



Welcome!  
Brief intro of yourself

## The League of Women Voters

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We're a nonpartisan political  
nonprofit organization

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Established in 1920, when women  
got the vote

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Men accepted since 1972

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We serve voters and promote  
good governance

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We research, educate and  
advocate



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- Membership open to anyone age 16 and over
- Membership is free for students!
- The League is **nonpartisan**
  - League does not endorse or oppose **any candidates**
- **We** study, educate and advocate
- There are **29 local Leagues in Florida**

## What Will Be On Your Ballot?

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- 1 U.S. Senate seat
- All U.S. House of Representatives seats
- Governor and Cabinet
- State Senators
- State House of Representatives
- Local county and/or municipal offices
- 12 Florida Constitutional Amendments



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Ask how many state Senators? 40

Ask how many state House Reps? 120

Ballot may include other races like Soil and Water Conservation District Officers, etc.

## Sources of Amendment Proposals

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- 3 are from the Florida Legislature
- 2 are citizen initiatives
- 7 are from the Constitution Revision Commission
- All require 60% on each proposal to pass



**Proposal by the legislature:** requires 3/5 approval by both chambers

**Citizen Initiative:** requires signed petitions from the equivalent of 8% of the number of voters who participated in the last presidential election

CRC proposals do not have to meet any language limit or length criteria unlike citizen initiatives or legislative proposals

**Proposal by the Constitutional Revision Commission** meets every 20 years. Committee met 2017-2018.

### **2 other methods - proposals by:**

- Taxation and Budget Reform Commission, or
- Constitutional Convention called for by citizens
- It's important to note that legislative acts can easily be changed. Not so with constitutional amendments.

# Amendment 1

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Source: Florida Legislature

## Increased Homestead Property Tax Exemption



Source of proposed amendment is the Florida Legislature

## Amendment 1

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Grants an additional \$25,000 homestead exemption for homes valued at \$125,000 or more starting on January 1, 2019



A vote **YES**

would amount to a loss of tax revenue



A vote **NO**

would retain the current exemption



- Current exemption is \$50,000 for homes valued over \$50,000
- Would increase to \$75,000 the total amount a homeowner can deduct for a home valued at \$125,00 or more
- The Florida Association of Counties estimates an annual loss to Florida of \$687 million
- Although it exempts school district levies, where would these million of dollars come from?

# Amendment 1

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## Supporting Organizations

- None at this time

## Opposing Organizations

- League of Women Voters of Florida
- Florida Policy Institute
- Florida League of Cities
- Progress Florida
- Florida Education Association



League position Oppose.

- League position: "No tax sources or revenues should be specified, limited, exempted or prohibited in the Constitution".
- Tax structure needs to be
  - flexible, responsive to needs of the people
  - left to Legislature or appropriate governmental bodies.

## Amendment 2

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Source: Florida Legislature

### Limitations on Property Tax Assessments



Source of proposed amendment is the Florida Legislature



## Amendment 2

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Would make permanent a 10% cap on non-homestead assessments



A vote **YES**

would keep the 10% cap and disallow tax revenue for rising property values



A vote **NO**

would end tax limits on non-homestead property and possibly increase taxes for schools



This would make permanent a cap on non-homestead assessment set to expire on Jan. 2019  
State Revenue Estimating Conference estimates a loss of tax revenue of \$700 million annually.

## Amendment 2

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### Supporting Organizations

- Florida Association of Realtors

### Opposing Organizations

- League of Women Voters of Florida



League position Oppose.

- because “No tax sources or revenues should be specified, limited, exempted or prohibited in the Constitution”.
- Tax structure needs to be flexible, responsive to needs of the people and left to Legislature or appropriate governmental bodies.

## Amendment 3

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Source: Citizen Initiative

### Voter Control of Gambling in Florida



Source of proposed amendment is Citizen Initiative (petitions)

## Amendment 3

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Would require a constitutional amendment to approve any new casino gambling



**A vote YES**

would require the voters to approve a citizen initiative to authorize any casino gambling in Florida



**A vote NO**

would continue to allow casino gambling to be approved by the Legislature



### Amendment 3:

- Control of gambling in Florida as this would prevent the state legislature from making decisions about gambling in any community. Only the voters can decide.
- Yes vote would preclude legislative proposals to add casino gambling. The legislature could approve other gambling such as poker rooms, bingo and fantasy spots.
- No vote would allow the legislature to make these decisions for local communities.

## Amendment 3

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### Supporting Organizations

- Voters In Charge
- Disney Worldwide Services
- Seminole Tribe of Florida
- No Casinos, Inc.
- League of Women Voters of Florida

### Opposing Organizations

- None at this time



- Voters In Charge is the organization that started the petition campaign for this measure
- League position: Support
  - League opposes gambling
  - Amendment restricts casino gambling and puts the decisions to the voters

## Amendment 4

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Source: Citizen Initiative

## Voting Restoration Amendment



Source of proposed amendment is Citizen Initiative (petitions)

## Amendment 4

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Would restore the eligibility to vote to persons with felony convictions who have completed their sentences



### A vote YES

would grant those persons who have completed their sentences the ability to register and to vote (except those convicted of murder or sex offenses)



### A vote NO

would continue making those who have completed their sentences wait a minimum of 5 years before applying to the Governor and Cabinet



#### Amendment 4

- Florida is one of only **four** states that have such a strict standard
- 766,200 valid petitions were required to get on the ballot
- In 2011, newly elected Go. Rick Scott, with the consent of the cabinet, issued strict new rules resulting in only 3,000 restored rights even though there are 30,000 pending applications.
- Today, some 1.6 million Floridians are disenfranchised. That's the highest in the nation and it accounts for nearly 10% of the total adult population in Florida

## Amendment 4

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### Supporting Organizations

- Florida Rights Restoration Coalition
- Floridians for a Fair Democracy
- ACLU of Florida
- Florida Education Association
- League of Women Voters of Florida
- Progress Florida
- Florida Policy Institute
- Florida National Organization of Women

### Opposing Organizations

- Floridians for a Sensible Voting Rights Policy



League position: Support

- By completing all terms of sentence, they've earned a second chance.



## Amendment 5

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Source: Florida Legislature

Supermajority  
Vote Required  
to Impose,  
Authorize, or  
Raise State  
Taxes or Fees



Source of proposed amendment is the Florida Legislature

## Amendment 5

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### A vote YES

would require two-thirds of Senate and House votes (a supermajority) to raise any taxes or fees



### A vote NO

would allow the Legislature to continue to approve increases in taxes and fees with a simple majority, and to bundle tax bills with other<sup>18</sup> measures



- Would include taxes on sales, gasoline, alcohol
- Would include fees for fishing, fishing licenses, firearms licenses
- Does not include a provision that would allow for tax or fee increases during times of economic emergencies
- This same provision was on the ballot in 2012 as TABOR (Tax Payers Bill of Rights). It was defeated.

## Amendment 5

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### Supporting Organizations

- Florida Tax Watch

### Opposing Organizations

- League of Women Voters of Florida
- Florida Policy Institute
- Progress Florida
- Florida Education Association



League position: Oppose.

- Does not include a provision for tax increases in emergency times (hurricanes, floods)
- Further exemplifies the inability of the Legislature to pass a reasonable budget

**Amendment 6 through  
Amendment 11 each contains  
multiple parts bundled  
into single YES/NO proposals**

**We will concentrate on the most  
important elements of these  
Amendments**

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- Voters face more questions than is apparent
- These ballot proposals include more than one issue and they **cannot** be voted on separately.
- Stress that you must look at the part of the amendment that is most egregious.
- The CRC can bundle issues and list them on the ballot title in any way (or order) they want.

## Amendment 6

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Source: Constitution Revision  
Commission (CRC)

Rights of Crime  
Victims; Judges



Source of proposed amendment is the Constitution Revision Commissions, known as the CRC

## Amendment 6

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- Expands victims' rights, many of which are in state law, while limiting time for an accused to file appeals
- Eliminates an existing constitutional provision that victims' rights do not interfere with the constitutional rights of the accused
- Raises the retirement age of judges from 70 to 75
- Prohibits courts and judges from deferring to state agencies interpretation



- Nothing in the title of the Amendment addresses the issue of what this amendment does to defendant's rights.
- Marsy's Law: a young woman was murdered by her ex-boyfriend who was released on bail, and her family was never notified.
- What is the most important aspect of this amendment? Remember, the retirement age decision does not impact those currently on the bench that are at retirement age.
- The constitution already covers victim's rights but there is some concern about the rights of the defendants, especially the rights to file for an appeal.

## Amendment 6

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### A vote YES

would enshrine more victim's rights in the constitution while eliminating an existing provision for the rights of the accused, raise the mandatory retirement age for a judge, and force judges to decide if the state agency correctly interpreted the law



### A vote NO

would would retain existing victim's rights in the constitution, and not set a deadline for appeals, keep judges retirement age at 70, and continue to allow state agencies interpretation of state laws



1. Would add more victims rights to the state Constitution, many of which are currently in state law.
  - Would dramatically increase protection from disclosure of victims' information.
  - Allow more victim input and access to
    - pre-sentencing investigations
    - sentencing or pre-trial release proceedings
    - sentencing reports.
2. Sets deadlines to complete any state appeals:
  - 2 years for a non-capital case and 5 years for a capital case, with limited exceptions.
3. Finally, the proposed amendment **eliminates an existing constitutional provision that ensures victims' rights "do not interfere with the constitutional rights of the accused"**.

## Amendment 6

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### Supporting Organizations

- 24 Florida Sheriffs
- Florida Smart Justice

### Opposing Organizations

- ACLU of Florida
- League of Women Voters of Florida



League Oppose.

- Victim's Rights are protected in Constitution
- This amendment would eliminate existing provision that victim's rights do not interfere with the Constitutional rights of the accused



## Amendment 7

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Source: Constitution Revision  
Commission (CRC)

First Responder  
and Military  
Member Survivor  
Benefits; Public  
Colleges and  
Universities



Source of proposed amendment is the Constitution Revision Commissions, known as the CRC

## Amendment 7

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- Creates mandatory death benefits to surviving spouses of first responders and military members.
- Requires supermajority vote to raise or impose college/university fees
- Establishes state college system as a constitutional entity



- This amendment mandates a supermajority to increase any fees. This is an attempt to limit money for universities by allowing duplicate benefits for military and requiring a super majority for increased student fees.
- It also provides that all employees of state colleges be granted these benefits. Right now they receive benefits as defined by the state legislature.
- This also establishes the state college system as a constitutional entity.

## Amendment 7

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### A vote YES would

- Force supermajority vote for university fee increases
- Add framework of state colleges in Constitution
- Require State to pay death benefits to U.S. Military residents or those stationed in Florida



### A vote NO would

- Continue allowing majority vote for fee increases
- Exclude a framework for state colleges in the Constitution
- Continue providing death benefits for first responders through state law



1. Force super majority vote of University Board of Trustees and state Board of Governor to increase fees
  2. Make the governing framework for state colleges a part of the Constitution.
  3. Create a constitutional requirement for state and local governments to pay death benefits to first responders.
    - Expands the definition of first responders to include paramedics and emergency medical technicians.
  4. Require the state to provide death benefits to members of the U.S. military who are either residents of Florida or who are stationed in the state.
- Amendment does not specify a funding source for death benefit payments

## Amendment 7

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### Supporting Organizations

- Association of Florida Colleges

### Opposing Organizations

- Florida Education Association
- League of Women Voters Florida



### League Position: Oppose

- Oppose a supermajority vote to increase fees or taxes.
- Family members of the military who die in the line of duty are currently compensated through the federal government



Source of proposed amendment is the Constitution Revision Commissions, known as the CRC

## Amendment 8

- Creates an 8 year term limit for school board members
- Public Schools: Allows the state legislature to set up a state-run system for establishing and operating public schools
- Creates a constitutional requirement for civics education in public schools, something already required by state law



The most important part of this amendment is buried in the second item. Under the Constitution, only local school boards can establish and oversee public schools, including charter schools. The Legislature attempted to do this in 2006 but the law creating an “Excellence Commission was deemed unconstitutional.

This proposal would add the following words, “The school board shall operate, control, and supervise all free public schools **established by the district school board** within the school district...” .

**This amendment does not state what will be established to augment or complement. It is truly an unknown and could be anything.**

This amendment would allow the state Legislature to establish charter schools through some other means to be decided by the state Legislature, who are not educators and often have family members who own charter schools.

## Amendment 8

### A vote YES would

- Establish term limits for school board members
- Permit Legislature to establish state-run public schools
- Put in the Constitution mandatory civics classes

### A vote NO would

- Reject term limits for local school boards the Legislature has authority for approving and supervising public schools
- Reject a constitutional mandate for something that is required by state law



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1. Create constitutional term limits for all Florida school board members, who could serve no more than two consecutive four-year terms.
2. Allow the Legislature to set up a state-run system for establishing and operating public schools, something only local school boards, elected by local communities, currently can do.
3. Create a constitutional requirement for civics education in public schools, something state law already requires in middle schools.

**Amendment 8**

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Supporting Organizations      Opposing Organizations

- U.S. Term Limits
- Florida School Boards Association
- Florida League of Women Voters
- Florida Policy Institute
- Florida Education Association
- Florida National Organization of Women

**REMOVED FROM BALLOT BY COURT ORDER**

**LWV** 32

U.S. Term Limits is a non-profit, non-partisan grassroots organization dedicated to enacting term limits for elected officials at every level of government in the United States. Term limits should be determined by local community for local officials.

League position: Oppose

Local voters have the authority to set term limits for their school boards by voting members in or out for another term. An alternative school system to establish public schools systems is not needed and takes away local accountability.

Civics is currently a required course in all middle schools; an amendment is unnecessary.



## Amendment 9

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Source: Constitution Revision  
Commission (CRC)

Prohibits Offshore  
Oil and Gas  
Drilling: Restricts  
Vaping in  
Enclosed Indoor  
Workplaces



Source of proposed amendment is the Constitution Revision Commissions, known as the CRC

Once again, combing 2 separate entities.

- Off shore drilling is of great concern to voters, especially since we have seen what can happen in other areas of the Gulf Coast.
- We have lots of constitutional prohibitions about smoking in workplaces.

## Amendment 9

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### A vote YES would

- Enshrine in Constitution a ban on offshore oil and gas drilling
- Signal Florida's opposition to offshore drilling
- Add vaping restrictions to Constitution



### A vote NO would

- Keep a drilling ban out of the Constitution
- Signal to federal government that Florida doesn't care about offshore drilling
- Keep vaping out of the Constitution



#### A vote YES would:

- Apply constitutional restrictions to drilling only to waters under state control, not to waters under federal control.
- Would not affect shipping of gas and oil on Florida waters.
- Add new restrictions to the Constitution on the use of electronic vaping devices, largely mirroring current constitutional restrictions on indoor workplace smoking.
- Create exceptions for vaping use in private homes, bars, hotel rooms designated for vaping, etc.

#### A vote NO would:

- Signal to the Federal Gov. that Floridians don't care about offshore drilling in their waters.
- Would keep vaping out of the Constitution.

## Amendment 9

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### Supporting Organizations

- Florida Wildlife Federation
- Gulf Restoration Network
- American Cancer Association
- Cancer Action Network
- League of Women Voters Florida
- Florida Policy Institute
- Progress Florida

### Opposing Organizations

- Florida Petroleum Council
- Associated Industries of Florida
- Florida Chamber of Commerce
- Consumers for Smoke-Free Alternatives



#### League Support :

- Concern for environment overrides concern for putting vaping restriction into the Constitution.
- Backs idea that banning offshore drilling sends signal to Federal government that Florida is strongly opposed to such drilling

## Amendment 10

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Source: Constitution Revision  
Commission (CRC)

### State and Local Government Structure and Operation



Source of proposed amendment is the Constitution Revision Commissions, known as the CRC

## Amendment 10

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- Requires Legislature in even years (election years) to start sessions in January
- Creates Office of Domestic Security and Counterterrorism
- Mandates existence of state Department of Veteran Affairs
- Forces all counties to elect and never abolish offices of: Sheriff, tax collector, property appraiser, Supervisor of Elections, and Clerk of Circuit Court



1. Constitution currently stipulates odd numbered years session must start in March
2. State law currently designates Florida Dept of Law Enforcement (FDLE) as lead agency in coordinating efforts to combat terrorism.
  - This proposal creates a new department within FDLE in support of all other agencies' anti-terrorism efforts
3. Constitution already authorizes Department of Veteran Affairs. This would make it mandatory
4. Florida Constitution requires that these offices exist in each county. They are referred to as "Constitutional offices"

This measure **mandates election** of these offices in each county : sheriff, tax collector, property appraiser, Supervisor of Elections and Clerk of Circuit Court

- Florida's counties are divided into charter and non-charter counties.
- County charters are voter-approved documents that act much like local constitutions: they outline how the county is governed.
- Some of charter counties have done away with or changed the duties of constitutional officers.
- This mandate would apply to Florida's 20 charter counties.

## Amendment 10

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### A vote YES would

- Fix the date of legislative sessions in even years
- Create office of Domestic Security and Counterterrorism
- Force the Legislature to always have a Department of Veteran Affairs
- Force all Florida counties to elect Constitutional Officers



### A vote NO would

- Continue to allow Legislature to set date for session in even numbered years
- Reject mandated Office of Security and Counterterrorism
- Reject mandated Department of Veteran Affairs
- Allow Florida's charter counties to continue determining how the duties of the five county offices will be arranged



A YES vote would:

1. Fix the date for legislative sessions in even years
2. Create office of Domestic Security and Counterterrorism within FDLE
3. Force the permanent establishment of Department of Veteran Affairs
4. Force ALL Florida counties to hold elections for Constitutional Officers, even those with a charter

A NO vote would:

1. Continue to allow Legislature to set date for session in even numbered years
2. Reject **mandated** Office of Security and Counterterrorism and **mandated** Department of Veteran Affairs
3. Allow Florida's charter counties to continue determining duties of five county offices identified in the state Constitution, and whether those offices should be elected posts.

## Amendment 10

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### Supporting Organizations

- None at this time

### Opposing Organizations

- League of Women Voters of Florida



League position Oppose.

- This limits the voters in local communities from deciding on the election of county officers.
- It adds unnecessary provision; the Legislature already has the power to set dates during even number years.
- FDLE is already the lead agency in coordinating efforts to prevent terrorism.
- Constitution already has authorized the Legislature to create Department of Veteran's Affairs. This amendment is clearly an effort to restrict the powers of local government

## Amendment 11

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**Source:** Constitution Revision  
Commission (CRC)

**Property Rights:  
Removal of  
Obsolete Provision;  
Criminal Statutes**



Source of proposed amendment is the Constitution Revision Commissions, known as the CRC



## Amendment 11

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- Repeals the state's ability to prohibit non-citizens from buying, owning, and selling property
- Deletes a provision that forces the state to prosecute criminal suspects under a law they were charged under, even if the law is repealed
- Deletes obsolete high-speed rail language from the Constitution



1. The Alien Land Laws (approved in 1926) cannot be enforced and there are no laws on the books preventing non-citizens from owning, buying or selling land.
2. This law would ensure that criminals are prosecuted under the most current laws on the books.
3. In 2000, voters approved an amendment that mandated building high speed rail. Four years later, the voters overturned that amendment, but the constitution was never changed.

## Amendment 11

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### A vote YES would

- Repeal Legislature's right to restrict property rights of non-citizens
- Delete requirement to prosecute criminal suspects for laws that have been changed since crime was committed
- Delete language about high speed rail



### A vote NO would

- Continue to have a law that restricts property rights of non citizens
- Continue to allow criminal suspects to be prosecuted under repealed laws.
- Retain high speed rail in Constitution



#### A Yes vote would:

- Repeal a nearly century-old provision that allows the Legislature to restrict the property rights of non-citizens.
- Permit the legislature to apply new sentencing guidelines to prisoners currently incarcerated - allowing an earlier release for them.
- Delete section of the Constitution concerning high-speed rail transportation.

## Amendment 11

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### Supporting Organizations

- None at this time

### Opposing Organizations

- None at this time



League has no position.

- Removing obsolete language is a good thing, but there are many other instances of obsolete language that are not addressed.
- The ability of non-citizens to purchase or sell property cannot be enforced: Florida has no laws on the books to enforce it.
- The provision that requires criminal suspects to be prosecuted under an obsolete law should be changed

## Amendment 12

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Source: Constitution Revision  
Commission (CRC)

Lobbying and  
Abuse of Office  
by Public Officers



Source of proposed amendment is the Constitution Revision Commissions, known as the CRC

## Amendment 12

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- Expands restrictions on paid lobbying by former public officers
- Creates restrictions on paid lobbying by currently serving public officers
- Prohibits certain abuses of public office



1. Expands from 2 yrs. to 6 yrs. the time that many officials would have to wait after leaving office before they could lobby state government. (*widely described as the longest such ban in the nation*)
2. Expands the range of government agencies that a sitting legislator may not lobby to include not only state gov't, but also federal and local governments. The new prohibition would **include statewide officeholders, such as Cabinet members.**
3. Amendment 12 also includes a new prohibition against officeholders and public employees using their positions to gain a "disproportionate benefit" for themselves or their families.

## Amendment 12

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### A vote YES would

- Extend ban on state lobbying by legislators and statewide elected officials to 6 years after leaving office
- Prohibit legislators and statewide elected officials from lobbying federal and local government agencies while in office
- Prohibit local elected officials from paid lobbying of anyone while in office and their own governing body for 6 years



### A vote NO would

- Keep in place the current 2 year ban



1. Extends ban on state lobbying by legislators and statewide elected officials from 2 yrs. to 6 yrs. after leaving office. Includes Governor, cabinet officers **and judges**.
2. Prohibits statewide officeholders, such as legislators, Cabinet members and top state agency employees from lobbying **anyone** while in office. Formerly, only prohibition was on lobbying **state** agencies.
3. Prohibit top state agency employees from any lobbying while working for the state and from lobbying state government for six years after leaving their job.
4. Prohibit any elected official or public employee from using his or her position to gain a “disproportionate benefit,” a term to be defined by the state Ethics Commission. This includes getting paid to lobby anyone while in office and from lobbying their own governing body for 6 years after leaving office.
5. A key issue is that there has been little enforcement of the 2 year ban, so why bother with a 6 year ban that has weak enforcement. The main problem is campaign finance (dark money).

## Amendment 12

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### Supporting Organizations

- Integrity Florida
- Common Cause
- Florida Policy Institute

### Opposing Organizations

- None at this time



League has no position.

- Although there is a need for lobbying reform, six years may be onerous.
- Amendment does not address important issue of money in campaigns.

## Amendment 13

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Source: Constitution Revision  
Commission (CRC)

Ends Dog Racing



Source of proposed amendment is the Constitution Revision Commissions, known as the CRC

Court has ruled against proposal, not being appealed. Dropped from Ballot Decision.

Florida has 12 of the nations 18 dog racing tracks



## Amendment 13

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Bans all wagering on any type of dog racing, although not stopping racing



### A vote **YES** would

- Ban all dog racing by Dec. 31, 2020
- Result in a loss of \$1 million in taxes



### A vote **NO** would

continue to allow wagering on dog races

## Amendment 13

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### Supporting Organizations

- Grey2K USA
- League of Women Voters Florida

### Opposing Organizations

- Florida Greyhound Association



League position is support because this is primarily a gambling issue and the League has held a consistent position against gambling

## We can help today with:

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- Voter registration
- Vote-by-mail requests
- Voter address changes
- Voter signature updates
- Change in party affiliation



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Acknowledgement is sent to a voter to confirm any changes that were made.

League is third party state-certified organization permitted to collect voter registrations. Changes must be made 30 days in advance of the General Election, which is Oct. 9.

## 3 Ways to Vote in Florida

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- Vote by mail
- Vote early
- At your precinct on Election Day

**Vote in the General  
Election on or before  
November 6**



Florida's **General Election on Tuesday, November 6** will have a broad impact across the government — with many contests for powerful positions. Floridians will vote on candidates for federal, state and local offices and ballot initiatives, including these 12 proposals for amendments to the Florida Constitution.

There are three ways to vote in Florida – by mail, early or on Election Day at your precinct.

You have to request a vote-by-mail ballot for each election from your Supervisor of Elections. Find early voting locations and your precinct at [BeReadyToVote.org](http://BeReadyToVote.org).

Get your personalized voter guide with  
the candidates and issues on your ballot

**BEREADYTOVOTE.ORG**

**VOTE411.ORG**<sup>®</sup>  
ELECTION INFORMATION YOU NEED

In fact, you can get everything you need to vote in Florida at [BeReadyToVote.org](http://BeReadyToVote.org). Register to vote. Check your voter status.

**And get your personalized voter guide** to see the races on your ballot, candidates' responses to policy questions important to you (and compare positions side-by-side), and these summaries of the constitutional amendments, as well as local issues on your ballot. You can print out a sample ballot indicating your preferences and use it to fill out your official ballot.