



NORTH TAMPA BAY C H A M B E R

Voters will be asked to approve or reject six state constitutional amendments during the Nov. 3 General Election.

Four of the amendments, numbers 1-4, are citizen initiatives and two, numbers 5 and 6, were referred by the Florida Legislature. This year, a citizen initiative required a total of 766,200 signatures collected from at least 14 of the 27 congressional districts on a petition to be considered. Additionally, the four citizen initiatives are subject to a financial impact review. Amendments require 60% approval from voters to pass.

The six proposed amendments this year are:

AMENDMENT 1: Citizenship Requirement to Vote in Florida Elections

Sponsor name: Petition drive carried out by Florida Citizen Voters, a political committee funded by anonymous donors

Ballot summary: This amendment provides that only United States Citizens who are at least 18 years of age, a permanent resident of Florida, and registered to vote, as provided by law, shall be qualified to vote in a Florida election.

Financial impact statement: Because the proposed amendment is not expected to result in any changes to the voter registration process in Florida, it will have no impact on state or local government costs or revenues. Further, it will have no effect on the state's economy.

AMENDMENT 2: Raising Florida's Minimum Wage Ballot

Sponsor name: Petition drive carried out by Florida For A Fair Wage, which was heavily funded by Orlando attorney John Morgan



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Ballot summary: Raises minimum wage to \$10 per hour effective Sept. 30, 2021. Each Sept. 30 thereafter, minimum wage shall increase by \$1 per hour until the minimum wage reaches \$15 per hour on Sept. 30, 2026. From that point forward, future minimum wage increases shall revert to being adjusted annually for inflation starting Sept. 30, 2027.

Financial impact statement: Supporters say cash-strapped Floridians are overdue for a wage boost and raising the minimum wage would help the economy because low-income workers tend to spend what they earn. Opponents and industry groups argue raising the minimum wage will result in hours being cut and less hiring. They also say the higher labor costs will be passed on to consumers through higher prices.

AMENDMENT 3: All Voters Vote in Primary Elections for State Legislature, Governor, and Cabinet

Sponsor name: Petition drive carried out by All Voters Vote, which is substantially funded by South Florida health care businessman Mike Fernandez

Ballot summary: Allows all registered voters to vote in primaries for state legislature, governor, and cabinet regardless of political party affiliation. All candidates for an office, including party nominated candidates, appear on the same primary ballot. Two highest vote getters advance to the general election. If only two candidates qualify, no primary is held and the winner is determined in the general election. Candidate's party affiliation may appear on the ballot as provided by law. Effective Jan. 1, 2024.

Financial impact statement: It is probable that the proposed amendment will result in additional local government costs to conduct elections in Florida. The Financial Impact Estimating Conference projects that the combined costs across



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counties will range from \$5.2 million to \$5.8 million for each of the first three election cycles occurring in even numbered years after the amendment's effective date, with the costs for each of the intervening years dropping to less than \$450,000. With respect to state costs for oversight, the additional costs for administering elections are expected to be minimal. Further, there are no revenues linked to voting in Florida. Since there is no impact on state costs or revenues, there will be no impact on the state's budget. While the proposed amendment will result in an increase in local expenditures, this change is expected to be below the threshold that would produce a statewide economic impact.

AMENDMENT 4: Voter Approval of Constitutional Amendments

Sponsor name: Petition drive carried out by Keep Our Constitution Clean, which is funded through a nonprofit group linked to a lobbying organization for several large Florida enterprises.

Ballot summary: Requires all proposed amendments or revisions to the state constitution to be approved by the voters in two elections, instead of one, in order to take effect. The proposal applies the current thresholds for passage to each of the two elections.

Financial impact statement: It is probable that the proposed amendment will result in additional state and local government costs to conduct elections. Overall, these costs will vary each election cycle depending on the unique circumstances of each ballot. The key factors determining cost include the number of amendments appearing for the second time on each ballot and the length of those amendments. The economic impact cannot be modeled, although the spending increase is expected to be below the threshold that would produce a



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statewide economic impact. Because there are no revenues linked to voting in Florida, there will be no impact on government taxes or fees.

AMENDMENT 5: Limitation on Homestead Assessments

Sponsor: The Florida Legislature.

Ballot summary: Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution, effective date Jan. 1, 2021, to increase, from two years to three years, the period of time during which accrued Save-Our-Homes benefits may be transferred from a prior homestead to a new homestead.

Financial impact statement: Taxable value increases are capped at 3% on homesteaded properties under the Save Our Homes benefit. This would give homeowners more time to transfer that tax break to a new property. It passed the Florida Legislature unanimously. Local governments would lose some money. The amendment would reduce property taxes by \$1.8 million, beginning in fiscal year 2021,2022, growing to an annual reduction of \$10.2 million, according to a fiscal analysis.

AMENDMENT 6: Ad Valorem Tax Discount for Spouses of Certain Deceased Veterans Who Had Permanent, Combat-Related Disabilities

Sponsor: The Florida Legislature.

Ballot summary: Provides that the homestead property tax discount for certain veterans with permanent combat-related disabilities carries over to such veteran's surviving spouse who holds legal or beneficial title to, and who permanently resides on, the homestead property, until he or she remarries or sells or otherwise disposes of the property. The discount may be transferred to a



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new homestead property of the surviving spouse under certain conditions. The amendment takes effect Jan. 1, 2021.

Financial impact statement: This would provide additional assistance to Florida veterans. It passed the Florida Legislature unanimously. It would mean slightly less revenue for schools and local government. School tax revenues would initially fall by \$400,000 with a recurring loss of \$1.6 million, according to a fiscal analysis. Non-school property tax revenues would fall initially by \$600,000 with a recurring loss of \$2.4 million.