

Palm Beach Civic Association Ballot Amendment Summary 2012

Eleven amendments will appear on the General Election ballot on November 6, 2012. Below is a brief summary of each amendment. All are Sponsored/Originator by the Florida Legislature.

Amendment 1: Health Care Services

Title on ballot: Health Care Services

What it would do: This would add an amendment to the state constitution that attempts to prohibit the government from requiring individuals to purchase health insurance.

IF YOU VOTE YES: A “yes” vote means you want the Florida Constitution to include a provision that prohibits the government from requiring you to purchase health insurance.

IF YOU VOTE NO: A “no” vote means you do not want the Florida Constitution to include a provision that prohibits the government from requiring you to purchase health insurance.

Amendment 2: Veteran’s Property Tax Discount

Title on Ballot: Veterans Disabled Due To Combat Injury; Homestead Property Tax Discount

What it would do: This amendment would allow certain disabled veterans, who were not Florida residents prior to entering military service, to qualify for a discount on their property taxes.

IF YOU VOTE YES: A “yes” vote means you want the state to give a property tax discount to disabled veterans who moved to Florida after entering the military.

IF YOU VOTE NO: A “no” vote means you do not want to extend the tax discount to disabled veterans who moved to Florida after entering the military.

Amendment 3: State Revenue Limitation

Title on Ballot: State Government Revenue Limitation

What it would do: This amendment would set a state revenue limit each year based on a formula that considers population growth and inflation instead of using the current method of calculating the revenue limit based on personal income.

IF YOU VOTE YES: A “yes” vote means you want the state to change the way it calculates its revenue limit.

IF YOU VOTE NO: A “no” vote means you do not want the state to change the way it calculates its revenue limit.

Amendment 4: Property tax limitations; property value decline; reduction for non-homesteaded assessment increases; delay of scheduled repeal

Title on Ballot: Property Tax Limitations; Property Value Decline; Reduction For Non-homestead Assessment Increases; Delay of Scheduled Repeal

What it would do: Reduce the maximum annual increase in taxable value of non-homestead properties from 10 percent to 5 percent; provide an extra homestead exemption for first-time home buyers; allow lawmakers to prohibit assessment increases for properties with decreasing market values.

IF YOU VOTE YES: A “yes” vote means you favor the enhanced tax breaks being proposed.

IF YOU VOTE NO: A “no” vote means you are against the enhanced tax breaks being proposed.

Amendment 5: State Courts

Title on ballot: State Courts

What it would do: This measure would provide for Senate confirmation of Supreme Court justices; give lawmakers control over changes to the rules governing the court system; and direct the Judicial Qualifications Commission, which investigates judicial misconduct complaints, to make its files available to the Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives.

IF YOU VOTE YES: A “yes” vote means you want the Senate to have confirmation power over Supreme Court appointees, and some authority over changes to the rules that govern the state’s courts. You also want to grant the House access to Judicial Qualifications Commission’s investigative files on judges.

IF YOU VOTE NO: A “no” vote means you do not want these proposed changes made to the state’s judiciary.

Amendment 6: Prohibition on Public Funding of Abortions; Construction of Abortion Rights

Title on Ballot: Prohibition on Public Funding of Abortions; Construction of Abortion Rights

What it would do: This amendment would make the existing federal ban on public funding for most abortions part of the state constitution. It would narrow the scope of a state privacy law that is sometimes used in Florida to challenge abortion laws.

IF YOU VOTE YES: A “yes” vote means you support putting the existing federal ban on the use of public funds for abortions into the state constitution; and you support eliminating the state’s privacy right with respect to a woman’s right to choose.

IF YOU VOTE NO: A “no” vote means you are against placing the existing federal ban on using public funds for abortions into the state constitution; and you are against eliminating the state’s privacy right with respect to a woman’s right to choose.

Amendment 7: This proposal was known as Amendment 7 until a legal challenge by opponents led to the rewriting of some of the ballot language and its reinstatement on the ballot as Amendment 8. This is the reason there is no Amendment 7 on the 2012 ballot.

Amendment 8: Religious Freedom

Title on Ballot: Religious Freedom

Note: This proposal was known as Amendment 7 until a legal challenge by opponents led to the rewriting of some of the ballot language and its reinstatement on the ballot as Amendment 8. This is the reason there is no Amendment 7 on the 2012 ballot.

What it would do: This amendment would remove the prohibition in Florida’s Constitution that prevents religious institutions from receiving taxpayer funding.

IF YOU VOTE YES: A “yes” vote means you want to remove from the Florida Constitution a prohibition against the state funding religious institutions and replace it with a provision that prohibits the state from denying funding to institutions based on religious affiliations.

IF YOU VOTE NO: A “no” vote means you want to retain the provision in the Florida Constitution that prohibits the state from funding religious institutions.

Amendment 9: Homestead Property Tax Exemption for Surviving Spouse of Military Veteran or First Responder

Title on Ballot: Homestead Property Tax Exemption for Surviving Spouse of Military Veteran or First Responder

What it would do: This would grant a full property tax exemption to the surviving spouses of military veterans who die while on active duty and to the surviving spouses of first responders who die in the line of duty.

IF YOU VOTE YES: A “yes” vote means you want the state to grant the full homestead exemption to the surviving spouses.

IF YOU VOTE NO: A “no” vote means you do not want the state to grant the full homestead exemption.

Amendment 10: Tangible Personal Property Tax Exemption

Title on Ballot: Tangible Personal Property Tax Exemption

What it would do: This amendment would double the tangible personal property tax exemption and allow local governments to increase the exemption.

IF YOU VOTE YES: A “yes” vote means you want to double the tangible personal property tax exemption and allow cities and counties to expand the exemptions beyond that.

IF YOU VOTE NO: A “no” vote means you do not want to double the tangible personal property tax exemption and you do not want to allow cities and counties to expand the exemptions.

Amendment 11: Additional Homestead Exemption; Low-Income Seniors Who Maintain Long-Term Residency on Property; Equal to Assessed Value

Title on Ballot: Additional Homestead Exemption; Low-Income Seniors Who Maintain Long-Term Residency on Property; Equal to Assessed Value

What it would do: This amendment would give an additional property tax exemption to low-income seniors who have lived in their home for more than 25 years.

IF YOU VOTE YES: A “yes” vote means you think cities and counties should have the authority to grant a full property tax discount to eligible seniors.

IF YOU VOTE NO: A “no” vote means you do not think that cities and counties should have the authority to grant a full property tax discount to eligible seniors.

Amendment 12: Appointment of Student Body President to Board of Governors of the State University System

Title on Ballot: Appointment of Student Body President to Board of Governors of the State University System

What it would do: This amendment would change the way the state selects the student representative on the state university system’s Board of Governors, which oversees the university system.

IF YOU VOTE YES: A “yes” vote means you want the state create a new council of university student presidents from which the student representative to the Board of Governors will be chosen.

IF YOU VOTE NO: A “no” vote means you want to keep the current system of selecting the student representative to the Board of Governors.

Source: Collins Center for Public Policy

Palm Beach County Ballot Questions

GEN_2012: PALM BEACH COUNTY - QUESTION 1

Economic Development Property Tax Exemptions for New Businesses and Expansions of Existing Businesses

This measure seeks to continue to allow the county to provide property tax exemptions for new or expanding businesses in the county. The current tax break incentive would expire in August 2014, if this measure to renew it does not get approved.

GEN_2012: PALM BEACH COUNTY - QUESTION 2

Slot Machines at Licensed Pari-Mutuel Facilities Located in Palm Beach County

This measure would allow slot machines to be placed at licensed pari-mutuel facilities. The Palm Beach Kennel Club is the only licensed facility in the county which could have the slot machines.