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Nevada Judge Tosses Teachers Union-Backed Petition to Put A's Stadium Funding on 2024 Ballot.

CARSON CITY, Nev. (AP) — A Nevada judge threw out a proposed ballot referendum backed by a statewide teachers union that would give voters the final say on whether to give \$380 million in public funding for a proposed \$1.5 billion Oakland Athletics stadium on the Las Vegas Strip.

The Monday ruling from Carson City District Court Judge James Russell sided with two lobbyists affiliated with trade unions that favor the public financing for the A's stadium. Russell sent the teachers union-backed Schools over Stadiums political action committee back to the drawing board in their attempts to thwart the public funding that the [state Legislature approved this year](#).

In an interview Tuesday, Schools over Stadiums spokesperson Alexander Marks said the organization's leadership will likely both appeal the decision to the Nevada Supreme Court and refile the referendum petition.

"While the decision is disappointing, it's not uncommon. Educators overcome obstacles every day, especially in a state ranked 48th in the nation," Marks said in a press release immediately after the ruling, referencing the state's recent low ranking in education funding. "We're undeterred and still committed to giving Nevada voters the opportunity to decide whether their tax dollars are used to subsidize a billionaire's stadium" — a reference to A's owner John Fisher.

The stadium financing debate in Nevada [mirrors those happening nationwide](#) over whether public funds should be used to help finance sports stadiums.

A's representatives and some Nevada tourism officials have said the public funding could add to Las Vegas' growing sports scene and act as an economic engine. But a growing chorus of economists, educators and some lawmakers had warned that it would bring minimal benefits when compared to the hefty public price tag.

The Nevada State Education Association has been among the most vocal opponents of public stadium funding, saying public schools need more investment and pointing to Nevada's low rankings in school funding as a reason not to put forth the \$380 million, which would largely be paid for by transferable tax credits and county bonds over 30 years.

Bradley Schrager, the attorney for the two plaintiffs, argued that the language on the petition was too broad, confusing and misleading.

"Nevadans deserve ballot measures that are conducted under the law," Schrager said in a Tuesday interview. "And this one, at least for the moment, was not."

The statewide teachers union had [filed paperwork](#) in September to start gathering signatures in hopes of getting a referendum to repeal the funding in front of voters on the 2024 general election ballot.

The group needed to gather about 100,000 signatures, or about 10% of the ballots cast in the last general election, to get the question in front of voters. Marks said they had not started gathering signatures yet in anticipation of Monday's court ruling.

Associated Press

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