

2006



Voter Guide

To Proposed Constitutional Amendments

Learn about the proposed amendments you will see on the ballot, including:

- ✓ **OFFICIAL BALLOT SUMMARY**
- ✓ **AMENDMENT TYPE**
- ✓ **FINANCIAL IMPACT**
- ✓ **PROponents & OPPONENTS**
- ✓ **ARGUMENTS - FOR & AGAINST**
- ✓ **WHAT YOUR VOTE MEANS**
- ✓ **SIGNATURE GATHERERS**
Were paid signature gatherers used?
- ✓ **PRINTABLE BALLOT FORM**
Make your decision and take it with you on Election Day.

AN EASY-TO-READ,
NON-PARTISAN GUIDE

FOR FLORIDA'S
NOVEMBER 7, 2006
GENERAL ELECTION



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Table of Contents

This fall more than 6.5 million registered voters are expected to head to the polls to cast their vote on six proposed constitutional amendments. In the absence of a state-published voter guide to amendments, VoteSmartFlorida.org – *Florida's free, non-partisan source for constitutional information* – is providing voters with a Voter Guide to cut through the clutter and confusion of proposed constitutional amendments. VoteSmartFlorida.org's free **2006 Voter Guide to Proposed Constitutional Amendments** is a non-partisan, unbiased guide on each of the proposed constitutional amendments.

In order to vote in the November 7 General Election you must be registered to vote by October 10. For more information on how you can register or for additional information about VoteSmartFlorida.org, visit www.VoteSmartFlorida.org today.

PRINTABLE BALLOT FORM Make your decision and take it with you on Election Day.	3
AMENDMENT #1 State Planning and Budget Process	4
AMENDMENT #3 Requiring Broader Public Support for Constitutional Amendments or Revisions	5
AMENDMENT #4 Protect People, Especially Youth From Addiction, Disease, and Other Health Hazards of Using Tobacco	6 - 7
AMENDMENT #6 Increased Homestead Exemption	8
AMENDMENT #7 Permanently Disabled Veterans' Discount on Homestead Ad Valorem Tax	9
AMENDMENT #8 Eminent Domain	10
SPECIAL COMMENTARY From Florida TaxWatch	11
WAS THIS GUIDE HELPFUL?	12

SPECIAL NOTE:

*Amendment #2 (Term Limits) was removed from the ballot by the Florida Legislature during the 2006 Session.
Amendment #5 (Independent Nonpartisan Commission to apportion legislative and congressional districts which replaces apportionment by legislature) was ruled unconstitutional by the Florida Supreme Court and also removed from the ballot.*

Revised 10.19.06



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Printable Ballot Form

Learn about the amendments you will see on the ballot through VoteSmartFlorida.org's **2006 Voter Guide to Proposed Constitutional Amendments**. Complete the sample ballot below and take it with you for an easy-to-use reference on Election Day.



AMENDMENT #1	YES	NO
State Planning and Budget Process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AMENDMENT #3	YES	NO
Requiring Broader Public Support for Constitutional Amendments or Revisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AMENDMENT #4	YES	NO
Protect People, Especially Youth From Addiction, Disease, and Other Health Hazards of Using Tobacco	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AMENDMENT # 6	YES	NO
Increased Homestead Exemption	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AMENDMENT #7	YES	NO
Permanently Disabled Veterans' Discount on Homestead Ad Valorem Tax	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AMENDMENT #8	YES	NO
Eminent Domain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SPECIAL NOTE:

*Amendment #2 (Term Limits) was removed from the ballot by the Florida Legislature during the 2006 Session.
Amendment #5 (Independent Nonpartisan Commission to apportion legislative and congressional districts which replaces apportionment by legislature) was ruled unconstitutional by the Florida Supreme Court and also removed from the ballot.*



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Amendment #1

Official Title:

State Planning and Budget Process

Official Ballot Summary:

Proposing amendments to the State Constitution to limit the amount of nonrecurring general revenue which may be appropriated for recurring purposes in any fiscal year to 3 percent of the total general revenue funds estimated to be available, unless otherwise approved by a three-fifths vote of the Legislature; to establish a Joint Legislative Budget Commission, which shall issue long-range financial outlooks; to provide for limited adjustments in the state budget without the concurrence of the full Legislature, as provided by general law; to reduce the number of times trust funds are automatically terminated; to require the preparation and biennial revision of a long-range state planning document; and to establish a Government Efficiency Task Force and specify its duties.

Amendment Type:

Legislative/Joint Resolution, this amendment was placed on the ballot by the Florida Legislature during the 2004 Legislative Session. It was required to pass both the Senate and House by a 60% vote to be eligible for the ballot.

Sponsor: Florida Legislature
SJR 2506 (2004 Session)
Sponsor: Sen. Tom Lee (R-Brandon)

Known Proponents:

Unknown

Known Opponents:

Unknown

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

Today, the Legislative Budget Commission has a variety of functions regarding appropriations. This amendment would establish a Joint Budget Commission and would do what has not been done before - put both the budget and revenue estimates together in one document. In addition to the annual budget, it will also require the Commission to create a long-term financial outlook.

AGAINST

Current general law, which prescribes requirements for each department and agency of state government to submit a planning document and supporting budget request, is adequate and an additional task force is not needed.

What Your Vote Means:

YES

If approved by voters, Amendment #1 would establish a long-range budget-planning process, putting both budget and revenue estimates together in one document. It would create a Government Efficiency Task Force (appointed every four years by the Governor, Senate President and Speaker of the House) to seek input from the public, executive and judicial branches and create a long-range financial plan.

NO

If Amendment #1 is not approved by voters, the current laws as set by Section 19 of Article III of the State Constitution will remain in place as originally proposed by the Taxation and Budget Reform Commission and approved by the voters in 1992.

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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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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Amendment #4

Official Title:

Protect People, Especially Youth, From Addiction, Disease and Other Health Hazards of Using Tobacco

Official Ballot Summary:

To protect people, especially youth, from addiction, disease, and other health hazards of using tobacco, the Legislature shall use some Tobacco Settlement money annually for a comprehensive statewide tobacco education and prevention program using Centers for Disease Control best practices. Specifies some program components, emphasizing youth, requiring one-third of total annual funding for advertising. Annual funding is 15% of 2005 Tobacco Settlement payments to Florida, adjusted annually for inflation. Provides definitions. Effective immediately.

Amendment Type: Initiative by Petition

Sponsor: Floridians for Youth Tobacco Education, Inc.
P. O. Box 18286, Tampa, FL 33679-0000
Phone: 813.875.8615

Known Proponents:

- American Cancer Society, Florida Division
- American Heart Association, Florida/Puerto Rico Affiliate
- American Lung Association of Florida
- Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids
- Florida Academy of Family Physicians
- Florida Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity
- Florida C.H.A.I.N.
- Florida Today
- Florida Young Democrats
- Florida State Conference NAACP
- GASP of Florida
- GFWAC North Pinellas Women's Club, Inc.
- League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
- National Hispanic Medical Association
- National Latino Council on Alcohol & Tobacco Prevention
- Pasco County Commissioner Pat Mulieri
- Representative Anne Gannon
- St. Lucie Medical Center
- Santa Rosa County School Board
- Senator Burt Saunders
- Smoke-Free Jacksonville
- UMSylvester, University of Miami
- We Care Jacksonville, Inc.
- Volusia County Medical Society

For a complete list of "Yes on 4" proponents, please visit www.keepkidssmokefree.org.

Known Opponents: Unknown

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

Yes, more than \$1 million was spent with California-based PCI Consultants to pay professionals to collect signatures.

Top Contributors:

- \$1.5 Million - American Cancer Society, Florida Division (Public Health, Tampa, FL)
- \$495,000 - American Heart Association (Public Health, Dallas, TX)
- \$175,000 - American Lung Association of Florida (Public Health, Tallahassee, FL)

Arguments:

FOR

In Florida, nearly 29,000 deaths are attributable to tobacco use annually, and the threat of tobacco is greatest among youth. Florida receives more than \$360 million annually from the tobacco settlement, yet only \$1 million is used to educate Florida's youth about the dangers of tobacco use. Factoring in inflation and increased cost of advertising, \$57 million appears to be both reasonable and fiscally responsible.

AGAINST

Everyone agrees kids should not smoke. However, the \$57 million a year will be coming out of our state's general revenue budget, which means less money for schools and roads. Technically, this proposed amendment could be achieved through the Legislature instead of the Constitution.

What Your Vote Means:

YES

If approved by voters, Amendment #4 would require that 15% (\$57 million) of the 2005 tobacco settlement payments to Florida would fund a statewide tobacco education and prevention program.

NO

If Amendment #4 is not approved by voters, Florida would continue to receive allocations as set by the Legislature and approved by the Governor. Current allocations are set at 1% of the tobacco settlement money.



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Amendment #4

Official Title:

Protect People, Especially Youth, From Addiction, Disease and Other Health Hazards of Using Tobacco

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Official Financial Impact Statement to Appear on the Ballot

This amendment requires state government to appropriate approximately \$57 million in 2007 for the comprehensive Statewide Tobacco Education and Prevention Program. Thereafter, this amount will increase annually with inflation. This spending is expected to reduce tobacco consumption. As a result, some long-term savings to state and local government health and insurance programs are probable, but indeterminate. Also, minor revenue loss to state government is probable, but indeterminate.

S. 100.371, Florida Statutes establishes a Financial Impact Estimating Conference to adopt and prepare financial impact statements to accompany any proposed constitutional amendment which is placed on the ballot by citizen's initiative petition.

Additional Financial Effects Based on the Financial Impact Estimating Conference's Research & Public Workshops

- Education, prevention and enforcement costs will increase. The state will be required to appropriate approximately \$57 million from Tobacco Settlement funds in 2007, which will be adjusted annually for inflation. Because the Tobacco Settlement funds are currently fully obligated, the requirement to spend these dollars on the specified programs will result in reductions to existing programs or the replacement of those dollars with \$57 million of other state funds.
- Some long-term savings to state and local government health and insurance programs is probable. The Comprehensive Statewide Tobacco Education and Prevention Program is expected to reduce tobacco consumption. Because of this, state and local governments that offer health and insurance programs will probably experience some long-term savings. However, the savings resulting from the prevention program are indeterminate. Many factors besides the prevention program contribute to the decline of tobacco use. In addition, the number of persons, particularly youth, who will stop using tobacco, for how long they will stop, or who will never use tobacco is unknown.
- Minor loss of revenue to the state is probable, but is indeterminate. Revenue to the state from the Tobacco Settlement payments and from the Cigarette and Other Tobacco Products Taxes are dependent in part on tobacco sales. The statewide campaign proposed by the constitutional amendment is expected to reduce consumption by some unknown amount. Many other factors may also contribute to the decline of tobacco use, including affected opinions about tobacco companies following the multi-state settlements, increasing cost of cigarettes, increasing tax rates on tobacco products, and the implementation of smoking regulations in public places. Consequently, minor loss of revenue is probable, but the amount attributable to the prevention program cannot be determined.



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Amendment #6

Official Title:

Increased Homestead Exemption

Official Ballot Summary:

Proposing amendment of the State Constitution to increase the maximum additional homestead exemption for low-income seniors* from \$25,000 to \$50,000 and to schedule the amendment to take effect January 1, 2007.

Amendment Type:

Legislative/Joint Resolution, this amendment was placed on the ballot by the Florida Legislature during the 2006 Legislative Session. It was required to pass both the Senate and House by a 60% vote to be eligible for the ballot.

Sponsor: Florida Legislature
HJR 353 (2006 Session)
Sponsor: Rep. Carlos Lopez-Cantera
(R-Miami)

Known Proponents:

Unknown

Known Opponents:

Unknown

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.

**Low-income seniors: 65 years old or above with a household income that does not exceed \$20,000.*

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.

Arguments:

FOR

Low-income seniors* are vulnerable to sudden increases in property tax assessments, because many live on fixed incomes and simply can't keep pace with increasing property taxes. This amendment will authorize the Legislature to allow local government to potentially ease tax burdens on those most threatened by increasing property taxes.

AGAINST

Property taxes generate a major source of revenue for local government. Reducing property taxes could financially devastate counties resulting in tax increases to cover revenue needs for schools and other local priorities. Therefore, reducing property tax burden on owners could result in a shift of tax burdens from the homestead property owner to other taxpayers.

What Your Vote Means:

YES

If approved by voters, Amendment #6 would authorize the Legislature to allow counties to increase the maximum additional homestead exemption for low-income seniors* from \$25,000 to \$50,000 effective January 1, 2007. Local counties have an existing option of adding an additional \$25,000, therefore, a low-income senior* could receive an exemption from property taxes as high as \$75,000.

NO

If Amendment #6 is not approved by voters, homestead exemptions would remain as listed in the Constitution:

- \$25,000 homestead exemption to all owners of "homestead" properties
- Allows local governments the option of offering an additional exemption to low-income seniors* of up to \$25,000 (established in 1982)

Financial Impact:

There is not a direct financial impact on state government. If all counties were to fully implement the increased exemption and millage rates remain the same, it could have an impact of reducing local revenues by \$36 million.



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Amendment #7

Official Title:

Permanently Disabled Veterans' Discount on Homestead Ad Valorem Tax

Official Ballot Summary:

Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution to provide a discount from amount of ad valorem tax on homestead of a partially or totally permanently disabled veteran who is age 65 or older who was a Florida resident at the time of entering military service, whose disability was combat-related, and who was honorably discharged, to specify percentage of the discount as equal to the percentage of veteran's permanent service-connected disability; to specify qualification requirements for the discount; to authorize the Legislature to waive the annual application requirement in subsequent years by general law; and to specify that the provision takes effect December 7, 2006, is self-executing, and does not require implementing legislation.

Amendment Type:

Legislative/Joint Resolution, this amendment was placed on the ballot by the Florida Legislature during the 2006 Legislative Session. It was required to pass both the Senate and House by a 60% vote to be eligible for the ballot.

Sponsor: Florida Legislature
HJR 631 (2006 Session)
Sponsor: Rep. Ray Sansom
(R-Ft. Walton Beach)

Known Proponents: Unknown

Known Opponents: Unknown

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.

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.

Arguments:

FOR

This is a chance to give thanks to veterans who were wounded in combat serving our country. The amendment would provide substantial ad valorem or "property tax" relief for Florida's military veterans who have fought in a foreign war. The proposed amendment would ensure the exemption is in proportion to the amount of disability a veteran receives.

AGAINST

Every permanent Florida resident who has legal title to and resides on real property is eligible for a homestead exemption of \$25,000. Currently, disabled veterans receive an additional \$5,000 homestead exemption. Providing an additional discount may cause some local governments to lose the income they would normally receive from these taxes.

What Your Vote Means:

YES

If approved by voters, Amendment #7 would lower taxes for disabled veterans* by allowing them to take a discount on their homestead property tax equal in proportion to the amount of disability as determined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (Effective: December 7, 2006)

NO

If Amendment #7 is not approved by voters, veterans eligible for the current law which authorizes a \$5,000 exemption for certain ex-servicemen who are disabled to a degree of 10 percent or more as a result of service in war, would still receive the \$5,000 exemption.

Financial Impact:

The Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR) has estimated the fiscal impact to be \$20.1 million.

* Required Documentation for Disabled Veterans:

- Proof of residency at time of entering service
- Proof that injury was combat-related
- Official letter from the U.S. Dept. of Veteran's Affairs stating the percentage of the veteran's service-connected permanent disability
- Copy of the veteran's honorable discharge

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Amendment #8

Official Title: Eminent Domain

Official Ballot Summary:

Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution to prohibit the transfer of private property taken by eminent domain to a natural person or private entity, providing that the Legislature may by general law passed by a three-fifths vote of the membership of each house of the Legislature permit exceptions allowing the transfer of such private property; and providing that this prohibition on the transfer of private property taken by eminent domain is applicable if the petition of taking that initiated the condemnation proceeding was filed on or after January 2, 2007.

Amendment Type:

Legislative/Joint Resolution, this amendment was placed on the ballot by the Florida Legislature during the 2006 Legislative Session. It was required to pass both the Senate and House by a 60% vote to be eligible for the ballot.

Sponsor: Florida Legislature
HJR 1569 (2006 Session)
Sponsor: Rep. Marco Rubio
(R-Miami)

Known Proponents:

- Coalition for Property Rights (CPR)
- Florida Association of Realtors
- Florida Chamber of Commerce
- Florida Farm Bureau
- Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association (FFVA)
- National Federation of Independent Businesses
- Property Rights Coalition (PRC)

Known Opponents:

Unknown

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

The decision as to whether a taking for economic development purposes is permissible in Florida lies squarely in the judiciary and will remain so unless the Constitution or statutes are amended to restrict such takings. Unless the Florida Constitution is amended, the question of whether a city or a county may take property for purposes of economic development will remain unanswered.

AGAINST

A constitutional amendment is not needed to address any eminent domain issues. This proposed constitutional amendment would place strict limits on the circumstances under which private property taken by eminent domain may be transferred to another party.

What Your Vote Means

YES

If approved by voters, Amendment #8 would require that private property taken by eminent domain must be retained for 10 years before it may be transferred to another private entity. The Legislature may provide exceptions to this limitation if passed by a 3/5 votes of the membership of each house.

NO

If Amendment #8 is not approved by voters, additional limits will not be placed on eminent domain. It would remain in its current form as stated in the Florida Constitution, Section 6, Article X, "prohibits takings of private property unless the taking is for a "public purpose" and the property owner is paid "full compensation."

Financial Impact:

There is not a direct financial impact on taxpayers, 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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Special Commentary

Florida TaxWatch, a private, non-profit, non-partisan research institute, has provided VoteSmartFlorida.org with special commentary on five of the six proposed constitutional amendments. According to TaxWatch, they are the only statewide organization devoted entirely to Florida's taxing and spending issues, Florida TaxWatch is ever present to ensure that taxes are equitable, not excessive, that their public benefits and costs are weighed, and that government agencies are more responsive and productive in the use of citizen's hard-earned tax dollars. Since 1979, policy makers and government employees have implemented 3/4 of Florida TaxWatch's cost-saving recommendations, saving the taxpayers of Florida more than \$6.2 billion--approximately \$1,067 in added value for every Florida family.



AMENDMENT #1: State Planning and Budget Process

It promotes worthwhile concepts to increase the focus on long-term fiscal planning and limit the spending of non-recurring revenues on recurring expenses. The establishment of a Government Efficiency Task Force could help formalize a much-needed process of looking for ways to save money without reducing necessary services. While generally favorable, much of this amendment is probably better suited to statutory enactment and the Legislative Budget Commission could open the door to balance of power issues between the Governor and the Legislature. And while limiting the spending of non-recurring money is proper, the 3% limit is too high and could result in ensuring it is spent each year (currently \$800 million).

AMENDMENT #3: Requiring Broader Public Support for Constitutional Amendments or Revisions

Florida TaxWatch has released several reports since 1994 pointing to the need for requiring a supermajority vote to amend the Florida Constitution. Only 10 of the past 103 amendments have passed with the approval of a majority of registered voters. In fact, fewer than 18% of Florida's registered voters have enacted some constitutional amendments. The current simple majority requirement makes it easier for issues that should be addressed statutorily to be set in constitutional stone. Requiring broader public support through a supermajority vote would assure there is broad consensus among Floridians before our central governing document is changed.

AMENDMENT #4: Protect People, Especially Youth, From Addiction, Disease, and Other Health Hazards of Using Tobacco

State funding of a comprehensive statewide tobacco education and prevention program, especially from tobacco settlement funds, has proven to be successful in reducing smoking. Preventing smoking can result in higher quality of life and reduce future health costs the state and taxpayers incur. Florida funded a program for several years, but over the last three years funding was cut to \$1 million. This proposed amendment mandates that \$57 million be spent on the tobacco program, that the appropriation will increase every year, and how some of the money would be spent. Tying future Legislatures' hands could result in more money being spent than needed. It does not allow for changing state funding priorities nor for full flexibility in how the money is spent.

AMENDMENT #6: Increased Homestead Exemption

This proposed amendment authorizes a maximum additional homestead exemption for low-income seniors of \$50,000. The Legislature still has to pass substantive law to authorize the higher exemption (current statutes only authorize \$25,000) and each city or county would then have to decide if it would adopt an ordinance to increase the exemption. Other provisions to protect low-income seniors from rising property taxes already exist: the basic \$25,000 exemption for all homesteads; another currently authorized homestead exemption for low-income seniors of \$25,000; the Save Our Homes Amendment; and the ability for them to defer taxes until there is a change in ownership. Based on the average statewide millage rate, a \$25,000 exemption is worth \$490. It is estimated that if all counties adopted the increased exemption, it would be worth \$36 million. It is likely that at least most of those taxes would be shifted to all other properties in the state.

AMENDMENT #7: Permanently Disabled Veterans' Discount on Homestead Ad Valorem Tax

Amendment #7 is self-executing and does not require implementing legislation. If the voters approve it, the tax break goes into effect. Florida currently provides an unlimited, total property tax exemption to totally disabled veterans and surviving spouses. A \$5,000 homestead exemption exists for partially disabled veterans. Under this amendment, disabled veterans would be exempt from the same portion of their property taxes as the portion of their disability. Savings Example: A 50% disabled veteran living in a house assessed at \$150,000 would save approximately \$1,225. During most of the legislative debate on this proposal last session, it was limited to World War II veterans, and carried a fiscal impact of \$1 million. Right before passage, the joint resolution was amended to include all veterans, which according to the Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR), increased its fiscal impact to approximately \$20.1 million. It is likely that at least most of those taxes would be shifted to all other properties in the state.



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VoteSmartFlorida.org is interested in hearing your feedback about our **2006 Voter Guide to Proposed Constitutional Amendments**. If you have any suggestions, requests or questions, please send an email to VoterGuide@VoteSmartFlorida.org or call 850.521.1274.

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