



GALT MILE NEWS

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GMCA
NOVEMBER 2018

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SIMPLIFYING THE CONSTITUTIONAL CLUTTER

self-educate: READ the comprehensive list of proposed Constitutional Amendments—page 4

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CONSTITUTIONAL CLUTTER: Log Rolling and Ballot Junk

By: Eric Berkowitz

Courts on Garbage Watch

Given the political fireworks launched during elections, most voters would rather flip a coin than self-educate about Ballot questions or proposed Constitutional Amendments. As a result, unscrupulous politicians and industrial juggernauts religiously use them as vehicles for realizing outrageous measures that would otherwise wither under marginal scrutiny.

Of the five methodologies available to amend the Florida Constitution, citizen initiative petitions and legislative Joint Resolutions (SJR, HJR) are the most common. When stonewalled by lawmakers in the majority party (who control the legislative spigot), citizens or business interests can place an amendment on the ballot by collecting petition signatures equal in number to 8% of the votes cast in the last Presidential election and sourced from at least one-half of the State's Congressional Districts.

To place a proposed Constitutional Amendment on the November 6, 2018 Ballot, a Citizen's initiative had to petition the signatures of 766,200 registered Florida voters by the February 1, 2018 filing deadline. In contrast with the rigorous eligibility burden mandated for citizens, for lawmakers in the majority party, bagging the 60% approval in both chambers required for a joint resolution is often easier than breathing.

Constitutional amendments can be proposed by the Taxation and Budget Reform Commission, a panel of 25 members selected by the Governor, the House Speaker and Senate President that meets every 20 years (next time in 2027) - and only provides for two members of the minority party. The fourth vehicle is a Constitutional Convention, which must be requested in a voter initiative and approved by a simple majority. Lastly - and this tear's headliner - amendments can be balloted by the Florida Constitution Revision Commission (CRC), which is established every 20 years to consider and propose amendments (met in 2017 - 2018); its 37 members are mostly selected by the Governor, the House Speaker, the Senate President, and include the Florida Attorney General - although three others are selected by the Florida Supreme Court.

Overwhelmingly predominated by the majority party, the CRC invariably furthers a partisan agenda. Unlike other ballot proposal vehicles, the CRC is allowed by law to bundle more than one issue into each question, a practice known as "logrolling". This format has devolved into a cliché - as it has been systematically used to cloak a nefarious objective. Usually, a series of inane and/or "apple pie" measures serve as window dressing for a surreptitious power grab, a special interest payoff - a back-door proposal that would ordinarily go down in flames.

Although thirteen (13) Proposed Amendments were initially certified for the ballot (eight proposed by the CRC, three by the Florida Legislature and two by citizen initiative), one of them - Amendment 8 - was scratched by the Florida Supreme Court. Amendment 8 would have mandated term limits of eight years for all Florida school boards; required schools to teach "civic literacy" and allowed the state to create public schools, something only local school boards currently can do. In addition to supplanting locally elected school boards with Tallahassee bureaucrats - it would provide for funding private Charter Schools with your tax dollars. Upholding a lower court decision, the high court ruled that Amendment 8 misled voters by not clearly stating its true purpose and never mentioning charter schools by name.

Three other CRC measures - Amendments 7, 9 and 11 - were also struck down by court rulings and removed from the ballot, but may reappear pending appeals. Potentially, twelve (12) Constitutional Amendments (nine (9) surviving ballot measures and three (3) under appeal) could appear on the November 6, 2018 general election ballot. Keep in mind - many of them camouflage constitutional hop-toads couched in misleading Ballot language. Several were created for the sole purpose of abridging your rights or draining your wallet. When voters are scammed by tricky ballot language, abusive measures repeatedly rejected by lawmakers will wind up in the Florida Constitution, so read on:

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #1

Ballot Title: Increased Homestead Property Tax Exemption

Reference: Amendment #1 would amend Section 6(a) of Article VII and add a section to the Florida Constitution's Article XII Schedule; Referred by the Florida Legislature.

Official Ballot Summary: Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution to increase the homestead exemption by exempting the assessed valuation of homestead property greater than \$100,000 and up to \$125,000 for all levies other than school district levies. The amendment shall take effect January 1, 2019

What you need to know:

Ballot Amendment 1 creates a third \$25,000 Homestead exemption, although inapplicable to the School Board levy. As of 2018, Section 6(a) of Article VII of the Florida Constitution allows for a \$25,000 Homestead exemption on the portion of home's value between \$0 and \$25,000, and another \$25,000 on the portion of home's value between \$50,000 and \$75,000 - a \$50,000 total deduction for homes valued at more than \$75,000.

If approved by the electorate, beginning January 1, 2019, a third \$25,000 homestead exemption could be claimed on that portion of a home's value between \$100,000 and \$125,000. This measure is controversial. Although it would only benefit roughly 2.4 million homesteaded Floridians with properties worth more than \$125,000, it will cost local jurisdictions more than \$687 million in lost revenues, leaving a huge gap in local government budgets.

Although originally filed by Senator Tom Lee as Senate Joint Resolution 1774 (SJR 1774) on March 7, 2017, its companion bill in the other chamber, House Joint Resolution 7105 (HJR 7105) was ultimately approved and filed with Secretary of State on May 5, 2017. The resolutions encountered blowback in the Senate and party-line votes in the House due to its adverse impact on local governments. A political force of nature, House Speaker Richard Corcoran has repeatedly characterized local governments as inefficient, corrupt and wasteful; and has supported a litany of bills that pre-empted local regulations to the Legislature. He announced that Amendment 1 was specifically designed to starve Counties and Cities. Corcoran helped leverage the necessary Statehouse votes.

Unfortunately, this election year popcorn is a mixed bag for the Galt Mile. To prevent threatened service cuts, cities and counties will offset the resulting revenue shortfall by shifting the assessment burden to small business owners, manufacturers, working families and non-homesteaded property owners - which includes thousands of Galt Mile snowbirds. Anticipating the amendment's approval, Broward County is adding \$11 million annually to reserves for 3 years to fund the projected \$34 million shortfall in FY 20. What happens in subsequent years will depend on the economy.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #2

Ballot Title: Limitations on Property Tax Assessments
Reference: Amendment #2 would amend Section 27 of Article XII of the Florida Constitution; Referred by the Florida Legislature and primarily supported by Amendment 2 is for Everybody - a lobbying puppet of the powerful Florida Association of Realtors.

Official Ballot Summary: Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution to permanently retain provisions currently in effect, which limit property tax assessment increases on specified non-homestead real property, except for school district taxes, to 10 percent each year. If approved, the amendment removes the scheduled repeal of such provisions in 2019 and shall take effect January 1, 2019.

What you need to know:

On January 23, 2017, the amendment was filed in the state legislature as House Joint Resolution 21 (HJR 21). Unanimously approved in the House and snagging all but 3 votes in the Senate, on May 8, 2017, the resolution was enrolled with the secretary of state.

In 2008, voters approved Amendment 1, a constitutional amendment that, among other provisions, created a cap of 10 percent on annual non-homestead parcel assessment increases. Other provisions in that landmark amendment - a second \$25,000 Homestead Exemption, a \$25,000 exemption for tangible personal property and Save-Our-Homes portability - were all permanent. The "snowbird cap" expires on January 1, 2019. Although conceived as a hedge against a housing bubble, snowbirds, landlords and business owners were finally provided a cap on their tax exposure. In limiting the property tax on rental properties, the cap increases the availability of affordable housing by cushioning leasing costs for tenants. It also slows inflation by lowering merchant overhead, provides relief to millions of Florida snowbirds and brings a measure of parity to a poorly balanced tax code. Since it doesn't apply to the School Board assessment, educational resources are preserved.

Seven weeks before the measure sunsets, Florida voters will have an opportunity to make the cap permanent. If Amendment 2 fails, all non-homestead property would be assessed at its full value beginning in January 2019. Referring to an in-house study that assesses the economic impact, executive vice president and counsel Robert Weissert at Florida TaxWatch explained, "the combined tax increase could potentially reach \$700 million annually." Amendment 2 enjoys broad statewide support. The only known objection is a protocol shortfall by the League of Women Voters, whose basic policy asserts that "No tax sources or revenue should be specified, limited, exempted, or prohibited in the Constitution." This is a no brainer - vote "YES".

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #3

Ballot Title: Voter Control of Gambling in Florida
Reference: Amendment #3 would add a Section 29 to Article X of the Florida Constitution; Sponsored primarily by Voters in Charge; Citizen Initiative.

Official Ballot Summary: This amendment ensures that Florida voters shall have the exclusive right to decide whether to authorize casino gambling by requiring that in order for casino gambling to be authorized under Florida law, it must be approved by Florida voters pursuant to Article XI, Section 3 of the Florida Constitution. Affects articles X and XI. Defines casino gambling and clarifies that this amendment does not conflict with federal law regarding state/tribal compacts.

What you need to know:

In 2004, voters passed an initiative, Amendment 4, to

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allow voters in Miami-Dade and Broward counties to authorize slot machines at parimutuel facilities, such as horse racing, greyhound racing, and jai alai exhibitions, that existed and were licensed during the prior two years. The Seminole Tribe of Florida, through the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), negotiated a Class III gaming compact with Republican Gov. Charlie Crist on July 7, 2010, allowing the Seminole Tribe to operate blackjack at five facilities through 2015, sharing revenue with the state. In 2015, Gov. Rick Scott (R) extended the compact with the Seminole Tribe for 20 years, adding craps and roulette to the agreement and providing the tribe with an exclusive right to blackjack. Except in Broward and Miami-Dade Counties, card games, casino games, and slot machines are currently prohibited at non-tribal facilities in Florida.

Approval of Amendment 3 would provide voters with the "exclusive right to decide whether to authorize casino gambling in the State of Florida," and make the citizen initiative process "the exclusive method of authorizing casino gambling."

Continued on page 6

The Florida State Legislature would be prohibited from authorizing casino gambling through statute or a constitutional amendment referred to the ballot. The measure would affect card games, casino games, and slot machines while omitting pari-mutuel wagering on horse racing, dog racing, or jai alai exhibitions. The amendment doesn't impact casino gambling on Native American tribal lands established through state-tribe compacts.

Compared to crafting an empowering statute or a legislative ballot referral, achieving consent by citizen initiative is significantly more difficult. A two-signature threshold must first be met for ballot position. In addition to a statewide acquisition of signatures equal to 8 percent of the votes cast in the preceding presidential election, to comply with a constitutional distribution requirement, the signature totals in at least half (14) of Florida's 27 Congressional Districts must also be equal to 8 percent of the district-wide vote in the last presidential election. Districts seeking to increase entertainment revenues by embracing casino gambling would be forced to rely on the approval of neighboring districts with competing alternative entertainment venues.

The handiwork of two corporate goliaths, this measure was designed to block the growth of Florida gaming - and each of the amendment's supporters have endorsed this objective. Amendment sponsor "Voters in Charge" is the lobbying spawn of the Walt Disney Company and the Seminole Tribe of Florida. 97% of the \$27.27 million amassed by "Voters in Charge" was pumped in by Disney Worldwide Services, Inc. (\$14.65 million) and the Seminole Tribe of Florida (\$11.78 million), whose shared objective is to preempt competition. Disney aspires to legally restrict Floridians and visitors to "wholesome family-friendly entertainment". As exclaimed by incoming Senate President Bill Galvano, Amendment 3 virtually locks up a gambling monopoly for the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

Whether you support or oppose casino gambling, rest assured that Amendment 3 is not a grand exercise in Democracy, but a surreptitious vehicle for quashing competition. As such, if you think the gaming industry can boost the state economy, vote no. Conversely, if you believe that gambling is the devil's playground, vote yes.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #4

Ballot Title: Voting Restoration Amendment

Reference: Amendment #4 would amend Section 4 of Article VI of the Florida Constitution; Sponsored primarily by Floridians for a Fair Democracy, Inc; Citizen Initiative.

Official Ballot Summary: This amendment restores the voting rights of Floridians with felony convictions after they complete all terms of their sentence including parole or probation. The amendment would not apply to those convicted of murder or sexual offenses, who would continue to be permanently barred from voting unless the Governor and Cabinet vote to restore their voting rights on a case by case basis.

What You Need to Know:

As of 2018, Florida is one of four states - along with Iowa, Kentucky, and Virginia - where convicted felons do not regain the right to vote, until and unless a state officer or board restores an individual's voting rights. This felon voting law was part of the Florida Constitution of 1968 - the state constitution active in 2018 - as well as the state constitutions of 1885 and 1868 - a vestige of Florida's post-Civil War concerns. Of the 50 states, two states - Maine and Vermont - do not rescind the right to vote for convicted felons, allowing them to vote while incarcerated; 14 states and Washington, D.C., restore voting rights upon completion of a prison sentence; four states restore voting rights upon completion of prison and parole time; 19 states restore the right to vote after prison time, parole, and probation are completed; and seven states have systems where certain felons, based on the type or number of crimes committed, regain the right to vote.

Amendment 4 was designed to restore voting rights for convicted felons, except those convicted of murder or a felony sexual offense, upon the completion of all terms of sentence, including prison, parole, and probation. Under former Florida Governor Charlie Crist, the Executive Clemency Board automatically restored the rights of

felons who had completed their sentences, paid restitution, and had no pending criminal charges. Eliminating those reforms, Governor Rick Scott (R) required convicted felons to wait five or seven years, depending on the type of offense, after the completion of their sentences to request that the board consider the restoration of their voting and other civil rights.

In Florida, an estimated 1,686,318 persons - 10.43 percent of the voting age population - are barred from voting due to felonies (the nation's highest disenfranchisement rate). Between 2012 and 2016 the Florida Department of Law Enforcement reported 6,759 felony convictions for driving with a suspended license. Rep. Charlie Crist (D-Fla) asked if someone who has paid his debt to society for driving with a suspended license should lose his right to vote for the rest of his life? Vote your conscience.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #5

Ballot Title: Supermajority Vote Required to Impose, Authorize, or Raise State Taxes or Fees

Reference: Amendment #5 would add a Section 19 to Article VII of the Florida Constitution; Referred by the Florida Legislature.

Official Ballot Summary: Prohibits the legislature from imposing, authorizing, or raising a state tax or fee except through legislation approved by a two-thirds vote of each house of the legislature in a bill containing no other subject. This proposal does not authorize a state tax or fee otherwise prohibited by the Constitution and does not apply to fees or taxes imposed or authorized to be imposed by a county, municipality, school board, or special district.

What You Need to Know:

On January 9, 2018, Republican Gov. Rick Scott, in his last State of the State address, called on the state legislature to pass a constitutional amendment requiring a two-thirds vote to increase taxes. The legislature passed House Joint Resolution 7001 (HJR 7001), which was enrolled as Amendment 5 and filed with Secretary of State on Friday, March 16, 2018.

Amendment 5 would require a two-thirds vote of each chamber of the Florida State Legislature to enact new taxes or fees or increase existing ones. As of 2018, the state legislature can enact new taxes or fees or increase existing ones, except the corporate income tax, through a simple majority vote in each chamber. Voters approved the amendment for the corporate income tax, with a three-fifths vote requirement to increase the tax above 5.0 percent, in 1971. Supported by Florida TaxWatch and opposed by the League of Women Voters of Florida, the measure would preclude a party-line vote to raise taxes or fees, unless a single party controlled 27 seats in the state Senate and 80 seats in the State-house.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #6

Ballot Title: Rights of Crime Victims; Judges

Reference: Amendment #6 would amend Section 16 of Article I and Sections 8 and 21 of Article V of the Florida Constitution and add a new section to Article XII of the state constitution; Referred as a Proposal by the Florida Constitution Revision Commission (CRC).

Official Ballot Summary: Creates constitutional rights for victims of crime; requires courts to facilitate victims' rights; authorizes victims to enforce their rights throughout criminal and juvenile justice processes. Requires judges and hearing officers to independently interpret statutes and rules rather than deferring to government agency's interpretation. Raises mandatory retirement age of state justices and judges from seventy to seventy-five years; deletes authorization to complete judicial term if one-half of term has been served by retirement age

What You Need to Know:

Amendment 6 would make changes to the state's law regarding the rights of crime victims, the age at which judges are required to retire, and judicial deference. The constitutional amendment regarding the rights of crime victims - known as Marsy's Law - would provide crime victims, their families, and their lawful representatives with specific rights, including a right to due process and to be treated with fairness and respect; a right to be free from intimidation, harassment, and abuse; a right to have the victim's welfare considered when setting bail; a right to proceedings free from unreasonable delay, among others.

EDITOR'S COMMENTARY

Chip LaMarca's SEPT 2018 Newsletter

By Eric Berkowitz

**In his September 2018 LaMarca Letter, District 4 Broward Commissioner Chip LaMarca describes recent improvements to the Broward County Convention Center Expansion and Headquarters Hotel project, reviewing design upgrades that include a 75% increase in exhibit areas, a 127% ballroom expansion and 143% more meeting space. LaMarca details the meteoric traffic growth at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport; cites Port Everglades for securing FEMA grants to enhance security infrastructure; recruits constituents to locally document King Tides flooding; and applauds the record number of pet adoptions at the Animal Care and Adoption Center during the August 18th "Clear the Shelter" event.*

Foraging FEMA Port Security Funds

As appropriated by the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2018 and authorized by Section 102 of the Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002, in FY 2018, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) set aside \$100,000,000 to promote sustainable, risk-based efforts to protect critical port infrastructure from attack. The FY 2018 Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) supports the building, sustainment, and delivery of core capabilities essential to achieving the National Preparedness Goal of a secure and resilient Nation.

In providing resources to actualize area and facility security plans by port authorities, facility operators, and state and local government agencies managing port security services, the FY 2018 PSGP competitively awards grant funding to support increased port-wide risk management; enhance domain awareness; conduct training and exercises; expand port recovery and resiliency options; further capabilities to prevent, detect, respond to, and recover from attacks. To comply with a cost-match program requirement, PSGP award recipients must provide a non-federal match (cash or in-kind) for at least 25 percent of the total project cost.

Field-level reviews conducted by the respective U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port (COTP) are scored and prioritized by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and submitted for a national level review. Following a detailed administrative/financial review by subject-matter experts from DHS and other Federal partners, surviving projects for each port area are ranked by a risk-based algorithm. FEMA then rubber-stamps the computer-prioritized project lists and submits them to Secretary Kirstjen M. Nielsen of Homeland Security for final approval.

*Evidently, Port Everglades IT Gurus are becoming increasingly proficient in piercing the FEMA ranking algorithm. In 2017, the Port only racked up a \$646,121 PSGP grant to the Broward Sheriff's Office for Port security. In 2018, the FEMA data processor spit out \$2,252,420 in two allocations for Port Everglades, \$950,967 to the Broward Sheriff's Office to enhance in-port firefighting response capabilities and \$1,301,453 directly to the Port. Every dollar is an offset to Port funds dedicated to the Master Plan upgrades for berthing and offloading Post-Panamax shipping – the key to the Port's competitive success. Read Commissioner Chip LaMarca's September Newsletter elsewhere in this edition. – [editor]**



Chip LaMarca's

SEPTEMBER 2018 Newsletter

Dear Broward County Residents,

I am honored to serve as your County Commissioner representing our coastal communities from Deerfield Beach to Fort Lauderdale and all of the amazing cities, towns and villages in between. Here are some recent highlights from around Broward County:

Convention Center Expansion and Headquarters Hotel Update

The Board of County Commissioners recently took another major step toward moving forward with the Broward County Convention Center Expansion and Headquarters Hotel project. At the August 14th County Commission meeting, the Direct Procurement Authority, composed of the Board of County Commissioners, approved an update on the design of the project. The updated design includes three key components: exhibition space, ballroom space and meeting space. With this update, 150,000 sq. ft of exhibit space will be added that will bring the total exhibit space to 350,000 sq. ft. The new update also adds a 67,000 sq. ft ballroom, bringing the total ballroom space to 119,661 sq. ft. And, the addition of 50,000 sq. ft of meeting space increases the total meeting space to 85,000 sq. ft. The updated design provides for the perfect balance between exhibit, meeting and ballroom space which will enhance the Convention Center's ability to attract more business that will provide a boost to our local economy.

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Broadcom Corporation co-founder Henry Nicholas started campaigning for this kind of legislation to increase the rights and privileges of victims. He formed the national organization Marsey's Law for All in 2009. Marsey's law is named for Henry Nicholas' sister Marsey Nicholas, a California college student who was murdered by her ex-boyfriend in 1983. Henry and his mother were confronted by Marsey's ex-boyfriend after his release on bail - prompting their advocacy on behalf of victim's rights. Voters in six states approved ballot measures for Marsey's Law, with the most recent in Ohio. Voters in neighboring Georgia will also consider an amendment for a Marsey's Law in 2018.

Amendment 6 would increase the age at which judges are required to retire from 70 to 75 and prohibit state courts from deferring to an administrative agency's interpretation of a state statute or rule in lawsuits. The Florida Constitution Revision Commission (CRC) voted 34 - 3 to place Amendment 6, which is composed of three constitutional amendment proposals, on the ballot. As Amendment 6 bundles three constitutional amendments, voters cannot approve or reject some, but not all, of the amendments. Voting "yes" on the ballot measure is a vote to pass the three constitutional amendments. Voting "no" on the ballot measure is a vote to reject the three constitutional amendments. Again - vote you conscience.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #10

Ballot Title: State and Local Government Structure and Operation
Reference: Amendment #10 would amend to Section 3 of Article III, Sections 4 and 11 of Article IV and Sections 1 and 6 of Article VIII of the Florida Constitution; Referred as a Proposal by the Florida Constitution Revision Commission (CRC).

Official Ballot Summary: Requires legislature to retain department of veterans' affairs. Ensures election of sheriffs, property appraisers, supervisors of elections, tax collectors, and clerks of court in all counties; removes county charters' ability to abolish, change term, transfer duties, or eliminate election of these offices. Changes annual legislative session commencement date in even-numbered years from March to January; removes legislature's authorization to fix another date. Creates office of domestic security and counterterrorism within department of law enforcement.

What You Need to Know:

The Florida Constitution Revision Commission (CRC) voted 29 - 8 to bundle four constitutional amendments into Amendment 10, which was placed on the November 2018 ballot. Proposal 9, Proposal 13, Proposal 26, and Proposal 103 were combined to create Proposal 6005, which formed the basis of this ballot measure. Amendment 10 requires the legislature to provide for a state Department of Veterans Affairs. In 1988, voters approved constitutional authorization to create a Department of Veterans Affairs, which was shortly thereafter established by the state legislature. In Amendment 10, creation of a Department of Veterans Affairs is required, not simply authorized. Since that Department is now almost 30-years old, this is essentially a housekeeping change with no practical benefit.

The skunk in Amendment 10 is a provision (CRC Proposal 13) that prohibits counties from abolishing certain local offices - sheriff, tax collector, property appraiser, supervisor of elections, and clerk of the circuit court - and requires elections for these offices. In Florida, counties with voter-approved charters are allowed to alter the duties managed in local constitutional offices or reassign those duties and abolish the offices. Of the state's twenty charter-governed counties, eight have either changed or eliminated at least one constitutional office. For example, in Miami-Dade, a sheriff is not elected but appointed by the County board while Volusia and Broward counties neither need nor elect tax collectors.

In 1974, Broward County voters abolished their elected tax collector position and transferred many of the duties from the clerk of courts to the County administrator and the Department of Finance and Administrative Services. An independently selected county auditor was also created. With the approval of Tallahassee, the changes enhanced the efficient delivery of these services while saving \$millions for County taxpayers. If this amendment passes, the offices would have to be restored, along with an increased taxpayer burden. Since the amendment would take effect in Miami-

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Dade and Broward counties on January 2, 2025, both counties would have to fund elections for the reconstituted offices in 2024. Cities and counties across the state oppose this provision for undermining the right of residents to local self-governance.

The amendment also creates a state Office of Domestic Security and Counter-Terrorism and requires the legislature to convene the regular legislative session on the second Tuesday of January of even-numbered years. As Amendment 10 includes four divergent constitutional amendments, the electorate isn't afforded an opportunity to approve those that make sense, and reject the bear traps. Voters must vote yes or no on the entire package. Since the housekeeping measure for the Department of Veterans Affairs has no impact, and lawmakers can easily create the Office of Domestic Security and Counter-Terrorism and change the start date of any legislative session, the remaining issue in this logrolled amendment begs the question – should your county answer to you - or Tallahassee?

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #12

Ballot Title: Lobbying and Abuse of Office by Public Officers
Reference: Amendment #12 would amend Section 8 of Article II, Section 13 of Article V and add a new section to Article XII of the Florida Constitution; Referred as a Proposal by the Florida Constitution Revision Commission (CRC).

Official Ballot Summary: Expands current restrictions on lobbying for compensation by former public officers; creates restrictions on lobbying for compensation by serving public officers and former justices and judges; provides exceptions; prohibits abuse of a public position by public officers and employees to obtain a personal benefit.

What You Need to Know:

Amendment 12 would make sweeping changes to the state Constitution's "ethics in government" provisions, following a failed attempt by the Legislature in 2018 to reform lobbying practices. It would prohibit a public official from lobbying for compensation during the official's term in office and for six years after the official leaves office. Under the current ethics rules, state lawmakers need only wait two years after leaving office before they can begin collecting a check for peddling influence in the legislature. This proposed amendment would expand the prohibition to lobbying federal and local governments, and would also apply to statewide officeholders, such as Cabinet members.

Originally approved by the CRC as Proposal 6007, Amendment 12 also applies to County and City officials, Department heads in Executive State agencies and tax district officials - who are also banned from lobbying their governing bodies while in office and for six years after they leave. Judges are banned from lobbying state government for six years after they leave the bench. Additionally, it prohibits public officials from using the office to obtain a disproportionate benefit for themselves or their families. It tasks the Florida Commission on Ethics with defining "disproportionate benefit" and codifying punishment. Although it fails to address the real problem with lobbying - the funding of political campaigns by special interests - Amendment 12 is a step in the right direction.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #13

Ballot Title: Ends Dog Racing
Reference: Amendment #13 would add a new section to Article X and a new section to Article XII of the Florida Constitution; Referred as a Proposal by the Florida Constitution Revision Commission (CRC).

Official Ballot Summary: Phases out commercial dog racing in connection with wagering by 2020. Other gaming activities are not affected.

What You Need to Know:

Initially filed as Proposal 67 by sponsor Tom Lee, it was revised by the CRC as Proposal 6012, and added to the November 2018 ballot as Amendment 13. As of 2018, Florida was one

Continued on page 17

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Broward County's Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport (FLL) continues to show strong growth as we maintain our lead as one of the fastest-growing airports in the United States. June passenger traffic was up by 12.5 percent from the previous year. Domestic traffic was up 8.7 percent and international traffic was up 26.3 percent. FLL is on track to reach 36 million total passengers by the end of the year. July traffic was up 7.6 percent, to 3.16 million. Nine out of FLL's top 10 Carriers experienced year-to-date growth. Additionally, Airports Council International ranked FLL first in growth for the year ending June 2018, 9th in total international traffic and 18th in total passenger traffic.

FLL is also seeing several new services and new markets. In June, JetBlue added new service to Santiago, Dominican Republic and announced service to Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands in October, and seasonal service to Steamboat Springs, Colorado in December. In July, Southwest started new service to San Antonio, Texas. Spirit announced new service to Asheville and Greensboro, North Carolina in September. Allegiant announced new service to Flint, Michigan starting in October. Two new international destinations for FLL have also been added, Norwegian announced new service to Madrid, Spain and Rome, Italy. Additionally, Canada's ultra-low-cost carrier Swoop will begin seasonal service to Hamilton, Ontario in October. For more information, please visit Broward.org/airport.

Broward's Port Everglades Receives Security Grant Funding

In June, Celebrity Cruises released renderings of Port Everglades Cruise Terminal 25. This \$120 million-plus renovation is progressing toward a substantial completion in late October. The new facility will open in November for the inaugural sailing of the Celebrity Edge.

In other Port related news, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency recently announced the FY 2018 Port Security Grant Program awards and Broward County's Port Everglades will receive more than \$2.25 million in U.S. port security grants. These funds will be used to advance firefighting capabilities and enhance the seaport's security infrastructure. For more information, please visit PortEverglades.net.

King Tides

Low lying areas in Broward County are extremely vulnerable to higher than average tides this time of year. Flooding in low-lying areas is more likely with the close proximity of the moon. Higher than average tides called King Tides, rising sea levels, and inclement weather conditions combine to intensify flooding risks. These often occur during the fall (August-November) with the peak usually occurring, the King Tide (Highest tide of year), in October.

Broward County is calling all citizen scientists interested in helping document tidal flooding in our community. If you or a group want to "adopt" a site to monitor and report, please email Resilience@Broward.org. For additional information please visit Broward.org/Waterresources.

Animal Care Breaks Record

August 18th. The fourth annual event helped set a new record for our Animal Care and Adoption Center, with more than 100 adoptions on that day and more than 1,000 residents visiting the shelter! Congratulations to the Animal Care and Adoption Center staff for getting us closer to our "no-kill" goal!

The Resident's Guide to Government provides a convenient resource to help people stay connected to their local government. It includes contact information for County officials and Federal, State and local agencies. Visitors can subscribe to eNews and social media sites. Please sign up at Broward.org/District4 to receive email updates from our office. If there is anything that we can do to assist you with your vision for a better Broward, please do not hesitate to contact our office at 954-357-7004 or by email at clamarca@broward.org.

As always, it is my honor and privilege to serve you.
Best regards

Chip

County Commissioner
District 4



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NOVEMBER/DEC

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

<p>4</p> <p>Daylight Saving Time ends</p> <p>SunTrust Sunday Jazz Brunch Riverwalk 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-396-3622</p>	<p>5 GMCA Presidents Council Meeting Playa del Sol Condominium 7:30 to 9 p.m.</p> <p>Commissioner Heather Moraitis: Beach Community Center, 6 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5033</p>	<p>6</p> <p>BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268</p> <p>Election Day-VOTE!!!!!!!</p> <p>Fort Lauderdale City Commission Meeting City Hall, 6 p.m.</p>	<p>7</p> <p>BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063</p> <p>Opera at the Museum NSU Art Museum Tea & Opera: Love In Paris 2:45 to 3:30 p.m. Info.: http://nsuartmuseum.org</p>
<p>11 Grace Jamaican Jerk Festival Markham Park Noon to 9 p.m. Info.: 786-361-1103</p> <p>Veteran's Day</p> <p>13.1 Half Marathon & Life Time 5K South Beach Park at Las Olas & A1A (1100 Seabreeze Blvd.) 6:15 a.m.: Half marathon; 7 a.m.: 5K Info.: www.131fortlauderdale.com/contact/</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p>BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268</p>	<p>14</p> <p>BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063</p> <p>Thanksgiving Feast at the Beach Beach Community Center 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-828-4610</p>
<p>18 Flanigan's Rockin' Rib Run 10K Vista View Park, Davie 7 a.m. Info.: 954-474-4074</p> <p>Miami International Piano Festival presents: Francesco Libetta Aventura Center, 5 p.m. Info.: ticketmaster.com</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Commissioner Heather Moraitis: Beach Community Center, 6 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5033</p>	<p>20</p> <p>BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268</p> <p>Fort Lauderdale City Commission Meeting City Hall, 6 p.m.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063</p> <p>The King and I (Through 12/2) Au-Rene Theater at the Broward Center Tix.: ticketmaster.com</p>
<p>25 Dancing By The Sea Beach Pavilion, LBTS 5 to 7 p.m. Info.: http://www.lbtsevents.com/events</p> <p>Winterfest Family Fun Day Huizenga Plaza 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Info.: 954-767-0686</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p>BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268</p> <p>56th Annual Christmas on Las Olas - 2018 600 to 1100 East Las Olas Blvd. 5 to 10 p.m. Info.: 954-258-8382</p>	<p>28</p> <p>BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063</p> <p>Light Up the Galt North Beach Restaurants & Shoppes (A1A & Oakland Park Blvd. along 32 & 33)</p>

NOV 2-18: Fort Lauderdale International Film Festival, Festival HQ (503 SE 6th St.), Info.: 954-525-FILM
 NOV 3: 36th Annual Golf Tournament, Pompano Beach Municipal Signature Greg Norman Course, Registration: 7:30 a.m.; Tee off: 8:30 a.m., Info.: 954-941-2940
 NOV 3: 15th Annual Denim & Diamonds Gala, Fort Lauderdale Marriott Harbor Beach Resort & Spa, 6 to 10 p.m., Info.: 954-564-3512
 NOV 3: LagoonFest, 101 S Flagler Dr. between North and South Clematis Street in downtown WPB, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Info.: 561-881-9757
 NOV 3-4: Ranse Volleyball Classic Pro Am, (310 N Ocean Blvd. in Deerfield Beach), 8 a.m., to 5 p.m., Info.: 561-241-3801
 NOV 10: Women Empower Expo, Broward County Convention Center, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Info.: 513-310-9497
 NOV 10: SwampFest Bluegrass Festival, Flamingo Gardens, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Info.: 954-473-2955
 NOV 10: Honor Our Troops Annual Veterans Day Car Show, Pompano CitiCentre, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Info.: 561-704-0669
 NOV 10-11: Camelot Days Medieval Festival, T.Y. Park, Hollywood, Info.: 786-332-0047
 NOV 11: Exotics on Las Olas, East Las Olas Blvd. from SE 6th Ave. to SE 11th Ave., 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Info.: exoticsonlasolas@gmail.com
 NOV 14: The Best of Times Senior Expo, Emma Lou Olson Civic Center, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., Info.: 754-246-2874
 NOV 15: Winter Business Expo 2018, Broward County Convention Center, 4 to 8 p.m., Info.: 954-838-9644
 NOV 27: Light Up Downtown, Stiles Plaza on Las Olas, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., Info.: 954-463.8772 Ext 206

ONE SOURCE FOR COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

THU

FRI

SAT

1 National Philanthropy Day
The Signature Grand, Davie
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Info.: 561-531-1148

2 Day of the Dead Celebration
Huizenga Plaza
4 to 11 p.m.
Info.: 954-449-1031

3 Ghost Light Society Soirée
Parker Playhouse
7 to 11 p.m.
Info.: 954-414-6901

Art of Wine & Food: Thankful for Wine
NSU Art Museum
6 to 8 p.m.
Info.: 954-262-0258

Rockin' at Provident Park
Performer: Bubba Mack Band (R & B / Blues)
Provident Park
7 to 10 p.m.
Info.: 954-828-7275

Dark Star Orchestra Concert
Revolution Live Outdoors
4 to Midnight
Info.: 954-449-1030

8 Ottmar Liebert & Luna Negra
Broward Center
8 to 10 p.m.
Info.: www.lbtsevents.com/events

9 Friday Night Music
El Mar & Commercial Blvd.
6:30 to 10:30 p.m.
Info.: www.lbtsevents.com/events

10 Champagne Fun Festival
Esplanade Park
4 to 9 p.m.
Info.: 954-696-5107

Discovery After Dark:
The Science of Beer
Museum of Discovery and Science
6:30 to 9 p.m.
Info.: http://mods.org

Fall Garden Festival
(Through 10/11)
Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden
9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Info.: 305-667-1651

Boca Raton Wine & Food Festival
Sanborn Square Park, Downtown Boca
6 to 10 p.m.
Info.: 561-338-7594

15 G.M.C.A. Advisory Board Meeting
Nick's Italian Restaurant, 11 a.m.

16 Friday Night Tunes
A Stone (Pop, Soul, Jazz, Gospel)
Joseph C. Carter Park
7 to 10 p.m.
Info.: 954-828-5363

17 Holiday Fantasy of Lights
5K Run & Walk
Tradewinds Park
Run: 6 p.m.; Walk: 7 p.m.
Info.: 954-956-7266

Light Up Lauderdale
Esplanade Park
6 to 8:30 p.m.
Info.: 954-468-1541 Ext. 208

Ft. Lauderdale Fall Home Design
& Remodeling Show
(Through 11/18)
Broward County Convention Center
Info.: 305-667-9299

Paddle with a Purpose
Reverend Samuel Delevoe Memorial Park
9 to 11 a.m.
Info.: 917-652-1050

22 Fort Lauderdale Turkey Trot & Paddle
DC Alexander Park
7:30 a.m.: Paddleboarders and 5K Run/Walk
Info.: 954-767-8866 Ext. 25

23 Friday Night Music
El Mar & Commercial Blvd.
6:30 to 10:30 p.m.
Info.: www.lbtsevents.com/events

24 Downtown Delray Beach Thanksgiving
Weekend Art Festival
(Through 11/25)
201 E Atlantic Ave., Delray Beach
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Info.: 561-746-6615

29 Hedwig and the Angry Inch
(Through 12/2)
Aventura Center
Tix.: ticketmaster.com

30 Riptide Music Festival
Fort Lauderdale Beach
(Harbor Dr. and A1A)
Info.: 305-521-5280

1 Vegfest Expo
War Memorial Auditorium
Noon to 6 p.m.
Info.: 305-521-5280

"Men of Style"
The Galleria Mall
6 to 9 p.m.
Info.: 954-446-0806

Holiday Magic Soiree at Bonnet House
6 to 9 p.m.
Info.: 954-563-5393

13th Annual Riverwalk Mutts & Martinis
America's Backyard (1100 SW 3rd Ave.)
3 to 6 p.m.
Info.: info@livingfoodslifestyles.com

THE FUN CONTINUES !

DECEMBER 2

Chanukah Festival
Beach Pavilion (LBTS), 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Info.: 954-607-1104

DECEMBER 8

63rd Annual Hollywood Beach Candy Cane Parade
Hollywood Beach Broadwalk, 7 p.m.
Info.: 954-921-3404

DECEMBER 8

Winterfest Black Tie Ball
Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino, 6 to 11 p.m.
Info.: 954-767-0686

DECEMBER 11

The South Florida Condo, HOA & Co-op Expo
Broward County Convention Center, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Info.: 212-683-5700

DECEMBER 13-16

12th Annual Palm Beach Food And Wine Festival
Many Venues across town, Palm Beach
Info.: 561-320-2030

DECEMBER 14

56th Annual Pompano Beach & Lighthouse Point Holiday Boat Parade
Pompano Beach Intracoastal, 7 to 9 p.m.
Info.: 954-941-2940

DECEMBER 15

47th Annual Seminole Hard Rock Winterfest Boat Parade
Intracoastal from New River in Fort Lauderdale to Lake Santa Barbara in Pompano
3 to 11 p.m.
Info.: 954-767-0686

DECEMBER 16

5th Annual Fort Lauderdale Jingle Bell Jog 5K
DC Alexander Park
5K Start Time: 7:30 a.m.; Little Elf Dashes: 8:30 a.m.
Info.: 954-661-2732

DECEMBER 18-JANUARY 20

Hamilton
Broward Center for the Performing Arts
Tix.: ticketmaster.com

FOR A COMPLETE LISTING OF EVENTS, GO TO THE CALENDAR AT WWW.GALTMILE.COM

First Saturday of Every Month: Beach Cleanup, Commercial Blvd. & the Beach LBTS (Meet at Pavilion), 9 to 9:30 a.m., Info.: 954-776-1000

First Saturday of Every Month: North Beach Art Walk, 3280 NE 32nd St, 7 to 11 p.m., Info.: 954-537-3370

Second Saturday of Every Month: Beach Sweep, Fort Lauderdale Beach Hub, 300 S. Fort Lauderdale Beach Blvd., 7 to 11 a.m., Info.: 954-709-3197

Second Saturday of Every Month: Burlock Coast Farmer's Market, Burlock Coast at the The Ritz-Carlton, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Info.: myfortlauderdalebeach.com

Second Tuesday of Every Month: Orchid Greenhouse Tours, Bonnet House, 11 a.m. to Noon, Info.: 954-703-2606

Mondays: Food Trucks at Artspark, 5:30 to 10 p.m., Youngs Circle in Hollywood

Thursdays: BHIP Farmer's Market, Broward Health Imperial Point Medical Arts Pavilion (633 N Federal Hwy.), 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Sundays: Tour-the River Ghost Tour, Stranahan House & Water Taxi, 7:30 p.m., Tix.: 954-524-4736

Sundays: Las Olas Sunday Market, 333 East Las Olas Blvd. & SE 4th Ave., 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Info.: 954-426-8436

Sundays (through May): Farmer's Market at El Prado Park, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Info.: 561-714-2745

Saturdays: Saturday Night Under the South Florida Stars, Fox Astronomical Observatory at Markham Park, Sunset to Midnight, Info.: 954-384-0442

EDITOR'S COMMENTARY: Heather Moraitis' SEPTEMBER 2018 Newsletter

By Eric Berkowitz

EDITOR'S COMMENTARY

In her September 2018 Newsletter, District 1 City Commissioner Heather Moraitis explores a Broward ballot question certified for the November election. If approved by the electorate, a planned bump in the sales tax from 6% to 7% will provide County officials with a 30-year funding resource for the buildout and maintenance of countywide transportation improvements - a growing burden that will otherwise bloat homeowner and merchant property taxes. In outlining a County plan to relieve congested roadways and enhance connectivity, her report also seeks to mitigate the confusion and distrust that tanked a similar ballot measure in 2016. Moraitis notes a monthly opportunity for local businesses to buy parking permits at the Beach Community Center; invites constituents to attend her Pre-Agenda Meetings; endorses a free Neighbors App by Ring to enhance community safety; and suggests using the Lauderserv app to conveniently contact the City.

BACK ON THE BALLOT

Broward County currently funds its transportation programs through gas tax revenues and general revenue funds (drawn primarily from property taxes). Since the federal gas tax (a flat amount unrelated to the price of gas) has remained unchanged for 20 years, gas tax revenues are declining as people drive less - in ever more fuel-efficient cars. At the same time, the costs of upgrading, operating and maintaining a fleet of public transit buses, myriad traffic signals, and aging roads have exploded. Absent some alternative funding source, that leaves general revenue funds - squeezed from your neck - to fill the widening gap.

The November 6, 2018 ballot includes a transportation question (back of page 3) asking voters whether to levy a 1% local option sales tax for funding countywide transportation system improvements. The tax will apply to all tangible goods (i.e. clothing, appliances, electronics, jewelry, etc.) and ready-to-eat food (from restaurants or delis), although ordinary groceries, medicines, gas and medical equipment are exempt.

Every dollar you spend on a taxable item will cost you one cent in additional sales tax. For example, if you go to Ace Hardware and spend \$20 on a set of metric wrenches, another 20 cents would be added to the existing 6% State sales tax. Since visitors and tourists generate between 30 and 40 percent of sales tax revenue, they will shoulder a comparable share of the incremental transportation levy.

Supporters decry Broward's status as dead last among Florida's 67 counties in per capita expenditures for roads and streets, and observe that 62 of Florida's 67 counties have already levied a transportation surtax.

Here's the rub. Whenever the County board pursues consideration of a "sales tax", Broward voters sweat bullets. Given the number of Broward officials sent to the Big House for unspeakable acts with the County cookie jar, County residents have come to equate approving a sales tax with offering heroin to a junkie. Prior attempts to graft an incremental levy to the statewide 6% sales tax in Broward were surgically dismembered on Election Day.

FLASHBACK TO 2016

The County's recently launched "Penny for Transportation" campaign is entering its second incarnation. An earlier version of this voter question was placed on the November 8, 2016 ballot. As the 2016 County board entertained visions of a regional transportation funding spigot, officials in Broward's 31 municipalities were frying up their own agenda. The cities were (and still are) losing a race to repair or replace infrastructure claimed by age and erosion. Deteriorating water and sewer systems, aging municipal buildings, battered fleet vehicles, erratically maintained parks and city streets heavily peppered with potholes and cracks were melting down city budgets.

Working separately, the County board had approved a ballot measure soliciting a 75-cent increase to the sales tax while the cities sought an infrastructure surtax of one dollar. With the County and cities both chasing independent sales tax ballot initiatives, Broward voters would have been confronted with a 7.75% sales tax - the highest in the State. This ludicrous 29% increase would have virtually guaranteed the failure of both ballot measures. Instead, City and County officials temporarily set aside long-simmering turf feuds and began negotiating a formula that both sides could live with.

At the June 22, 2016 County Commission meeting, in a room packed with Mayors and City Commissioners from across the county, the issue came to a head. Spearheading negotiations for the municipalities was Weston Mayor Dan Stermer, who opened the meeting with an eerie proposition to the county board, "Will you marry us?" After two deadlocked County Commission votes, a plan brokered by County Commissioner Mark Bogen and Stermer was approved.

MARRIED LIFE

Under the proposal, a combined 30-year surtax increase would be downsized to one cent on each dollar, hiking the existing 6% sales tax to 7%. The penny increase would be equally divided between a County Transportation Tax and a Municipal Infrastructure Tax, and posed to voters as two separate ballot questions. If both measures were approved, the half-penny County Transportation tax would be dedicated to Broward's transportation wish list.

For the first 20 years, the other half-penny would be distributed to Broward municipalities based on population demographics, and budgeted to infrastructure improvements - spin for slush funds. After 20 years, Broward would also snag 40% of the infrastructure tax proceeds, providing the County with a 70% share of the combined surtax over the final ten years of the levy.

If either measure failed, the other would die by proxy. In hindsight, this "Victory or Death" protocol was overly ambitious - and arrogant. The sales tax increase was rejected. Although the county proposal squeaked through by 51 percent to 49 percent, voters crushed the city levy by 38.2 percent to 61.8 percent, effectively killing both measures. The result wasn't unexpected. Waves of voters who knew little about the county transportation surtax and less about the municipal infrastructure levy were also largely oblivious to the fact that both half-penny sales tax proposals had to pass for either to be enacted. In a testament to futility, thousands of confused voters said yes to one and no to the other.



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WHY IT FAILED

Spending plans patched together by the County and a handful of cities for anticipated tax revenues were widely criticized as eleventh-hour creative writing exercises; many cities were mute about how their share of the windfall would be allocated. After voting, many Broward residents complained that efforts to educate the public in their city were obscure, disjointed, lacking in credibility or simply never attempted. Others condemned sales taxes as unfair and regressive (creating a disproportional burden on lower-income residents). However, it wasn't the vague municipal spending librettos - or an inherent social inequity that killed the surtax.

While conceding the need for infrastructure and transportation upgrades, thousands of Broward voters - already distrustful of local government spending - were skull-blocked about delivering annual truckloads of discretionary cash to a string of unknown future politicians for 30 years. Despite the creation of an Oversight Board to safeguard the integrity of future disbursements, several Broward Commissioners feared this vulnerability before the 2016 vote.

A staunch advocate of enhancing Broward's Transportation infrastructure, Broward Commissioner Tim Ryan believed the 3-decade assessment was snake-bit, exhorting "Many, many people will look at it skeptically. Why? ...because government has a long and storied history of wasting money." Questioning the spotty ballot data fed to the public, County Commissioner Steven Geller remarked, "When somebody tells me what they're going to build in 30 years, I have very little confidence. Those are not even accurate guesses."

In contrast, Palm Beach officials had asked for a sales tax increment capped at \$2.7 billion to fix roads, upgrade schools, fund several new projects in different cities - and sunset after 10 years - or when the cap was reached. It was approved by 57% of Palm Beach voters. In Broward, officials asked for a 30-year Golden Goose and said "trust me". It failed. What a shock.

TRUST ISSUES

Convincingly defeated, seventeen Broward municipalities headed to the bond market to address worsening infrastructure deficits. Since the County transportation surtax would have been approved - albeit by a hair - if it hadn't been linked to the City proposal, Broward officials want a second bite at the apple. Hopefully, they learned from the 2016 beatdown, since they will face many of the same obstacles this year - one in particular.

For decades, Broward residents watched scores of local elected officials and government bureaucrats being arrested, tried and jailed for monkeying with public funds - and many others who dodged "Club Fed" by selling out crooked cohorts after being caught and later turned by Federal Prosecutors. Having accepted bribes from undercover FBI agents in 2009, former Broward Commissioner Josephus Eggelletion, School Board member Beverly Gallagher and Miramar Commissioner Fitzroy Salesman were arrested and jailed for corruption. In 2010, Fort Lauderdale Commissioner Cindi Hutchinson was booked on 11 counts of public corruption and later jailed. More recently, on January 25, 2018, the FBI scooped up long-time Hallandale Beach Mayor Joy Cooper for money laundering and engineering a campaign funds shell game.

While the need for a long-term transportation funding vehicle is legitimate, approval of the surtax in November may hinge on the extent to which our elected officials can reclaim credibility systematically auctioned off by avaricious peers and predecessors. Since Broward Commissioners are revisiting their request for a 30-year supply of blank checks, the electorate will once again face the daunting prospect that some of those who may ultimately select funding targets are currently exploring the mysteries of Nursery School.

PREPARING FOR ROUND 2

To help win over skeptical voters in each city, the County board has solicited the assistance of municipal officials coun-

tywide in framing the surtax as vastly preferable to bleeding transportation dollars from local taxpayers - while confirming that the surtax permanently shifts roughly a third of the fiscal burden to visitors and tourists. To secure proactive municipal cooperation, County officials came bearing gifts. Each city that executes an Interlocal agreements with the County will lock up a healthy windfall.

Of the approximately \$15.6 billion that the County would soak up over 30 years, a minimum of ten percent (10%) of those proceeds will fund projects annually submitted by municipalities and ranked for implementation by the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) based on how productively each project alleviates traffic congestion or enhances connectivity. Taken together with federal transportation grants, Broward cities would divvy up a projected \$3.3 billion share of revenues collected by the County over 30 years - not exactly chicken feed.

Funding demands on cities with Community Bus Services (i.e. Sun Trolley, Pelican Hopper, etc.) will be replaced by surtax revenues - those cities will receive \$540 million for operational, maintenance and capital costs. Other eligible municipal projects include street lighting, roadway runoff drainage, buffer/sound walls, fiber optics for transportation systems, landscaping, transit or a transportation related parking projects, and roadway improvements.

By September 4, when Fort Lauderdale approved its interlocal agreement with the County, Broward cities had already requested funding for 709 local projects with an estimated total cost of \$2.8 billion. To allay fears wrought by decades of knee-jerk spending, the County will empower a seven-member appointing authority to establish an Oversight Board charged with approving revenue disbursements. Read Commissioner Heather Moraitis' September 2018 newsletter elsewhere in this edition. - [editor]*

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for monkeying
with public funds**

of 10 states where wagering on dog races is legal. Of the nation's 18 dog-racing tracks currently operated for gambling in six different states, 12 are in Florida. Neighboring Alabama is also one of the six states with active dog racing tracks. The remaining 40 states had prohibited wagering on dog races. Gambling was illegal in Florida until 1931, when the Florida State Legislature passed a law to allow wagering on horse racing and dog racing.

If approved, Amendment 13 would prohibit Florida pari-mutuel operations (a type of betting pool) from racing dogs for wagering after January 1, 2021. All wagering on the outcome of live dog races held in Florida – primarily greyhounds – would also be prohibited. Dog tracks operated by licensed permitholders would be allowed to host other pari-mutuel sports such as horse racing and jai-alai, and continue offering other types of gambling, including poker rooms. Also, the amendment waives a state requirement that tracks hold a full schedule of live greyhound races in order to continue operating poker rooms or slot machines as part of their pari-mutuel licenses. The Department of Business and Professional Regulation, which oversees the Division of Pari-Mutuel Wagering, estimated annual losses of \$1 million and \$1.3 million in tax and fee revenues in fiscal years 2019 and 2020 – if voters approve the ban.

Primarily advocated by Protect Dogs- Yes on 13 - organized to end the cruelty of greyhound racing in Florida - the ban is also supported by several animal advocates, including the Committee to Protect Greyhounds, the Animal Legal Defense Fund, Pets Ad Litem, and others. Committee to Support Greyhounds is leading the campaign in opposition to this amendment. Amendment 13 authorizes the Florida Legislature to specify civil or criminal penalties for violating the constitutional amendment. Animal advocates will vote YES, inveterate gamblers will vote NO. Which are you?

Most importantly – make your voice heard – VOTE!•

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From the Desk of Commissioner **HEATHER MORAITIS**

September 2018

Broward County Transportation System Surtax

On September 4, the Fort Lauderdale City Commission approved a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute an Interlocal Agreement with Broward County for the Transportation System Surtax. The Broward County Commission voted on June 5, 2018 to place a Transportation Surtax Levy on the November 6, 2018 ballot. The one percent sales surtax (penny sales tax) will need to be approved by the majority of voters during the election.

The proposed surtax is for a 30-year period and is estimated to receive approximately \$15.6 billion over the duration, while leveraging up to an additional \$3 billion from federal, state, and other sources. The Broward County Transportation System Surtax will fund countywide transportation projects to relieve traffic congestion in all 31 municipalities that include improvements to traffic signalization, county roadways, intersection improvements, senior mobility options, public transportation (transit and rail), and to fund future investments in Broward's transportation system.

The State of Florida has completed a performance audit of Broward County's transportation plan. The audit results show that the plan meets all requirements, including clearly stated objectives, fiscal responsibility, tested projects, and compliance. The plan is ready to work, and this audit shows that we are prepared if it is approved.

Broward County is home to 1.9 million residents and over 10 million visitors come here each year creating additional traffic and stress on our roads. Approximately 30 percent of the revenue generated by this surtax would be paid by those who visit Broward County each year. More than 64 households move to Broward each day and our elderly population is rapidly increasing. The surtax will fund on-demand transportation services for persons with disabilities (paratransit) and provide seniors with community shuttles.

The Broward County Transportation System Surtax is designed to address:

- New traffic control technologies to reduce traffic congestion
- Intersection improvements, including resurfacing, pavement markings, mast arm upgrades, drainage improvements, sidewalk and Americans with Disabilities Act updates
- Reduced road flooding
- Fiber Optic network improvements on critical roadways to support new technologies
- Miles of drainage and resiliency projects
- Greenways, bike lanes and pedestrian amenities
- School Zone safety improvements
- Improved routes and overall transit service, including proposed light rail on high-ridership corridors
- On-demand transportation services for persons with disabilities (Paratransit)
- Community shuttles

With traffic congestion ranked as a top concern across Broward County, the surtax will reduce traffic congestion, increase accessibility, and provide for sustainable transportation infrastructure for all of Broward's residents.

Sincerely,

Heather Moraitis

District 1 City Commissioner
Parking Customer Service at Beach Community Center

Parking Customer Service at Beach Community Center

The City will have a customer service representative at the Beach Community Center on the last Wednesday of every month to issue monthly parking permits for local businesses. Staff will be there from 11 am to 3 pm except for a lunch break between 12:30 pm to 1 pm. They will only be able to accept checks as a method for payment.

Neighbors App by Ring

The Fort Lauderdale Police Department encourages our neighbors to download the Neighbors application (iOS/Android), join their neighborhood and discover the power that can emerge from combining neighbors, cameras and the Fort Lauderdale Police Department. Visit www.flpd.org/ring to learn how to download the Neighbors app by Ring.

City of Fort Lauderdale 24-Hour Customer Service Center - 954-828-8000

The City of Fort Lauderdale is here to serve our neighbors 24-hours-a-day, and now you can easily contact us right from your smartphone or other mobile device when you are on-the-go. You can report a streetlight outage, clogged stormdrain, pothole, or broken waste cart; find out your sanitation pick-up days or how to pay your water bill; and more. Download the FREE Lauderserv app from the Apple App Store or Google Play today.

For More Information

- Sign-up for Email Updates/Newsletters to get additional links to important city information, upcoming events, photos, commission agendas and meeting reminders for district meetings. Please contact District 1 Assistant Melissa Coningsby, MConingsby@fortlauderdale.gov or 954-828-5033, to receive emails or to schedule an appointment.
- Follow Commissioner Moraitis on Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn @heathermoraitis



A black and white photograph of two parrots perched on a branch. The parrot in the foreground is looking towards the camera, while the one behind it is looking to the side. The background is dark and out of focus.

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ALF #12940

Successful Recovery Thanks to “Team Terrific”

- Jan Tansey, *Knee replacement patient*

Jan Tansey has a special name for the group of physical therapists at Broward Health Imperial Point (BHIP): Team Terrific. After undergoing a successful knee replacement surgery, she found a second family with the physical therapy team at BHIP.

Read the rest of Jan's story at BrowardHealth.org/PatientStories.

JOINT REPLACEMENT SURGERY LECTURE

Tuesday, November 20th at 3PM
First Floor – Cafeteria
Light refreshments to be served

To register call **954.759.7400**
& select option 5.



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