatives off the ballot. Four other advisory questions related to the initiatives placed on the ballot by the Spokane City Council will also be removed.

Chris Nerison, who leads Spokane Moves to Amend the Constitution, one of the initiative sponsors, said he was surprised at the ruling but that he would not appeal Moreno's decision.

"The judge said that she was not going to rule on the constitutionality of the initiatives. And then she did rule on the constitutionality of the initiatives," said Nerison, adding that he believed Moreno was "moved to submit to corporate interests."