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Florida's 12 Proposed Constitutional Amendments on the November 2018 Ballot

The Florida Legislature has the power to put proposed amendments on the ballot, as do Citizen Initiatives that have collected the necessary number of signatures of support and met other requirements. They make up the first five proposed amendments on the fall ballot:

Amendment 1: [Increased Homestead Property Tax Exemption](#) – This proposal from the Florida Legislature would increase the homestead exemption from its current \$50,000 to \$75,000 on all levies except local school taxes and apply only to homes with at least \$125,000 in value.

Amendment 2: [Limitations on Property Tax Assessments](#) – This legislative proposal would help non-homesteaded (commercial) property by limiting future property tax increases to 10% a year. A similar current cap expires in 2019.

Amendment 3: [Voter Control of Gambling in Florida](#) – This citizens' initiative would give Florida voters the exclusive authority to decide whether casino gambling should be allowed in Florida beyond the current Indian reservations, which are controlled by federal laws.

Amendment 4: [Voting Restoration Amendment](#) – This citizens' initiative would automatically restore the voting rights of felons after they serve all conditions of their sentences. Murderers and sex offenders, however, would continue to go before the Governor and Cabinet for restoration of their voting rights.

Amendment 5: [Supermajority Vote Required to Impose, Authorize, or Raise State Taxes or Fees](#) – This legislative proposal, as the title implies, would require a two-thirds vote of each chamber of the legislature to impose, authorize, or raise a statewide tax or fee.

In April 2018, Florida's Constitution Revision Commission approved eight additional proposed amendments to the ballot for Florida voters to consider. They will join the five 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 spent 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:

Amendment 6: [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. [Read more here on how this proposed amendment was created.](#)

Amendment 7: [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. [Read more here on how this proposed amendment was created.](#)

~~**Amendment 8: [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. [Read more here on how this proposed amendment was created.](#)~~

~~– The Florida Supreme Court struck this amendment from the ballot on September 7, 2018 as the result of a court challenge.~~

Amendment 9: [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. [Read more here on how this proposed amendment was created.](#)

Amendment 10: [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. [Read more here on how this proposed amendment was created.](#)

Amendment 11: [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; [Read more here on how this proposed amendment was created.](#)

Amendment 12: [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. [Read more here on how this proposed amendment was created.](#)

Amendment 13: [Ends Dog Racing](#) – The only other single-subject amendment, this would eliminate greyhound dog racing in Florida by the year 2020. [Read more here on how this proposed amendment was created.](#)

All proposed amendments to Florida’s constitution require a 60% majority vote to be approved. 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!