
Texas constitutional amendments

Eleven proposed constitutional amendments go before Texas voters in the Nov. 3 election. The proposals passed both chambers of the Legislature with a two-thirds vote and must win voter approval to be added to the state constitution. Early voting begins Monday. The propositions are:

- **PROPOSITION 1:** Authorizes financing methods for municipalities and counties to acquire buffer zones or open spaces next to military bases. The proposal could prevent encroachment next to the base and allow construction of roads, utilities and other infrastructure to promote the mission of a military base.
- **PROPOSITION 2:** Allows the Legislature to provide for ad valorem taxation of a residence homestead solely on the basis of the property's value as a residence, not at the potentially higher commercial use value.
- **PROPOSITION 3:** Provides for uniform standards and procedures for the appraisal of property for taxation. Texas lacks uniform standards, and proponents say this amendment would ensure that property in diverse parts of the state are valued using the same generally accepted practices.
- **PROPOSITION 4:** Establishes a national research university fund to help emerging research universities achieve national prominence as major research universities. Those pushing the proposal say it will provide funding similar to what elevated Texas A&M University and the University of Texas to Tier One status, providing jobs and stature to the state. Others question whether now is the time to spend such money.
- **PROPOSITION 5:** Permits the Texas Legislature to allow a single board of equalization for two or more adjoining appraisal entities. That means area appraisal boards can be consolidated if they choose.
- **PROPOSITION 6:** Authorizes the Veterans' Land Board to issue general obligation bonds in amounts equal to or less than amounts previously authorized. It would prevent the land board from continually having to seek legislative authorization.
- **PROPOSITION 7:** Allows an officer or enlisted member of the Texas State Guard or other state militia or military force to hold other civil offices. This would correct what some say is an oversight in the state constitution.
- **PROPOSITION 8:** Authorizes the state to contribute money, property and other resources to establish veterans hospital. It's designed to speed up efforts to open a federal Veterans Administration hospital in the Rio Grande Valley, where residents currently must travel to San Antonio to receive some VA hospital services.
- **PROPOSITION 9:** Protects the right of the public to access and use the public beaches bordering the seaward shore of the Gulf of Mexico. This would block private developers from restricting beach access to the public, but some say it could infringe on private property rights.
- **PROPOSITION 10:** Limits elected members of the governing boards of emergency services districts to terms no longer than four years.
- **PROPOSITION 11:** Prohibits governments from taking private property for private economic development to increase a tax base. It also limits the Legislature's power to grant eminent domain authority to a governmental entity.