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LMA NEWSLETTER

April 23, 2018

Constitution Revision Commission Adds 8 Proposed Amendments to November's Ballot

Concern of "log-rolling" more than 20 proposals into 8 measures

Florida's Constitution Revision Commission last week gave final approval to put eight proposed amendments to the state constitution on the ballot this November for Florida voters to consider. They will join five others placed on the ballot by the Legislature or citizens' initiatives. But because many of the eight actually contain multiple proposals, there is concern they are essentially "take it or leave it", as they may contain an idea you like combined with one or two that you don't like. Yet, you'll have to vote them up or down – or skip it.

The Commission meets every 20 years to consider changes to the state constitution. It's spent the last 16 months considering more than 900 proposals from its own 37 members – political appointees and elected officials – and from the general public. Proposed amendments by the Commission, unlike those by citizens' initiatives, don't have to comply with the single-subject rule nor do they carry a fiscal impact statement. That distinction played out over the past several weeks as critics accused the Commission of ultimately logrolling more than 20 separate proposals into these final eight proposed constitutional amendments:

[P 6001: Rights of Crime Victims; Judges](#) – This is three proposals in one amendment. It would revise and establish new rights for crime victims, based in part on the national push for Marsy's Law; require an administrative law judge to interpret state statute or rule instead of letting an agency do so; and create a retirement age of 75 for judges.

[P 6002: First Responder and Military Member Survivor Benefits; Public Colleges and Universities](#) – This is another three-for-one. It would require a supermajority vote of the state Board of Governors and local University Boards of Trustees to raise tuition or fees or impose new ones; would give the State College System its own governance, as the university system has; and provide college scholarships to survivors of first responders and military members.

[P 6003: School Board Term Limits and Duties; Public Schools](#) – This is another three-for-one. It would establish term limits on local school board members; allow the state to approve and supervise charter schools in place of local school districts; and require civic literacy education in public schools.

[P 6004: Prohibits Offshore Oil and Gas Drilling; Prohibits Vaping in Enclosed Indoor Workplaces](#) – This is two proposals in one amendment. It would prohibit offshore oil and gas drilling and prohibit vaping in indoor workplaces, including restaurants.

[P 6005: State and Local Government Structure and Operation](#) – This is a four-for-one. It would require the legislature to hold its annual session in January of even-numbered years (lawmakers currently choose for themselves); establish the Office of Domestic Security and Counterterrorism within FDLE; create the

Office of Veterans' Affairs to be headed by the Governor and Cabinet; and require charter counties to elect all officers, including tax collectors and sheriffs, rather than appointing them as some currently do.

[P 6006: Property Rights; Removal of Obsolete Provision; Criminal Statutes](#) – This is another three-for-one, but centers around eliminating obsolete sections of the constitution. It would eliminate a ban on non-citizens from owning land; establish that any repeal of criminal statute is not retroactive; and delete a provision regarding high-speed ground transportation;

[P 6007: Lobbying and Abuse of Office by Public Officers](#) - This single-subject amendment would require state and local officials to wait six years after leaving office before they could lobby their former government and would prohibit officials from using their office to receive a “disproportionate benefit” for themselves or relatives.

[P 6012: Ends Dog Racing](#) – The only other single-subject amendment, this would eliminate greyhound dog racing in Florida by the year 2020.

The proposed amendments have been sent to the Secretary of State, who will assign actual ballot numbers to each for the November election.

All proposed amendments to Florida's constitution require a 60% majority vote to be approved. In the coming months leading to the November 6 election, future editions of this *LMA Newsletter* will feature a focus story on each of the 13 proposed amendments on the ballot. As many of our readers are Floridians, it's important to know how each of these measures can affect us and our families, businesses, and employees. Knowledge is power!