

Nov. 7 Ballot Order of Proposed Texas Constitutional Amendments Set

Deputy Secretary of State Joe Esparza has drawn the ballot order of the 14 proposed constitutional amendments that voters will decide on Nov. 7.

This month's drawing featured the most proposed constitutional amendments since 2007 when voters decided on 17 measures on two election dates. The year with the highest number of measures was 1987 when 25 proposals were on the ballot.

None of this year's proposed constitutional amendments is deemed controversial by veteran Capitol watchers but Proposition 4, a measure addressing Texas' astronomical property taxes, will garner a good deal of interest.

To make the constitutional amendment ballot, measures must receive two-thirds approval by the Texas House of Representatives and the Texas Senate. The Governor's approval is not required under the state constitution.

It is possible that other constitutional amendments may be considered by the state legislature when it meets again this fall, but due to that special session's timing, these would not be on the November ballot if adopted.

The Nov. 7 ballot is ordered as follows.

PROPOSITION 1	
Right to Farm and Ranch / HJR 126 by Rep. DeWayne Burns, R-Cleburne	
TITLE	Proposing a constitutional amendment protecting the right to engage in farming, ranching, timber production, and wildlife management
DESCRIPTION	Establishes a right to farming, ranching, timber production, horticulture, and wildlife management in the state constitution.

PROPOSITION 2	
Childcare Property Tax / SJR 64 by Sen. Royce West, D-Dallas	
TITLE	Proposing a constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation real property used to operate a child-care facility.
DESCRIPTION	Allow local governments to exempt childcare facilities from property taxes.

PROPOSITION 3	
Wealth Tax / HJR 132 by Rep. Cole Hefner, R-Mount Pleasant	
TITLE	Proposing a constitutional amendment prohibiting the imposition of an individual net worth or wealth tax.
DESCRIPTION	Prohibit a wealth or net worth tax.

PROPOSITION 4**Homestead Exemption / HJR 2 by Rep. Will Metcalf, R-Conroe (SECOND SPECIAL SESSION)**

TITLE	Proposing a constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to establish a limit on the maximum appraised value of real property other than a residence homestead for ad valorem tax purposes.
DESCRIPTION	Increases the homestead tax exemption from \$40,000 to \$100,000 and authorizes the Texas Legislature to limit the annual appraisal increase on non-homestead real property.

PROPOSITION 5**University Fund / HJR 3 by Rep. Greg Bonnen, R-Houston**

TITLE	Proposing a constitutional amendment renaming the national research university fund as the Texas University Fund, providing for the appropriation of certain investment income.
DESCRIPTION	Renames the National Research University Fund to the Texas University Fund and establishes an ongoing revenue source from the accrued interest of the economic stabilization fund.

PROPOSITION 6**Texas Water Fund / SJR 75 by Sen. Charles Perry, R-Lubbock**

TITLE	Proposing a constitutional amendment creating the Texas water fund to assist in financing water projects in this state.
DESCRIPTION	Creates the Texas Water Fund to finance water projects.

PROPOSITION 7**Texas Energy Fund / SJR 93 by Sen. Charles Schwertner, R-Georgetown**

TITLE	Proposing a constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the Texas energy fund and the authorization of other funding mechanisms to support the construction, maintenance, and modernization.
DESCRIPTION	Creates the Texas Energy Fund and authorizes funding to modernize electric generation facilities

PROPOSITION 8**Broadband Infrastructure Fund / HJR 125 by Rep. Trent Ashby, R-Lufkin**

TITLE	Proposing a constitutional amendment creating the broadband infrastructure fund to assist in the financing of broadband and telecommunications services projects in the state.
DESCRIPTION	Creates the Texas Broadband Infrastructure Fund to finance high-speed broadband access.

PROPOSITION 9**Teacher Retirement System / HJR 2 by Rep. Greg Bonnen, R-Houston**

TITLE	Proposing a constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to provide one-time or ongoing benefit enhancements to eligible annuitants of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas.
DESCRIPTION	Authorizes the state legislature to make cost-of-living adjustments or other benefit enhancements to eligible annuitants of the teacher retirement system.

PROPOSITION 10	
Medical Equipment Taxes / SJR 87 by Sen. Joan Huffman, R-Houston	
TITLE	Proposing a constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation certain tangible personal property held by a manufacturer of medical or biomedical products.
DESCRIPTION	Authorizes an ad valorem tax exemption on equipment and inventory manufactured by medical or biomedical companies.

PROPOSITION 11	
El Paso Parks / SJR 32 by Sen. Cesar Blanco, D-El Paso	
TITLE	Proposing a constitutional amendment relating to the authority of the legislature to permit conservation and reclamation districts in El Paso County to issue bonds supported by ad valorem taxes.
DESCRIPTION	Authorizes the state legislature to permit conservation and reclamation districts in El Paso County to allow the county to issue bonds to fund parks and recreational facilities.

PROPOSITION 12	
Galveston Co. Treasurer / HJR 134 by Rep. Greg Bonnen, R-Houston	
TITLE	Proposing a constitutional amendment to abolish the office of county treasurer of Galveston County.
DESCRIPTION	Abolishes the Galveston County Treasurer.

PROPOSITION 13	
Judge Retirement Age / HJR 107 by Rep. Four Price, R-Amarillo	
TITLE	Proposing a constitutional amendment to increase the mandatory age of retirement for state justices and judges.
DESCRIPTION	Increases the mandatory retirement age for state judges from 75 to 79.

PROPOSITION 14	
Centennial Parks Conservation Fund / SJR 74 by Sen. Tan Parker, R-Flower Mound	
TITLE	Proposing a constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the centennial parks conservation fund to be administered by the Parks and Wildlife Department.
DESCRIPTION	Creates the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund.

Election Night Returns

The Secretary of State's Office election night returns operation for the tabulation of unofficial returns will be available to Texas media for the Nov. 7 Constitutional Amendment Election.

Media subscribers will obtain access to an online-based inquiry system with immediate updates called the XML Newsfeed option. Vote totals are updated continuously throughout election night as soon as returns are received. The inquiry system will display election results for statewide, district, county, and early voting totals.

If your station is interested in subscribing to this service, please contact Julia Montes in the SOS office at (800) 252-8683 or at JMontes@sos.texas.gov. A completed reservation form and full payment must be received by Sept. 22.

Should your station decide not to subscribe, news staff will be able to view the unofficial results at www.sos.texas.gov. There is a slight delay in the reporting of the results to the SOS website compared to the XML Newsfeed option.

HD 2 Special Election

There is one statehouse political race on the Nov. 7 ballot, the special election to fill the unexpired term of ousted St. Rep. Bryan Slaton, R-Royse City. Slaton was expelled from the Texas House of Representatives in May after the details of his sexual misconduct with an aide were revealed.

There is a Sept. 6 candidate filing deadline for the special election.

Several Republicans and at least one Democrat are running in the special election for HD 2, a rural, conservative district in Northeast Texas.

Questions? Contact TAB's [Michael Schneider](#) or call (512) 322-9944.