



THE TORCH

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Proposed Constitutional Amendments Election, Nov. 5, 2019

Texans will have a chance to vote on 10 proposed constitutional amendments on November 5, 2019. Below is a guide from Texans for Fiscal Responsibility (TFR).

PROPOSITION 1: Neutral

“The constitutional amendment permitting a person to hold more than one office as a municipal judge at the same time.”

In Texas, a person can serve in more than one municipal judge position, assuming the person was appointed to each of those positions. However, if an individual is elected as a municipal judge they are prohibited from being elected or appointed as a judge. Proposition 1 would allow an individual to hold more than one office as an elected or

appointed municipal judge for multiple municipalities at the same time.

Pros: Texas already permits individuals to be appointed to multiple municipal judicial offices, and the constitutional amendment only adjusts the law to treat appointed and elected judges equally.

Con: Texas should not have allowed judges to serve in more than one office in the first place and the state would be better off not to double-down on the practice.

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Texas Eagle Forum Website

Be sure and check Texas Eagle Forum's website for legislative updates and news from around the state.

Go to texaseagle.org

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PROPOSITION 2: Oppose

“The constitutional amendment providing for the issuance of additional general obligation bonds by the Texas Water Development Board in an amount not to exceed \$200 million to provide financial assistance for the development of certain projects in economically distressed areas.”

The Texas Water Development Board will be allowed to issue bonds, and therefore go into debt, in order to continue financing water supply, sewer service, and drainage projects in economically distressed areas. State-subsidized debt serves as a disincentive to properly prioritizing spending and distorts market forces.

PROPOSITION 3: Support

“The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to provide for a temporary exemption from ad valorem taxation of a portion of the appraised value of certain property damaged by a disaster.”

Currently, local governments in Texas have the ability to reappraise properties damaged in disasters, but not to exempt the owners from all or part of their total tax burden. Local governments should be given more tools with which to provide tax relief for property owners. Proposition 3 is a commonsense reform that should result in taxpayer savings.

PROPOSITION 4: Support

“The constitutional amendment prohibiting the imposition of an individual income tax.”

The Texas Constitution already requires the Legislature by simple majority vote to seek voter approval to impose an income tax. This amendment would mean that a future legislature would have to vote by a super-majority and obtain voter approval to amend the constitution in order to impose an income tax.

TFR supports any proposal that prevents the government from imposing an income tax or otherwise increasing taxes on Texans. Proposition 4 makes it harder for a future legislature to impose an economically destructive income tax on our state.

PROPOSITION 5: Support

“The constitutional amendment dedicating the revenue received from the existing state and use taxes that are imposed on sporting goods to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Historical Commission to protect Texas’ natural areas, water, quality, and history by acquiring, managing, and improving state and local parks and historical sites while not increasing the rate of the sales and use taxes.”

Sales taxes on sporting goods will be dedicated to wildlife and nature preservation. While taxes on sporting goods in Texas have always been intended to finance state parks, lawmakers inside the Capitol frequently pilfered the revenues for other projects. The

passage of Proposition 5 will prevent that diversion and ensure that revenues raised are spent on their intended purpose.

PROPOSITION 6: Oppose

“The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to increase by \$3 billion the maximum bond amount authorized for the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas.”

CPRIT will be authorized to spend additional taxpayer dollars. While well-intentioned, CPRIT has not been a good steward of taxpayer dollars and cancer research is not a core function of government.

PROPOSITION 7: Support

“The constitutional amendment allowing increased distributions to the available school fund.”

The General Land Office or State Board of Education will have the ability to distribute up to \$600 million of the school fund, up from \$300 million currently. Securing additional revenue from the state’s oil and gas reserves was one of the alternatives adopted in lieu of an increased sales tax.

PROPOSITION 8: Oppose

“The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the flood infrastructure fund to assist in the financing of drainage, flood mitigation, and flood control projects.”

This amendment creates a permanent fund to help with flood mitigation infrastructure. State-subsidized debt serves as a disincentive to properly prioritizing spending and distorts market forces.

PROPOSITION 9: Support

“The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation precious metal held in a precious metal depository located in this state.”

Precious metals stored in the state depository would not be subject to being taxed as income-producing business assets. We oppose any form of ad valorem taxes.

PROPOSITION 10: Support

“The constitutional amendment to allow the transfer of a law enforcement animal to a qualified caretaker in certain circumstances.”

If it is in the best interest of the animal, the law enforcement animals will be allowed to be transferred to its caretaker upon retirement. Currently illegal due to prohibitions on “special benefits” and “gifts,” Proposition 10 is a commonsense change to the constitution that should save taxpayer money while treating service animals and their handlers with respect.

NOTE: Early voting is October 21 thru November 1. Please do your homework and VOTE!



No Compromise on Liberty

By **Senator Bob Hall (R-Rockwall)**, 9/27/19

The unwarranted attack on Texan's inalienable right to self-defense is intensifying. There is no question, Texans' GOD-GIVEN RIGHT to self-defense is under attack. The battle lines have been drawn and it is crystal clear that the socialist Democrat politicians on the left and those with a left-leaning heart have gun confiscation as their No. 1 target in Texas.

I know of no Republican who has or would campaign for gun confiscation in violation of our Second Amendment rights. We have looked but cannot find a single website or Facebook page where a Republican House or Senate member is advocating any new law aimed at increased gun control, much less gun confiscation. In fact, most Republicans indicate strong Second Amendment support.

However, there exists within the Capitol a strong push for "expanded background checks." This should be a real "red flag" (no pun intended) for gun owners. The natural erosion of our rights is inevitable once we start down the path of gun control. Gun confiscation in Germany, China, and European communist countries did not happen in one quick step; it happened over a period of time, one step at a time, with each small step moving closer and closer to the goal of gun confiscation.

Expanded background checks on firearm sales will result in a de facto government gun registration scheme. Currently, the information is collected by licensed arms dealers who are required to maintain the information, which means they are only one legislative session away from being required to report that information to the federal government. It is at that point, historically, that governments have begun to pass so-called "commonsense" laws to remove guns from the hands of so-called "dangerous" individuals. Unfortunately, the definition of "dangerous" is in the eye of the beholder, and political beliefs on one party's part can be interpreted as "dangerous" by a tyrannical government.

In Texas, Republicans control the government. However, our state can still start down the road to gun confiscation if well-meaning citizens and politicians forget history and think that, this time, so-called "commonsense" laws intended to keep guns out the hands of so-called "dangerous" individuals simply won't infringe on the right or ability for law-abiding citizens to defend themselves.

"The natural erosion of our rights is inevitable once we start down the path of gun control."

Nothing could be further from the truth. Republicans have long promised Texans we would protect their Second Amendment rights. We must pray that those promises are kept. Although I'm not on the ballot this time around, I will be supporting only those candidates who truly support the original intent of the Second Amendment. In fact, Texans would be well served to only support candidates who believe in and advocate for moving to the right by allowing all law-abiding citizens to have the ability to defend themselves, their families, and others in all circumstances.

The "line in the sand" for your right to self-defense has been drawn. Those who love LIBERTY will support ZERO COMPROMISE. There is no middle ground. Everyone will be on one or the other side of this issue.

Again, I state: "I know not on which side others will stand, but I promise you that I, and my family, will stand with liberty and fight for law-abiding citizens' GOD-GIVEN RIGHT to self-defense. I pray you will stand with me, so our children and grandchildren can enjoy the fruits of liberty our Founding Fathers intended."

Texan Joins National Eagle Forum Board

Glyn Wright McKay recently accepted the invitation of the Eagle Forum governing board to become one of its eleven members. Glyn lives in Arlington, Texas and is a Field Director for Club for Growth. She previously served as the Eagle Forum Executive Director in our Washington D.C. office. Glyn is a second-generation Eagle, crediting her passion for serving, defending, and preserving the American tradition to the influence of her grandmother, a member of Eagle Forum for over 30 years.

SOURCE: Eagle Forum Press Release, 9/12/19

Austin Sued Over Abortion Support Funding

Last month, the Austin City Council became the first city in the nation to give the abortion industry taxpayer dollars for providing “logistical assistance” (transportation, lodging, and, of all things, child care) to women seeking abortions in Austin. Now, the abortion industry is receiving some ironic justice. Don Zimmerman, an Austin resident and former Council member, is suing the City of Austin for abetting the abortion industry’s practice of killing preborn children. If Zimmerman’s lawsuit is successful, Austin would not have the legal authority to shovel \$150,000 dollars to pro-abortion organizations, like the council has planned in their new budget. This lawsuit is a welcome role reversal. Ordinarily, in Texas, the abortion industry initiates a legal challenge against almost any Pro-Life law enacted by the Texas Legislature. There are currently four pro-abortion lawsuits challenging Texas Pro-Life policies. In fact, one of these lawsuits—aptly termed the “Shotgun Lawsuit”—challenges nearly every Pro-Life Texas statute on the books. Now, rather than playing defense, the Pro-Life movement is proactively taking the fight directly to some of the abortion industry’s most exasperating and determined promoters: Austin City Council and Mayor Steve Adler.

SOURCE: Texas Right to Life, 9/12/19

Who Is Backing Climate Activist Greta Thunberg?

Teenager Greta Thunberg has become world-renowned because of her fight against climate change. It all started in 2018 when she began a school strike on her own, standing outside the Swedish parliament with different placards trying to shape opinion and get young people to join. The Swedish media quickly picked up her one-girl-mission against climate change and wrote several articles about her. Greta is the daughter of famous opera singer and left-liberal activist Marlena Ernman, who helped her daughter get started. Thunberg soon also got her own coach—a well-known climate activist from Germany, Luisa-Marie Neubauer. What is the likelihood of a young girl who starts a school strike outside the Swedish parliament getting schoolchildren from all over the world to join her cause? And how often do 16-year-olds have their own coaches? Neubauer belongs to the organization called “One Foundation,” backed by well-known wealthy financiers, including multi-billionaire oligarch George Soros, the father of the global, radical, and left-liberal lobby and activist network, “Open Society,” supporting thousands of NGOs.

SOURCE: www.freewestmedia.org, 4/24/19

Quote of the Month

“Any solution that aims to take away more guns from more people is counterproductive. Gun-control laws don’t reduce crime. They don’t keep criminals from committing evil, despicable acts. And they certainly haven’t kept us safe.”

~ Rachel Malone, Texas Director of Gun Owners of America, *The Texas Minute*, 9/6/19

Great American Quote

“This country has been through a lot of challenges and always risen resiliently to them. Whether it’s the civil rights movement, surviving through our Civil War or today’s challenges. Whatever they may be, I’ve got great confidence in America and I say to those who don’t: ‘Look elsewhere. Where else would you rather be?’”

~ Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch, in an interview with CNN, 9/10/19

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