

Prop 1 (HJR 126) *“The constitutional amendment protecting the right to engage in farming, ranching, timber production, horticulture, and wildlife management.”*

Protects a person’s right to engage in agricultural operations on property he or she owns or leases.

SUPPORTERS SAY the Proposition would protect the state’s agricultural operations.

CRITICS SAY that limiting community and legislative ability to set standards regarding food safety, water pollution, and animal welfare that large, industrial farms would operate with less accountability and also that small, family farms could be undermined. Some say the burden of proof of clear and convincing evidence required by the resolution is too high and that requiring government entities to demonstrate that a regulation was necessary by a preponderance of the evidence would be a better standard of proof.

Prop 2 (SJR 64) *“The constitutional amendment authorizing a local option exemption from ad valorem taxation by a county or municipality of all or part of the appraised value of real property used to operate a child-care facility.”*

Proposes to allow cities and counties to provide an exemption for all or part (not less than 50%) of the value of property used to operate a child-care facility.

SUPPORTERS SAY providing a tax exemption for Texas child-care centers would free-up resources that could be used to pay higher wages and increase child-care centers' ability to hire and retain staff. Some say that the Texas child-care shortage is likely to have devastating effects on early childhood education, economic growth, and employment opportunities for parents.

There is no known opposition.

Prop 3 (HJR 132) *“The constitutional amendment prohibiting the imposition of an individual wealth or net worth tax, including a tax on the difference between the assets and liabilities of an individual or family.”*

HJR 132 proposes to prohibit the legislature from imposing a tax based on the wealth or net worth of an individual or family. The proposed amendment also would prohibit the legislature from imposing a tax based on the difference between the assets and liabilities of an individual or family.

SUPPORTERS SAY this is a proactive attempt to protect Texans from a tax on wealth. Such measures can discourage investment and innovation in favor of excessive individual spending. Taxing wealth in Europe has had a negative effect (economic stagnation). While such a tax has not been proposed in Texas, this amendment would **ensure** that Texans had a direct say if a future legislature tried to implement one. **The constitution already prohibits a state income tax without a vote of the people, and this resolution would do the same for a tax on wealth to ensure Texans could vote on whether the state should impose one.**

CRITICS SAY: The needs of Texans may be different in the future than they are now, and addressing future needs should be a task for future legislatures.

Prop 4 (HJR 2 – Second Special Session) *“The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to establish a temporary limit on the maximum appraised value of real property other than a residence homestead for ad valorem tax purposes; to increase the amount of the exemption from ad valorem taxation by a school district applicable to residence homesteads from \$40,000 to \$100,000; to adjust the amount of the limitation on school district ad valorem taxes imposed on the residence homesteads of the elderly or disabled to reflect*

increases in certain exemption amounts; to except certain appropriations to pay for ad valorem tax relief from the constitutional limitation on the rate of growth of appropriations; and to authorize the legislature to provide for a four-year term of office for a member of the board of directors of certain appraisal districts.”

- This amendment modifies certain provisions of the Constitution related to property taxes by authorizing a temporary limit (3 years) on increases in real property for tax purposes to 20% (the homestead limit will remain at 10%).
- It will also increase school district mandatory homestead exemption from \$40,000 (increased from \$25,000 in May 2022) to \$100,000.
- It allows the O65/DP limit on school taxes (the ceiling or freeze) to be reset to include the increased exemptions.
- Additionally, it will exempt appropriations in the future that are used for property tax relief from being considered as part of the Constitutional spending limit. This allows the State to pay for these reductions and Hold Harmless our school districts.
- It will authorize the election of 3 directors on the board of county approval districts in counties with a population of at least 75,000 (currently 50 counties) to (eventually) serve 4 year terms. The enabling legislation also extends the 5 appointed members to serve 4 year terms beginning in 2025 AND provides for the CAD board – not the state district administrative judge to appoint Appraisal Review Board members. At least two of the elected directors must vote with the appointed members.

Prop 5 (HJR 3) *“The constitutional amendment relating to the Texas University Fund, which provides funding to certain institutions of higher education to achieve national prominence as major research universities and drive the state economy.”*

HJR 3 proposes to rename the national research university fund as the Texas University Fund (TUF), and would allocate the interest, dividends, and investment earnings from the Economic Stabilization Fund (rainy day fund) from the preceding fiscal year at an amount not to exceed \$100 million for the state fiscal year beginning September 1, 2024. A 2% growth rate limit would also be in place in future state fiscal years. The proposed amendment also would prohibit any state university that is entitled to participate in dedicated funding provided by Article VII, Section 18 of the Texas Constitution from receiving money from the TUF (TEXAS A&M AND UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS as they each receive research funds from the Permanent University Fund (1/3 of the PUF is distributed to Texas A&M system annually, and the remaining 2/3 to the University of Texas system. As of 2023, the PUF is valued at over \$30 billion.

The implementing legislation (HB 1595), would require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to determine the amount of each distribution, identify eligible institutions, and report this to the state legislature and Comptroller. Supporters include the Greater Houston Partnership, Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce, North Texas Commission, Teaching Hospitals of Texas, Texas Association of Business and Texas Business Leadership Council.

SUPPORTERS SAY this proposition will help the state educationally and economically by authorizing necessary funding to provide for more high quality research in Texas universities.

There were no concerns identified – no critics.

Prop 6 (SJR 75) *“The constitutional amendment creating the Texas water fund to assist in financing water projects in this state.”*

SJR 75 proposes to create the Texas water fund administered by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) or its successor to assist in financing water projects in the state. The fund administrator may ONLY use the fund to transfer money to other TWDB funds or accounts.

This proposition will address rising concerns in water demands due to our rapidly growing Texas population. If passed, January 1, 2024, the comptroller will be required to transfer \$3 billion of the unencumbered balance of the general revenue fund to the Texas Water Fund.

Prop 7 (SJR 93) *“The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the Texas energy fund to support the construction, maintenance, modernization, and operation of electric generating facilities.”*

SJR 93 proposes to establish the Texas energy fund. The Texas energy fund would be a special fund in the state treasury outside the general revenue fund, administered by the Public Utility Commission. Funds could be used only by PUC or its successor to provide loans and grants to finance or incentivize the construction, maintenance, modernization, and operation of electric generating facilities necessary to ensure the reliability or adequacy of an electric power grid in the state.

Some suggest that additional state funding is needed to increase the reliability of the state’s electric market. The cost of addressing growing electric reliability is cost prohibitive and this will provide for the allocation of funds for loans and grants to eligible projects for electric generating facilities that will serve as backup power sources across the state.

Prop 8 (HJR 125) *“The constitutional amendment creating the broadband infrastructure fund to expand high-speed broadband access and assist in the financing of connectivity projects.”*

HJR 125 creates the broadband infrastructure fund which, under the oversight of the Comptroller, will fund the expansion of access to and adoption of broadband and telecommunications services. The fund will expire in 12 years (2035), unless extended by adoption of a joint resolution of the legislature.

SUPPORTERS SAY passage will give Texans the opportunity to increase broadband access and affordability across the state by authorizing major investments in broadband and telecommunications infrastructure in coordination with federal funding programs. The fund will close the digital divide in the state, which in turn could help to improve quality of life and spur significant economic growth, including higher personal incomes, job creation, and increased state revenue.

CRITICS SAY the enabling legislation should require the broadband infrastructure fund to prioritize projects that develop fiber optic broadband infrastructure, which may be faster, safer, and more durable and reliable than wireless broadband. Other critics say that to ensure that broadband investment is successfully implemented by a skilled and properly trained workforce, the enabling legislation should have incorporated federally recommended labor standards for broadband projects (including such things as direct employment rather than subcontracted workforce and fair labor standards including robust in-house training requirements, in the criteria for awarding grants.

Prop 9 (HJR 2) *“The constitutional amendment authorizing the 88th Legislature to provide a cost-of-living adjustment to certain annuitants of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas.”*

HJR 2 proposes to authorize provision of a cost-of-living adjustment to eligible retirees of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS). It includes a one-time stipend for those who have reached age 70 by August 31, 2023 and a COLA for those who retired on or before August 31, 2020. Stipend amounts are \$7,500 for those 75 years or older and \$2,400 for those 70 to 74. The 2% COLA will be for those who retired between 2013 and 2020 (or their eligible beneficiaries); 4% COLA for those who retired between 2001 and 2013 (or their eligible beneficiaries) AND 6% COLA for those who retired before 2001.

Prop 10 (SJR 87) *“The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation equipment or inventory held by a manufacturer of medical or biomedical products to protect the Texas healthcare network and strengthen our medical supply chain.”*

SJR 87 proposes to allow the legislature to exempt from taxation tangible personal property held by a medical or biomedical manufacturer as a finished good or used in the manufacturing or processing of medical or biomedical products, medical devices, pharmaceuticals, and PPE. Supporters say passage will protect the Texas healthcare network and strengthen our medical supply chain.

Prop 11 (SJR 32) *“The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to permit conservation and reclamation districts in El Paso County to issue bonds supported by ad valorem taxes to fund the development and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities.”*

SJR 32 proposes to provide for conservation and reclamation districts in El Paso County to issue bonds to fund the development and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities. Currently, only El Paso County is excluded. Passage will fund the development and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities.

Prop 12 (HJR 134) *“The constitutional amendment providing for the abolition of the office of county treasurer in Galveston County.”*

HJR 134 proposes to abolish the office of County Treasurer in Galveston County and authorizes Commissioners Court to employ or contract with a qualified person or designate another county officer to perform any functions that would have been performed by the Treasurer. The proposed amendment would take effect only if a majority of the voters of Galveston County voting on the proposition favor the amendment.

Prop 13 (HJR 107) *“The constitutional amendment to increase the mandatory age of retirement for state justices and judges.”*

HJR 107 proposes to increase the mandatory retirement age for state justices and judges which currently requires (justices and judges of the appellate courts, district courts, and criminal district courts) retirement at the end of the term during which they reach the age of 75 years. It also removes the provision stating that justices and judges may only serve until December 31 of their fourth year in office if they reach the age of 75 years in the first four years of a six-year term. THUS, this amendment extends the current mandatory retirement age for certain justices and judges, reflecting the fact that people are living and working longer.

Prop 14 (SJR 74) *“The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the centennial parks conservation fund to be used for the creation and improvement of state parks.”*

SJR 74 proposes to establish the centennial parks conservation fund. Currently, Texas Parks and Wildlife leases (or partially leases) land from private corporations to create some state parks. As a result, there have been incidents where land leased by the state for a park was sold to a private entity, shutting down the park in the process.

If the state had a dedicated fund to use for purchasing new land, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department would have the ability to make sustainable investments in new parks affording voters the opportunity to ensure that Texans and visitors can continue to enjoy the beauty of Texas' parks for generations to come.