

**ANALYSIS OF 14 PROPOSED TX CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**  
**NOVEMBER 7, 2023 ELECTIONS**

<b>Proposition Number</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Why Needed</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>
1	Farming, ranching, timber production horticulture & wildlife mgmt.	Protects rights of farmers & ranchers to engage in normal ag operations on land they own or lease.	Population growth & increasing municipal regs place undue burden on farmers & ranchers; impacts amount & quality of our food.	TX Farm Bureau TX Wildlife Assn TX Forestry Assn TX Landowners Council; TX Poultry Fed. TX Seed Trade Assn; Texans for Fiscal Responsibility	American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
<p><b>Additional Info:</b> Prevents government from banning farming for no specific reason. <b>For:</b> ensures that generally accepted farming, timber production, and wildlife mgmt. practices are allowed in cities and counties; allows legislature to protect the public from imminent danger. <b>Against:</b> limits the power of local govt to protect the health of their community; allows farms, including large industrial farms, to operate with less accountability; counties and cities must follow “acceptable agricultural practices” defined by Texas A&amp;M; this may be too broad for urban areas.</p>					
<b>Proposition Number</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Why Needed</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>
2	Child Care Facilities	Local option exemption from <i>ad valorem</i> taxation of all or part of appraised value of property used as childcare facility. Exemption must not be <50% and only if childcare facility participates in Rising Star Program and at least 20% of the children enrolled at facility receive subsidized child-care services thru TX Workforce Commission. Not eligible if facility is also a residence.	Inflationary costs and high property taxes creating a shortage in child-care facilities.	Methodist Healthcare Assn; TX Restaurant Assn.	Texans for Fiscal Responsibility
<p><b>Additional Info:</b> Prompted by federal COVID relief funds drying up. <b>For:</b> Exemption may allow childcare centers to stay open, parents to remain in workforce, and provide raises to childcare workers. <b>Against:</b> Effect will be to transfer tax burden to individual taxpayers, who will have to make up the taxes lost by cities &amp; counties granting the exemption. Also, the childcare centers may not pass the savings on to parents and their employees. Texans for Fiscal Responsibility: “Carving out property tax exemptions for businesses always result in higher tax burdens for other businesses and homeowners...”</p>					

Proposition Number	Subject	Purpose	Why Needed	For	Against
3	Taxation (wealth)	Prohibiting individual wealth or net worth tax, including tax on the difference between the assets and liabilities of an individual or family. Will ensure that such a tax cannot be imposed without voters' consent; Texans will not be penalized for working to create wealth.	Several states have recently proposed this kind of tax. Including this in the Constitution means a future legislature cannot impose such a tax without voter consent.	All Republican TX House Members; Texans for Fiscal Responsibility	"Every Texan" and TX Federation of Teachers

**Additional Info:** Texans for Fiscal Responsibility: "Texans are already taxed too much, and taxing individuals or families based on their total wealth is immoral and would be an abuse of the State's taxing authority."

Proposition Number	Subject	Purpose	Why Needed	For	Against
4	Ad Valorem Taxation (Property)	Establishes temporary limit on maximum appraised value of non-homestead real property for ad valorem tax purposes. Limits increase in appraised value over 3 years to <20%. Increases homestead exemption from ad valorem taxes by school district from \$40K to \$100K. Increases certain exemptions for elderly & disabled. Creates 3 elected positions on 9-member appraisal boards for counties with population >75K.	Some people are struggling to stay in homes because of high taxes. Increasing exemption to \$100K will especially benefit owners of moderately priced homes. Having elected positions on appraisal boards makes boards more accountable to local taxpayers.	National Federation of Independent Business – Texas; Texas Assn. of Builders; Texas Realtors; Texans for Fiscal Responsibility	None found*

**Additional Info: For:** Since taxpayers are responsible for state's historic budget surplus, some of the surplus funds should be returned to them. Over \$12B will be sent from State revenue fund to school districts, shifting burden from property taxes. Texans for Fiscal Responsibility: "...most of this relief will not be permanent, [but] some relief is better than none."

**Against:** No relief for renters and shifting away from property taxes = higher sales taxes and increased business taxes.

Proposition Number	Subject	Purpose	Why Needed	For	Against
5	Universities	Rename National Research University Fund, created in 2009 to provide a dedicated source of funding to enable emerging TX research universities to attain	Provides a predictable and sustainable source of funding for universities that do	Greater Houston Partnership; Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce; North Texas Commission;	Texans for Fiscal Responsibility

		national prominence, to the “Texas University Fund”; exclude from eligibility universities supported by TX University Fund; provide dedicated revenue source limited to \$100M from State’s “Rainy Day” Fund.	not have access to the Permanent University Fund. TX A&M & UT receive funds from Permanent Univ. Fund.	Teaching Hospitals of Texas; TX Assn. of Business; TX Business Leadership Council;	
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**Additional Info: Against:** The “rainy day” fund was not designated to fund higher education. Texans for Fiscal Responsibility: “Taxpayers already fund higher education by billions of dollars every year. Higher education already receives enough public support, not to mention that most of them are essentially publicly funded leftist indoctrination centers.”

Proposition Number	Subject	Purpose	Why Needed	For	Against
6	Water	Creating TX Water Fund to assist in financing water projects. To be administered by Water Development Board or its successor. Endowed w/a \$1B down payment from the general fund. At least 25% to be used to increase water supply thru marine desalination and treating reclaimed fracking water.	Persistent drought, increased population, aging water infrastructure; existing funding mechanisms do not provide flexibility to secure new water supply sources and repair existing water infrastructure.	Sponsored by Senator Charles Perry (Republican).  TX Water Development Board; TX Water Conservation Assn; TX Oil & Gas Assn; TX Assn. of Builders; TX Assn. of Business; TX Desalination Assn.	None found*

**Additional Info: Against:** The Water Development Board should be able to address the state’s water needs without the creation of new programs. Also, not enough money is being designated, and money from state revenue should not be used to fund local projects. Texans for Fiscal Responsibility: “While clean water is a very important resource, this amendment will nonetheless expand government and the spending of taxpayer dollars. We remain neutral.”

Proposition Number	Subject	Purpose	Why Needed	For	Against
7	Utilities	Creates TX Energy Fund to authorize Public Utility Comm. to use funds without further appropriation to provide loans and grants to any entity to finance or incentivize electric generating facilities (natural gas fueled), including associated infrastructure necessary to ensure reliability or adequacy of an electric power grid.	Supporters say additional state funding is needed to increase reliability of TX’s electric grid and gas-fueled power is more reliable than wind and solar; creating this fund enables the PUC to provide loans and	ConocoPhillips, Koch Companies, BASF Corporation Employees PAC, TX Assn of Manufacturers, TX Oil and Gas Assn, TX Pipeline Assn, and Valero Energy Corporation PAC;	Oneok, Inc., Environment Texas, Texas Advanced Energy Business Alliance, and Texas Consumer Association

			grants to electric generating facilities.	Texans for Fiscal Responsibility	
<p><b>Additional Info: For:</b> Texans for Fiscal Responsibility: “a crucial step to securing the Texas Grid and protecting against rolling blackouts.”  <b>Against:</b> “it would be more appropriate to provide funding through the rate payer system as opposed to providing state subsidies funded by all taxpayers.” Also, “gas-fueled power plants are not always reliable and emit greenhouse gases, driving climate change.” Solar &amp; wind powered plants not eligible, despite providing 39% of state electricity.</p>					
Proposition Number	Subject	Purpose	Why Needed	For	Against
8	Telecommunications	Establishes a Broadband Infrastructure Fund in the amount of \$1.5B for the expansion of access to and adoption of broadband and telecommunications services. Authorizes Comptroller of Public Accts to use this fund without further appropriation only for the expansion of access to and adoption of broadband and telecommunications.	Without reliable broadband internet, millions of Texans are at a disadvantage in employment, education and health care. Establishing this fund would close the “digital divide.” Especially important for agriculture and energy sectors.	AT&T Inc., Comcast Corporation, NBC Universal, Conference of Urban Counties, T-Mobile US, Inc., and Verizon Communications, Inc.	Texans for Liberty; Texans for Fiscal Responsibility
<p><b>Additional Info: Against:</b> “...funding the Internet is not the responsibility of government. Private companies already provide most Texans with broadband internet. Texas has previously allocated \$600M for broadband purposes and the state is likely to receive billions of dollars from the federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program. “Creating a costly new broadband fund with state taxpayer dollars is excessive and fiscally irresponsible.” Texans for Fiscal Responsibility: “Since this fund would essentially act as corporate welfare for broadband companies, and the [surplus] money should be returned to taxpayers in the form of property tax relief, we recommend voting against this amendment.”</p>					
Proposition Number	Subject	Purpose	Why Needed	For	Against
9	Teachers	Authorizes cost of living adjustment (COLA) to certain annuitants of the Teacher Retirement System through a transfer of funds (\$3.3B) from the general revenue fund to TRS’s trust fund. Also exempts the COLA from the constitutional limit on overall state spending.	Majority of teachers do not participate in the federal social security system, so TRS their only retirement pay. There has been no COLA in 20 years, so much purchasing power lost.	Texas AFL-CIO, Raise Your Hand Texas, TX Assn. of School Administrators, TX Assn. of School Boards, TX Elementary Principals and Supervisors Assn., and TX Retired Teachers Assn.	None found*

**Additional Info:** **For:** "This is needed because no COLA provisions in TRS; the money for this is coming from surplus and will increase spending power of teachers and their survivors. **Against:** COLA is not enough to offset inflation and does not address the current teacher shortage. Texans for Fiscal Responsibility is neutral on the issue.

Proposition Number	Subject	Purpose	Why Needed	For	Against
10	Ad Valorem Taxation	Authorizes exemption from ad valorem taxation equipment or inventory held by a manufacturer of medical or biomedical products.	The cost to ship medical and biomedical equipment & supplies increased more than 50% in 2021, causing Texans to pay more for vital supplies. Texas' high tax rate discourages medical manufacturers; this exemption would encourage expansion of and investment in regional medical/biomedical manufacturing.	The Texas Medical Center, Texas Healthcare and Bioscience Institute, Greater Houston Partnership, and Biotechnology Innovation Organization	Texans for Fiscal Responsibility

**Additional Info:** **For:** This will encourage biomedical companies to come to TX and bring high paying jobs and strengthen the supply chain. **Against:** "School districts, cities and counties currently collect property taxes on property such as this. Property taxes go to pay for police, firefighters, libraries, and public education. The new exemption would cost school districts some \$207M over the next 5 years. The amendment doesn't keep taxing entities from raising tax rates on individuals and other businesses to make up for the loss." The burden of the loss of revenue to schools, cities and counties will fall most heavily on communities with biomedical manufacturers. Texans for Fiscal Responsibility: "Since this will inevitably increase the tax burden on homeowners and small businesses to make up the difference in lost tax revenue, we strongly recommend voting against this amendment."

Proposition Number	Subject	Purpose	Why Needed	For	Against
11	El Paso County Bond	Authorizes the El Paso County conservation and reclamation (C&R) district to issue bonds to develop and finance parks and other purely recreational facilities with taxes.	Currently 10 C&R districts have this authority. This amendment would add El Paso County to the list. Addresses the need for more parks and opens spaces to	El Paso Water	

			improve quality of life.		
<p><b>Additional Info:</b> C&amp;R districts manage stormwater storage, land irrigation, and conservation &amp; development of forests. <b>For:</b> Benefits quality of life for El Paso residents and encourages more economic development. <b>Against:</b> This would cause property taxes to increase and gives C&amp;R districts the “unnecessary authority to assess property taxes.” Also land allocated to parks could be more economically productive if left in private hands. Texans for Fiscal Responsibility is neutral because it is a “local issue.”</p>					
Proposition Number	Subject	Purpose	Why Needed	For	Against
12	Galveston Co. Treasurer	Abolishes the Galveston County Treasurer’s office if, any addition to passing at state level, a majority of Galveston County voters also approve.	This is a move toward more efficient government. Duties to be absorbed by other county officials.	Texans for Fiscal Responsibility	County Treasurers Association of Texas
<p><b>Additional info:</b> <b>For:</b> Galveston County voters already effectively approved this by voting into office the Treasurer who vowed to abolish the office. Nine other counties have already eliminated their county treasurer positions and are operating efficient county govts. This will save taxpayers \$450K annually, and reduce risk of misappropriation of funds like what happened in 2018. Texans for Fiscal Responsibility: “...one less government official means a smaller government overall.” <b>Against:</b> County Treasurers Assn says having an independently elected treasurer ensures separation of powers (checks and balances) and creates a system that lets a treasurer “challenge the commissioners’ court if they question the legality and propriety of a payment order.” Also, it won’t reduce costs but shift the costs to other departments who will pick up the workload.</p>					
Proposition Number	Subject	Purpose	Why Needed	For	Against
13	State Judges & Justices Retirement Age	Increases mandatory retirement age to 79 from 75 years; also increases the earliest mandatory retirement age from 70 to 75. Repeals provision requiring judges with 6-year terms to retire at the end of 4 <sup>th</sup> year if they turned 75 during the first four of the term.	People are living and working longer; judges and justices should be allowed to.	Statutory Probate Judges of Texas; Texans for Lawsuit Reform; Texas Assn. of Retired, Senior, and Former Judges, Inc.; Texas Civil Justice League; Texas Trial Lawyers Assn.; Texas Watch	Texans for Fiscal Responsibility
<p><b>Additional info:</b> <b>For:</b> Decreases turnover and ensures a more predictable &amp; stable judicial system. A particular judge’s performance can be addressed by the electorate and Judicial Conduct Commission. <b>Against:</b> Judicial Conduct Commission may not be able to address in a timely manner problems with older judges experiencing cognitive decline or lower productivity. Extending age limit means prevents judiciary from reflecting current demographics of state population. Lastly, retired judges who desire to continue to work can still serve as visiting judges, so no need for this. Texans for Fiscal Responsibility: “.As we have seen on the federal level, cognitive decline is a real problem and could jeopardize justice.”</p>					
Proposition Number	Subject	Purpose	Why Needed	For	Against

14	Parks	Creates Centennial Parks Conservation Fund (endowed w/\$1B) to be used for the creation and improvement of state parks.	State parks systems are currently funded by park entrance fees, legislative appropriations, and a portion of state sales tax on sporting goods. This creates a trust fund outside the treasury for the sole purpose of parks creation and improvement.	Environment Texas, Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter, Texans for State Parks, Texas Foundation for Conservation, and Texas Travel Alliance	Texans for Fiscal Responsibility
<p><b>Additional Info:</b> 95% of TX land is privately owned and getting more expensive. Funds would go to buying more land for the state parks system, which celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday this year (hence the name). <b>For:</b> State parks provide affordable access to public recreation; protect water resources, and safeguard wildlife habitat; provide an economic boost to outdoor recreation industry and rural communities located near state parks; and educate Texans on heritage and wildlife. <b>Against:</b> Taxpayer \$ should not be used to create and maintain parks; recreation is not a proper role of government; there are other public needs more pressing than adding to the park system; and having more public land could impose restrictions on private development and related agricultural and mineral rights.</p>					

Source Documents: <https://tlc.texas.gov/docs/amendments/analyses23.pdf>; <https://www.texastribune.org/2023/09/15/texas-constitutional-amendment-voter-guide/>; <https://www.texastaxpayers.com/need-to-know-a-look-at-the-texas-constitution-amendment-propositions-on-the-ballot/>;

Prop 1 :

[https://ballotpedia.org/Texas Proposition 1, Right to Farming, Ranching, Timber Production, Horticulture, and Wildlife Management Amendment \(2023\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Texas_Proposition_1,_Right_to_Farming,_Ranching,_Timber_Production,_Horticulture,_and_Wildlife_Management_Amendment_(2023)); <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysip53HrETw>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysip53HrETw>

Prop 2 : [https://ballotpedia.org/Texas Proposition 2, Property Tax Exemption for Child-Care Facilities Amendment \(2023\)#Support](https://ballotpedia.org/Texas_Proposition_2,_Property_Tax_Exemption_for_Child-Care_Facilities_Amendment_(2023)#Support); <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J222AJOLh0o>

Prop 3 : [https://ballotpedia.org/Texas Proposition 3, Prohibit Taxes on Wealth or Net Worth Amendment \(2023\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Texas_Proposition_3,_Prohibit_Taxes_on_Wealth_or_Net_Worth_Amendment_(2023)); [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=soL35wZLT\\_U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=soL35wZLT_U)

Prop 4 : [https://ballotpedia.org/Texas Proposition 4, Property Tax Changes and State Education Funding Amendment \(2023\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Texas_Proposition_4,_Property_Tax_Changes_and_State_Education_Funding_Amendment_(2023)); <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b2XygnUudoM>

Prop 5 :

[https://ballotpedia.org/Texas Proposition 5, Rename State University Research Fund and Establish Ongoing Revenue Source Amendment \(2023\);](https://ballotpedia.org/Texas_Proposition_5,_Rename_State_University_Research_Fund_and_Establish_Ongoing_Revenue_Source_Amendment_(2023);) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9WQTr8HdSwU>

Prop. 6 : [https://ballotpedia.org/Texas Proposition 6, Creation of the Water Fund Amendment \(2023\);](https://ballotpedia.org/Texas_Proposition_6,_Creation_of_the_Water_Fund_Amendment_(2023);)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BxEp7tLf6Y>

Prop. 7 : [https://ballotpedia.org/Texas Proposition 7, Creation of State Energy Fund Amendment \(2023\);](https://ballotpedia.org/Texas_Proposition_7,_Creation_of_State_Energy_Fund_Amendment_(2023);)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8TMxZE2hIE>

Prop. 8 : [https://ballotpedia.org/Texas Proposition 8, Creation of Broadband Infrastructure Fund Amendment \(2023\);](https://ballotpedia.org/Texas_Proposition_8,_Creation_of_Broadband_Infrastructure_Fund_Amendment_(2023);)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bnaw3G5PBjk>

Prop. 9 : [https://ballotpedia.org/Texas Proposition 9, Cost-of Living Adjustments for Teacher Retirement System Amendment \(2023\);](https://ballotpedia.org/Texas_Proposition_9,_Cost-of_Living_Adjustments_for_Teacher_Retirement_System_Amendment_(2023);)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPXAPwtPPD8;>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPXAPwtPPD8>

Prop. 10: [https://ballotpedia.org/Texas Proposition 10, Tax Exemption on Medical Equipment and Inventory Amendment \(2023\);](https://ballotpedia.org/Texas_Proposition_10,_Tax_Exemption_on_Medical_Equipment_and_Inventory_Amendment_(2023);)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1YFS4b8WP3Y>

Prop. 11 :

[https://ballotpedia.org/Texas Proposition 11, Authorize Bond Issues in Conservation and Reclamation Districts in El Paso County Amendment \(2023\);](https://ballotpedia.org/Texas_Proposition_11,_Authorize_Bond_Issues_in_Conservation_and_Reclamation_Districts_in_El_Paso_County_Amendment_(2023);)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LNIQc8LVsTc;](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LNIQc8LVsTc) <https://www.navasotaexaminer.com/article/news/amending-texas'-constitution-understanding-2023-ballot-propositions-11-and-12>

Prop. 12 :

[https://ballotpedia.org/Texas Proposition 12, State Employees as Consultants, Advisors, or Members of School Boards Amendment \(1962\);](https://ballotpedia.org/Texas_Proposition_12,_State_Employees_as_Consultants,_Advisors,_or_Members_of_School_Boards_Amendment_(1962);)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xHobkBAN6GI;](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xHobkBAN6GI) <https://www.navasotaexaminer.com/article/news/amending-texas'-constitution-understanding-2023-ballot-propositions-11-and-12>

Prop. 13:

[https://ballotpedia.org/Texas Proposition 13, Increase Mandatory Retirement Age for State Judges Amendment \(2023\);](https://ballotpedia.org/Texas_Proposition_13,_Increase_Mandatory_Retirement_Age_for_State_Judges_Amendment_(2023);)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRcEWFqulYs>

Prop. 14: [https://ballotpedia.org/Texas Proposition 14, Creation of the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund Amendment \(2023\);](https://ballotpedia.org/Texas_Proposition_14,_Creation_of_the_Centennial_Parks_Conservation_Fund_Amendment_(2023);)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4SiKQ6lpvkl>

*CAVEAT : Although the Texas League of Women Voters provides some helpful information, I have found a couple of errors in their videos. For example, it is stated that Proposition 5 creates two new university funds. That is not true; the NRUF was created in 2009. Only one new fund is to be created in this amendment.*



\*This means Ballotpedia reported no one registered in opposition during the legislative process, and I was unable to find any official positions in opposition in my own research.