

Constitutional Amendments

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Related Categories: Texas Constitution, Legislation

On November 8, 2011, voters will have a chance to consider **ten constitutional amendments** proposed by the 82nd Legislature. The proposed amendments cover a wide range of topics, including taxes, bonds, the Permanent School Fund, pardons, and terms of office.

For background and analysis of the ballot propositions, see the House Research Organization's *Constitutional Amendments Proposed for Nov. 2011 Ballot*, and the Texas Legislative Council's *Condensed Analyses of Proposed Constitutional Amendments*

The **Texas Constitution** is one of the longest in the nation and it's still growing. The Constitution is changed through amendments, which are proposed by the Texas Legislature and accepted or rejected by the voters.

Since the current Constitution was adopted in 1876, **467 amendments have been accepted and 176 have been defeated.**

Constitutional Amendments Proposed for the November 8, 2011 ballot

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| 82nd R. S. | SJR 14 | 1The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of all or part of the market value of the residence homestead of the surviving spouse of a 100 percent or totally disabled veteran. |
| 82nd R. S. | SJR 4 | 2The constitutional amendment providing for the issuance of additional general obligation bonds by the Texas Water Development Board in an amount not to exceed \$6 billion at any time outstanding. |
| 82nd R. S. | SJR 50 | 3The constitutional amendment providing for the issuance of general obligation bonds of the State of Texas to finance educational loans to students. |
| 82nd R. S. | HJR 63 | 4The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to permit a county to issue bonds or notes to finance the development or redevelopment of an unproductive, underdeveloped, or blighted area and to pledge for repayment of the bonds or notes increases in ad valorem taxes imposed by the county on property in the area. The amendment does not provide authority for increasing ad valorem tax rates. |
| 82nd R. S. | SJR 26 | 5The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to allow cities or counties to enter into interlocal contracts with other cities or counties without the imposition of a tax or the provision of a sinking fund. |

- 82nd R. S. **HJR 109** 6The constitutional amendment clarifying references to the permanent school fund, allowing the General Land Office to distribute revenue from permanent school fund land or other properties to the available school fund to provide additional funding for public education, and providing for an increase in the market value of the permanent school fund for the purpose of allowing increased distributions from the available school fund.
- 82nd R. S. **SJR 28** 7The 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.
- 82nd R. S. **SJR 16** 8The constitutional amendment providing for the appraisal for ad valorem tax purposes of open-space land devoted to water-stewardship purposes on the basis of its productive capacity.
- 82nd R. S. **SJR 9** 9The constitutional amendment authorizing the governor to grant a pardon to a person who successfully completes a term of deferred adjudication community supervision.
- 82nd R. S. **SJR 37** 10The constitutional amendment to change the length of the unexpired term that causes the automatic resignation of certain elected county or district officeholders if they become candidates for another office.