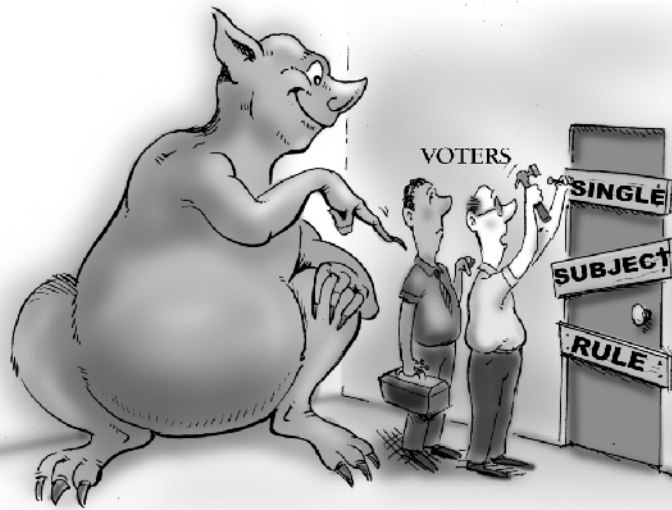


The Single-Subject Rule

Locking TABOR in – locking changes out?

The Single-Subject Rule – The single-subject rule is not actually part of the TABOR Amendment, but it partly came about as a reaction to TABOR. The single-subject rule has a profound impact on how the state can deal with TABOR's far-reaching effects as well as with other conflicting constitutional amendments. Not long after TABOR was enacted, state and local governments began to realize that the amendment was about far more than voting on tax increases. TABOR controls revenue limits, tax refunds, multi-year debt, local government spending, schools and even elections. In fact, the courts have never determined just how many subjects the TABOR Amendment actually contains.

In 1994, two years after TABOR was enacted, voters adopted the single-subject rule – a constitutional amendment requiring that any measure to be voted on can contain only one subject, which must be clearly expressed in the ballot title. The single-subject rule was presented to voters by the legislature and conceived in part to prevent complex and conflicting TABOR-like initiatives from making it onto the ballot. Before there was a single-subject rule, TABOR was enacted all at once, however, many legal experts now suggest that because of the single-subject rule, it can only be repealed or modified one subject at a time. The voters used the single-subject rule to lock out the unintended consequences of future “Christmas tree” measures, but in doing so, the public also locked in any unintended consequences of TABOR.



“Ha, this should keep those monster amendments out!”