

Amendment #3

Official Title:

Requiring Broader Public Support for Constitutional Amendments or Revisions

Official Ballot Summary:

Proposes an amendment to Section 5 of Article XI of the State Constitution to require that any proposed amendment to or revision of the State Constitution, whether proposed by the Legislature, by initiative, or by any other method, must be approved by at least 60 percent of the voters of the state voting on the measure, rather than by a simple majority. This proposed amendment would not change the current requirement that a proposed constitutional amendment imposing a new state tax or fee be approved by at least 2/3 of the voters of the state voting in the election in which such an amendment is considered.

Amendment Type:

Legislative/Joint Resolution, this amendment was placed on the ballot by the Florida Legislature during the 2005 Legislative Session. It was required to pass both the Senate and House by a 60 percent vote to be eligible for the ballot.

Sponsor: Florida Legislature
HJR 1723 (2005 Session)
Sponsor: Judiciary Committee

Known Proponents:

- Florida Association of Realtors
- Florida Chamber of Commerce
- Florida Farm Bureau
- Florida Institute of CPAs
- Floridians for Better Transportation
- ProtectOurConstitution.org
(A complete list of partners is on their website.)

Known Opponents:

- ACORN
- AFL-CIO
- Christian Family Coalition
- Common Cause
- Florida Family Action, Inc.
- Florida Policy Roundtable
- Humane Society of the United States
- SaveVotersVoice.org (A complete coalition list is on their website.)
- TrusttheVoters.org (A complete list of supporters is on their website.)

Were Paid Signature Gatherers Used to Place This on the Ballot?

N/A - Amendment was placed on the ballot via the Legislature. It was required to pass both the Senate and House by a 60% vote.

Arguments:

FOR

Florida's Constitution is the easiest to amend in our nation. In recent years, ballot initiatives have become a vehicle for well-financed special interest groups to protect their interests via the state's most sacred document. By implementing a higher threshold for approval of constitutional amendments it broadens consensus because a higher percentage of Florida's electorate will be required to pass the initiative.

AGAINST

When issues are not passed through the Legislature, the ballot initiative process is critical to ensuring the peoples' voices are still heard. The citizen initiative process remains a vital check on government when, for whatever reasons, the government refuses to act. Requiring a higher percentage of the electorate could diminish an initiative's chances of being approved.

What Your Vote Means:

YES

If approved by voters, Amendment #3 would increase the number of votes needed to approve ballot initiatives from 50% +1 to 60% of those voting on the measure.

NO

If Amendment #3 is not approved by voters, the current requirement of 50% +1 approval would remain in place.

Financial Impact:

There is not a direct financial impact on state or local government.

Note: The Financial Impact Estimating Conference is not required to adopt and prepare official financial impact statements to accompany proposed constitutional amendments which are placed on the ballot by the Florida Legislature.



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