

2019 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

PROPOSITION 1 - Neutral

How it reads: *"The constitutional amendment permitting a person to hold more than one office as a municipal judge at the same time."*

What it means: 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.

Why NEUTRAL?

Supporters Say: 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.

Opponents Say: 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.

PROPOSITION 2 - Oppose

How it reads: *"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."*

What it means: 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.

Why OPPOSE? State-subsidized debt serves as a disincentive to properly prioritizing spending and distorts market forces.

PROPOSITION 3 - Support

How it reads: *"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."*

What it means: 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.

Why SUPPORT? 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

How it reads: *"The constitutional amendment prohibiting the imposition of an individual income tax including a tax on an individual's share of partnership and unincorporated association income."*

What it means: 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.

Why SUPPORT? We support 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

How it reads: *“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.”*

What it means: Sales taxes on sporting goods will be dedicated to wildlife and nature preservation.

Why SUPPORT? 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

How it reads: *“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.”*

What it means: CPRIT will be authorized to spend additional taxpayer dollars.

Why OPPOSE? 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

How it reads: *“The constitutional amendment allowing increased distributions to the available school fund.”*

What it means: 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.

Why SUPPORT? 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

How it reads: *“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.”*

What it means: This amendment creates a permanent fund to help with flood mitigation infrastructure.

Why OPPOSE? State-subsidized debt serves as a disincentive to properly prioritizing spending and distorts market forces.

PROPOSITION 9 - Support

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

What it means: Precious metals stored in the state depository would not be subject to being taxed as income-producing business assets.

Why SUPPORT? Exemption from ad valorem taxes is always a good thing.

PROPOSITION 10 - Support

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

What it means: 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.

Why SUPPORT? 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.