

**For Immediate Release
November 3, 2016**

**For More Information:
Jeanette Mott Oxford
314-775-3261**

**Empower Missouri Calls on Nov. 8 Voters to Study Ballot Measures:
*Defeat of Amendment 6 Vital to Missourians with Low Incomes***

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo.....With less than a week until the November 8th General Election, the Board and staff of Empower Missouri today contacted their members statewide to share positions the organization has taken on several ballot measures. Jeanette Mott Oxford, executive director of Empower Missouri, said, “Those concerned about poverty and hunger in Missouri must study the ballot carefully and vote to protect those with low incomes. A no vote on Amendment 6 is especially crucial.”

Amendment 6 would weaken current strong voting rights in our state constitution by allowing imposition of photo voter identification rules. Federal courts have increasingly acknowledged that such laws do nothing to reduce fraud while unfairly depriving low-income voters, disproportionately People of Color, of their constitutional rights.

“Would you want to lose your right to vote, simply because you had failed to renew your state-issued photo ID in time for an election, even though you had other ways to prove your identity?” Oxford asked.

“In a time of family emergency, such as the illness of an elderly parent, virtually any Missouri voter with an ID expiration date just before an election, could experience loss of voting rights if Amendment 6 passes,” Oxford continued. “Households with low incomes are especially likely to fail to renew a photo ID before the expiration date, often having to wait until the next paycheck due to lack of savings or discretionary income.”

For Empower Missouri’s ballot measure guide to the 2016 General Election, **“*Being a Justice Advocate in the Voting Booth,*”** go to: <http://empowermissouri.org/ballot-guide-nov-8-2016/>

Empower Missouri (www.empowermissouri.org) advocates for the well-being of all Missourians through civic leadership, education, and research. Founded in 1901, the organization has operated under four names, including Missouri Association for Social Welfare from 1933 until 2014, and has focused continuously on improving public policy in order to ensure access to basic human needs and to promote equity.

#####