



FLORIDA NOW Recommendations on Florida Constitutional Amendments on the 2018 Ballot

Vote "Yes" on 4, 9 and 13
Make up your own mind on 3 (casino gambling)
Vote "No" on the rest

Amendment 1 - Increase the amount of a home's value exempted from property tax (Legislative proposal)

Oppose - Florida NOW believes no tax sources or revenue should be specified, limited, exempted, or prohibited in or by the Florida Constitution and the proposal would limit localities' ability to respond to economic conditions and needs.

Amendment 2 - Cap on non-homestead parcel assessment increases imposed (Legislative proposal)

Oppose - Florida NOW believes no tax sources or revenue should be specified, limited, exempted, or prohibited in or by the Florida Constitution and the proposal would limit localities' ability to respond to economic conditions and needs.

Amendment 3 - New casino gambling decisions to be made by citizens, effectively barring the Legislature from making gambling decisions by passing laws (Citizen initiative)

No Position

Amendment 4 - Automatic restoration of the voting rights of felons after completion of a sentence, except for those convicted of murder or sex offenses (Citizen initiative)

Support - FLNOW was one of the sponsors of this initiative. This restriction on voting rights is a vestige of Florida's post-Civil War Constitution. Florida is one of only four states permanently barring a felon from voting after a sentence is completed.

Amendment 5 - Requires a 2/3 vote of the Legislature to approve new or increased taxes or fees (Legislative proposal)

Oppose - This amendment does not include a provision that would allow for tax increases in times of emergencies (hurricanes, floods, recessions, etc.) and is an abrogation of the Legislature's fiduciary responsibility to pass a reasonable budget.

Amendment 6 - Vastly expands the scope of victims rights under the state Constitution: increases the mandatory age for judges from 70 to 75: forces courts to ignore interpretations by government agencies of laws (CRC proposal)

Oppose - Victims' rights are already protected in the Constitution, and eliminates an existing provision protecting some constitutional rights of the accused. The two other proposals do not cure this objection.

Amendment 7 - Creates a supermajority requirement for universities to impose new or increase existing student fees, enshrines in the Constitution guidelines for the State College System, and mandates that the state pay a death benefit to first responders or members of the military killed in the line of duty (CRC proposal)

Oppose - A supermajority vote to increase fees limits the ability to adjust student fees and respond to economic conditions, costs and needs. Family members of the military who die in the line of service are already compensated through the federal government.

~~**Amendment 8 - Mandates term limits of 8 years for all school boards, allows the state to create "public schools", which only local school boards currently can do, and requires schools to teach "civic literacy" (CRC proposal).**~~

~~**STRICKEN FROM BALLOT by Florida Supreme Court decision; FLNOW had opposed**~~

Amendment 9 - Prohibits oil and gas drilling beneath all waters controlled by Florida and prohibits vaping in enclosed indoor workplace (CRC proposal).

Support - Concerns for the environment override concern about regulating vaping. Also, if this amendment passes, it sends a signal to the federal government that Florida cares about off-shore drilling.

Amendment 10 - Has Legislature hold its session in early January on even numbered years, creates an Office of Domestic Security and Counter-terrorism, mandates the existence of a Florida Department of Veteran Affairs, and forces all counties to elect rather than appoint some or all a county's constitutional officers (CRC proposal)

Oppose - The Legislature already has the power to set dates during even numbered years. As to new Florida agencies, FDLE is already the lead agency in coordinating efforts to prevent terrorism, and the Constitution already has authorized the Legislature to create a Department of Veteran Affairs. Limiting local communities from deciding on the election or appointment of county officers is clearly an effort to restrict the powers of local government.

Amendment 11 - 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 that has become obsolete, deletes obsolete language regarding high speed rail in Florida (CRC proposal)

Support - Deletes an unconstitutional, anti-immigrant provision from our constitution and would address mass incarceration by allowing criminal justice reforms to apply retroactively.

Amendment 12 - Expands ethics rules for elected officials and government employees by changing from 2 to 6 years the time that they would have to wait before being able to lobby state government (CRC proposal)

Oppose - Although there is a need for lobbying reform, 6 years might be onerous, and the amendment does not address the real issue regarding lobbying, which is the impact of money in political campaigns.

Amendment 13 - Bans wagering on any type of dog racing, notably greyhounds, by December 31, 2020, while continuing to allow dog tracks to offer other types of gambling, including poker rooms (CRC proposal)

Support - This CRC proposal has a single subject and is supported by many NOW members.

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