Proposed Constitutional Amendments to be voted on November 8, 2016

Florida Department of State
Division of Elections

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Words <u>underlined</u> are additions; words ~~stricken~~ are deletions.

NO. 1
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT
ARTICLE X, SECTION 29
(INITIATIVE)

Ballot Title:
Rights of Electricity Consumers Regarding Solar Energy Choice

Ballot Summary:
This amendment establishes a right under Florida's constitution for consumers to own or lease solar equipment installed on their property to generate electricity for their own use. State and local governments shall retain their abilities to protect consumer rights and public health, safety and welfare, and to ensure that consumers who do not choose to install solar are not required to subsidize the costs of backup power and electric grid access to those who do.

Financial Impact Statement:
The amendment is not expected to result in an increase or decrease in any revenues or costs to state and local government.

Full Text:

ARTICLE X
Miscellaneous

Section 29 – Rights of electricity consumers regarding solar energy choice. –
(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT. Electricity consumers have the right to own or lease solar equipment installed on their property to generate electricity for their own use.
(b) RETENTION OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL ABILITIES. State and local governments shall retain their abilities to protect consumer rights and public health, safety and welfare, and to ensure that

consumers who do not choose to install solar are not required to subsidize the costs of backup power and electric grid access to those who do.

(c) DEFINITIONS. For purposes of this section, the following words and terms shall have the following meanings:

(1) "consumer" means any end user of electricity regardless of the source of that electricity.

(2) "solar equipment," "solar electrical generating equipment" and "solar" are used interchangeably and mean photovoltaic panels and any other device or system that converts sunlight into electricity.

(3) "backup power" means electricity from an electric utility, made available to solar electricity consumers for their use when their solar electricity generation is insufficient or unavailable, such as at night, during periods of low solar electricity generation or when their solar equipment otherwise is not functioning.

(4) "lease," when used in the context of a consumer paying the owner of solar electrical generating equipment for the right to use such equipment, means an agreement under which the consumer pays the equipment owner/lessor a stream of periodic payments for the use of such equipment, which payments do not vary in amount based on the amount of electricity produced by the equipment and used by the consumer/lessee.

(5) "electric grid" means the interconnected electrical network, consisting of power plants and other generating facilities, transformers, transmission lines, distribution lines and related facilities, that makes electricity available to consumers throughout Florida.

(6) "electric utility" means any municipal electric utility, investor-owned electric utility, or rural electric cooperative which owns, maintains, or operates an electric generation, transmission, or distribution system within the state.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE. This section shall be effective immediately upon voter approval of this amendment.

NO. 2
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT
ARTICLE X, SECTION 29
(INITIATIVE)

Ballot Title:
Use of Marijuana for Debilitating Medical Conditions

Ballot Summary:
Allows medical use of marijuana for individuals with debilitating medical conditions as determined by a licensed Florida physician. Allows caregivers to assist patients' medical use of marijuana. The Department of Health shall register and regulate centers that produce and distribute marijuana for medical purposes and shall issue identification cards to patients and caregivers. Applies only to Florida law. Does not immunize violations of federal law or any non-medical use, possession or production of marijuana.

Financial Impact Statement:
Increased costs from this amendment to state and local governments cannot be determined. There will be additional regulatory costs and enforcement activities associated with the production, sale, use and possession of medical marijuana. Fees may offset some of the regulatory costs. Sales tax will likely apply to most purchases, resulting in a substantial increase in state and local government revenues that cannot be determined precisely. The impact on property tax revenues cannot be determined.

Full Text:

ARTICLE X
Miscellaneous

SECTION 29.– Medical marijuana production, possession and use.

(a) PUBLIC POLICY.

(1) The medical use of marijuana by a qualifying patient or caregiver in compliance with this section is not subject to criminal or civil liability or sanctions under Florida law.

(2) A physician shall not be subject to criminal or civil liability or sanctions under Florida law solely for issuing a physician certification with reasonable care to a person diagnosed with a debilitating medical condition in compliance with this section.

(3) Actions and conduct by a Medical Marijuana Treatment Center registered with the Department, or its agents or employees, and in compliance with this section and Department regulations, shall not be subject to criminal or civil liability or sanctions under Florida law.

(b) DEFINITIONS. For purposes of this section, the following words and terms shall have the following meanings:

(1) "Debilitating Medical Condition" means cancer, epilepsy, glaucoma, positive status for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), Crohn's disease, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, or other debilitating medical conditions of the same kind or class as or comparable to those enumerated, and for which a physician believes that the medical use of marijuana would likely outweigh the potential health risks for a patient.

(2) "Department" means the Department of Health or its successor agency.

(3) "Identification card" means a document issued by the Department that identifies a qualifying patient or a caregiver.

(4) "Marijuana" has the meaning given cannabis in Section 893.02(3), Florida Statutes (2014), and, in addition, "Low-THC cannabis" as defined in Section 381.986(1)(b), Florida Statutes (2014), shall also be included in the meaning of the term "marijuana."

(5) "Medical Marijuana Treatment Center" (MMTC) means an entity that acquires, cultivates, possesses, processes (including development of related products such as food, tinctures, aerosols, oils, or ointments),

transfers, transports, sells, distributes, dispenses, or administers marijuana, products containing marijuana, related supplies, or educational materials to qualifying patients or their caregivers and is registered by the Department.

(6) "Medical use" means the acquisition, possession, use, delivery, transfer, or administration of an amount of marijuana not in conflict with Department rules, or of related supplies by a qualifying patient or caregiver for use by the caregiver's designated qualifying patient for the treatment of a debilitating medical condition.

(7) "Caregiver" means a person who is at least twenty-one (21) years old who has agreed to assist with a qualifying patient's medical use of marijuana and has qualified for and obtained a caregiver identification card issued by the Department. The Department may limit the number of qualifying patients a caregiver may assist at one time and the number of caregivers that a qualifying patient may have at one time. Caregivers are prohibited from consuming marijuana obtained for medical use by the qualifying patient.

(8) "Physician" means a person who is licensed to practice medicine in Florida.

(9) "Physician certification" means a written document signed by a physician, stating that in the physician's professional opinion, the patient suffers from a debilitating medical condition, that the medical use of marijuana would likely outweigh the potential health risks for the patient, and for how long the physician recommends the medical use of marijuana for the patient. A physician certification may only be provided after the physician has conducted a physical examination and a full assessment of the medical history of the patient. In order for a physician certification to be issued to a minor, a parent or legal guardian of the minor must consent in writing.

(10) "Qualifying patient" means a person who has been diagnosed to have a debilitating medical condition, who has a physician certification and a valid qualifying patient identification card. If the Department does not begin issuing identification cards within nine (9) months after

the effective date of this section, then a valid physician certification will serve as a patient identification card in order to allow a person to become a "qualifying patient" until the Department begins issuing identification cards.

(c) LIMITATIONS.

(1) Nothing in this section allows for a violation of any law other than for conduct in compliance with the provisions of this section.

(2) Nothing in this section shall affect or repeal laws relating to non-medical use, possession, production, or sale of marijuana.

(3) Nothing in this section authorizes the use of medical marijuana by anyone other than a qualifying patient.

(4) Nothing in this section shall permit the operation of any vehicle, aircraft, train or boat while under the influence of marijuana.

(5) Nothing in this section requires the violation of federal law or purports to give immunity under federal law.

(6) Nothing in this section shall require any accommodation of any on-site medical use of marijuana in any correctional institution or detention facility or place of education or employment, or of smoking medical marijuana in any public place.

(7) Nothing in this section shall require any health insurance provider or any government agency or authority to reimburse any person for expenses related to the medical use of marijuana.

(8) Nothing in this section shall affect or repeal laws relating to negligence or professional malpractice on the part of a qualified patient, caregiver, physician, MMTC, or its agents or employees.

(d) DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT. The Department shall issue reasonable regulations necessary for the implementation and enforcement of this section. The purpose of the regulations is to ensure the availability and safe use of medical marijuana by qualifying patients. It is the duty of the Department to promulgate regulations in a timely fashion.

(1) Implementing Regulations. In order to allow the Department sufficient time after passage of this section, the following regulations

shall be promulgated no later than six (6) months after the effective date of this section:

a. Procedures for the issuance and annual renewal of qualifying patient identification cards to people with physician certifications and standards for renewal of such identification cards. Before issuing an identification card to a minor, the Department must receive written consent from the minor's parent or legal guardian, in addition to the physician certification.

b. Procedures establishing qualifications and standards for caregivers, including conducting appropriate background checks, and procedures for the issuance and annual renewal of caregiver identification cards.

c. Procedures for the registration of MMTCs that include procedures for the issuance, renewal, suspension and revocation of registration, and standards to ensure proper security, record keeping, testing, labeling, inspection, and safety.

d. A regulation that defines the amount of marijuana that could reasonably be presumed to be an adequate supply for qualifying patients' medical use, based on the best available evidence. This presumption as to quantity may be overcome with evidence of a particular qualifying patient's appropriate medical use.

(2) Identification cards and registrations. The Department shall begin issuing qualifying patient and caregiver identification cards, and registering MMTCs no later than nine (9) months after the effective date of this section.

(3) If the Department does not issue regulations, or if the Department does not begin issuing identification cards and registering MMTCs within the time limits set in this section, any Florida citizen shall have standing to seek judicial relief to compel compliance with the Department's constitutional duties.

(4) The Department shall protect the confidentiality of all qualifying patients. All records containing the identity of qualifying patients shall be confidential and kept from public disclosure other than for valid medical or law enforcement purposes.

(e) LEGISLATION. Nothing in this section shall limit the legislature from enacting laws consistent with this section.

(f) SEVERABILITY. The provisions of this section are severable and if any clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this measure, or an application thereof, is adjudged invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction other provisions shall continue to be in effect to the fullest extent possible.

NO.3
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT
ARTICLE VII, SECTION 6
ARTICLE XII
(LEGISLATIVE)

Ballot Title:

Tax Exemption for Totally and Permanently Disabled First Responders

Ballot Summary:

Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution to authorize a first responder, who is totally and permanently disabled as a result of injuries sustained in the line of duty, to receive relief from ad valorem taxes assessed on homestead property, if authorized by general law. If approved by voters, the amendment takes effect January 1, 2017.

Full Text:

ARTICLE VII
FINANCE AND TAXATION

SECTION 6. Homestead exemptions.—
(a) Every person who has the legal or equitable title to real estate and maintains thereon the permanent residence of the owner, or another legally or naturally dependent upon the owner, shall be exempt from taxation thereon, except assessments for special benefits, up to the assessed valuation of twenty-five thousand dollars and, for all levies other than school district levies, on the assessed valuation greater than fifty thousand dollars and up to seventy-five thousand dollars, upon establishment of right thereto in the manner prescribed by law. The real estate may be held by legal or equitable title, by the entireties, jointly, in common, as a condominium, or indirectly by stock ownership or membership representing the owner's or member's proprietary interest in a corporation owning a fee or a leasehold initially in excess of ninety-eight years. The exemption shall not apply with respect to any

assessment roll until such roll is first determined to be in compliance with the provisions of section 4 by a state agency designated by general law. This exemption is repealed on the effective date of any amendment to this Article which provides for the assessment of homestead property at less than just value.

(b) Not more than one exemption shall be allowed any individual or family unit or with respect to any residential unit. No exemption shall exceed the value of the real estate assessable to the owner or, in case of ownership through stock or membership in a corporation, the value of the proportion which the interest in the corporation bears to the assessed value of the property.

(c) By general law and subject to conditions specified therein, the Legislature may provide to renters, who are permanent residents, ad valorem tax relief on all ad valorem tax levies. Such ad valorem tax relief shall be in the form and amount established by general law.

(d) The legislature may, by general law, allow counties or municipalities, for the purpose of their respective tax levies and subject to the provisions of general law, to grant either or both of the following additional homestead tax exemptions:

(1) An exemption not exceeding fifty thousand dollars to any person who has the legal or equitable title to real estate and maintains thereon the permanent residence of the owner and who has attained age sixty-five and whose household income, as defined by general law, does not exceed twenty thousand dollars; or

(2) An exemption equal to the assessed value of the property to any person who has the legal or equitable title to real estate with a just value less than two hundred and fifty thousand dollars and who has maintained thereon the permanent residence of the owner for not less than twenty-five years and who has attained age sixty-five and whose household income does not exceed the income limitation prescribed in paragraph (1).

The general law must allow counties and municipalities to grant these additional exemptions, within the limits prescribed in this subsection,

by ordinance adopted in the manner prescribed by general law, and must provide for the periodic adjustment of the income limitation prescribed in this subsection for changes in the cost of living.

(e) Each veteran who is age 65 or older who is partially or totally permanently disabled shall receive a discount from the amount of the ad valorem tax otherwise owed on homestead property the veteran owns and resides in if the disability was combat related and the veteran was honorably discharged upon separation from military service. The discount shall be in a percentage equal to the percentage of the veteran's permanent, service-connected disability as determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. To qualify for the discount granted by this subsection, an applicant must submit to the county property appraiser, by March 1, an official letter from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs stating the percentage of the veteran's service-connected disability and such evidence that reasonably identifies the disability as combat related and a copy of the veteran's honorable discharge. If the property appraiser denies the request for a discount, the appraiser must notify the applicant in writing of the reasons for the denial, and the veteran may reapply. The Legislature may, by general law, waive the annual application requirement in subsequent years. This subsection is self-executing and does not require implementing legislation.

(f) By general law and subject to conditions and limitations specified therein, the Legislature may provide ad valorem tax relief equal to the total amount or a portion of the ad valorem tax otherwise owed on homestead property to ~~the~~:

(1) The surviving spouse of a veteran who died from service-connected causes while on active duty as a member of the United States Armed Forces.

(2) The surviving spouse of a first responder who died in the line of duty.

(3) A first responder who is totally and permanently disabled as a result of an injury or injuries sustained in the line of duty. Causal connection

between a disability and service in the line of duty shall not be presumed but must be determined as provided by general law. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "disability" does not include a chronic condition or chronic disease, unless the injury sustained in the line of duty was the sole cause of the chronic condition or chronic disease.

As used in this subsection and as further defined by general law, the term~~:~~

~~a.~~ "first responder" means a law enforcement officer, a correctional officer, a firefighter, an emergency medical technician, or a paramedic, and the term~~:~~

~~b.~~ "in the line of duty" means arising out of and in the actual performance of duty required by employment as a first responder.

ARTICLE XII
SCHEDULE

Tax exemption for totally and permanently disabled first responders.—The amendment to Section 6 of Article VII relating to relief from ad valorem taxes assessed on homestead property for first responders, who are totally and permanently disabled as a result of injuries sustained in the line of duty, takes effect January 1, 2017.

Proposed constitutional amendment No. 4 appeared on the August 30, 2016 Primary Election Ballot

NO.5
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT
ARTICLE VII, SECTION 6
ARTICLE XII
(LEGISLATIVE)

Ballot Title:
Homestead Tax Exemption for Certain Senior, Low-Income, Long-Term Residents; Determination of Just Value

Ballot Summary:
Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution to revise the homestead tax exemption that may be granted by counties or municipalities for property with just value less than $250,000 owned by certain senior, low-income, long-term residents to specify that just value is determined in the first tax year the owner applies and is eligible for the exemption. The amendment takes effect January 1, 2017, and applies retroactively to exemptions granted before January 1, 2017.

Full Text:

ARTICLE VII
FINANCE AND TAXATION

SECTION 6. Homestead exemptions.—
(a) Every person who has the legal or equitable title to real estate and maintains thereon the permanent residence of the owner, or another legally or naturally dependent upon the owner, shall be exempt from taxation thereon, except assessments for special benefits, up to the assessed valuation of twenty-five thousand dollars and, for all levies other than school district levies, on the assessed valuation greater than fifty thousand dollars and up to seventy-five thousand dollars, upon establishment of right thereto in the manner prescribed by law. The real estate may be held by legal or equitable title, by the entireties, jointly, in common, as a condominium, or indirectly by stock ownership

or membership representing the owner's or member's proprietary interest in a corporation owning a fee or a leasehold initially in excess of ninety-eight years. The exemption shall not apply with respect to any assessment roll until such roll is first determined to be in compliance with the provisions of section 4 by a state agency designated by general law. This exemption is repealed on the effective date of any amendment to this Article which provides for the assessment of homestead property at less than just value.

(b) Not more than one exemption shall be allowed any individual or family unit or with respect to any residential unit. No exemption shall exceed the value of the real estate assessable to the owner or, in case of ownership through stock or membership in a corporation, the value of the proportion which the interest in the corporation bears to the assessed value of the property.

(c) By general law and subject to conditions specified therein, the Legislature may provide to renters, who are permanent residents, ad valorem tax relief on all ad valorem tax levies. Such ad valorem tax relief shall be in the form and amount established by general law.

(d) The legislature may, by general law, allow counties or municipalities, for the purpose of their respective tax levies and subject to the provisions of general law, to grant either or both of the following additional homestead tax exemptions:

(1) An exemption not exceeding fifty thousand dollars to a ~~any~~ person who has the legal or equitable title to real estate and maintains thereon the permanent residence of the owner, ~~and~~ who has attained age sixty-five, and whose household income, as defined by general law, does not exceed twenty thousand dollars; or

(2) An exemption equal to the assessed value of the property to a ~~any~~ person who has the legal or equitable title to real estate with a just value less than two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, as determined in the first tax year that the owner applies and is eligible for the exemption, and who has maintained thereon the permanent residence of the owner for not less than twenty-five years, ~~and~~ who has attained

age sixty-five, and whose household income does not exceed the income limitation prescribed in paragraph (1).
The general law must allow counties and municipalities to grant these additional exemptions, within the limits prescribed in this subsection, by ordinance adopted in the manner prescribed by general law, and must provide for the periodic adjustment of the income limitation prescribed in this subsection for changes in the cost of living.
(e) Each veteran who is age 65 or older who is partially or totally permanently disabled shall receive a discount from the amount of the ad valorem tax otherwise owed on homestead property the veteran owns and resides in if the disability was combat related and the veteran was honorably discharged upon separation from military service. The discount shall be in a percentage equal to the percentage of the veteran's permanent, service-connected disability as determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. To qualify for the discount granted by this subsection, an applicant must submit to the county property appraiser, by March 1, an official letter from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs stating the percentage of the veteran's service-connected disability and such evidence that reasonably identifies the disability as combat related and a copy of the veteran's honorable discharge. If the property appraiser denies the request for a discount, the appraiser must notify the applicant in writing of the reasons for the denial, and the veteran may reapply. The Legislature may, by general law, waive the annual application requirement in subsequent years. This subsection is self-executing and does not require implementing legislation.
(f) By general law and subject to conditions and limitations specified therein, the Legislature may provide ad valorem tax relief equal to the total amount or a portion of the ad valorem tax otherwise owed on homestead property to the:
(1) Surviving spouse of a veteran who died from service-connected causes while on active duty as a member of the United States Armed Forces.

(2) Surviving spouse of a first responder who died in the line of duty.
(3) As used in this subsection and as further defined by general law, the term:
a. "First responder" means a law enforcement officer, a correctional officer, a firefighter, an emergency medical technician, or a paramedic.
b. "In the line of duty" means arising out of and in the actual performance of duty required by employment as a first responder.

ARTICLE XII
SCHEDULE

Additional ad valorem exemption for persons age sixty-five or older.—This section and the amendment to Section 6 of Article VII revising the just value determination for the additional ad valorem tax exemption for persons age sixty-five or older shall take effect January 1, 2017, following approval by the electors, and shall operate retroactively to January 1, 2013, for any person who received the exemption under paragraph (2) of Section 6(d) of Article VII before January 1, 2017.

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