

VOICE OF REASON

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President



Hometown Democracy Appears Headed to 2008 Ballot *Florida Jobs at Stake*

Another special interest-backed constitutional amendment is only \$1.5 million away from making the 2008 ballot. Only, we're not talking about pregnant pigs or legalizing drugs, we're talking about killing jobs and shutting down important projects such as transportation improvement and even affordable housing solutions.

On June 22, the Florida Supreme Court ruled that the "Hometown Democracy" amendment's language could be included on the 2008 ballot. Now that it has met the Supreme Court's single-subject requirement and the Attorney General's review, all that's left before making it on the 2008 ballot is to collect the required 611,009 signatures. We expect the special interests behind this initiative to hire out-of-state, paid signature gathering firms to ensure that the amendment makes it on the ballot.

Hometown Democracy, the group behind the amendment, is a front group for environmentalists who want to turn representative democracy on its ear. The group opposes constitutional amendment reform and is spearheading an amendment that would kill jobs and stop progress in Florida.

This proposed initiative would require voters to approve every proposed change to a local government's comprehensive plan, which serves as a blueprint for development including the building of new schools, hospitals or other necessary development. The ramifications would be disastrous to Florida's business climate, as job creation would be eliminated and construction would come to a halt. How will we accommodate the 1,100 new residents that move to Florida each day without jobs and housing?

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***Hometown
Democracy is a
proposed
constitutional
amendment that
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growth in Florida.***

There is already local control over comprehensive plan changes. The special interests don't want you to know that:

- Local officials (not state government or special interests) already manage the process to change a comprehensive plan.
- These locally elected officials have the experience that allows them to make complex growth decisions.
- If this passes, special interests will clog local governments with costly campaigns to defeat or pass comprehensive plan changes.
- The resulting additional special elections will be a very expensive burden on local taxpayers.

Supporters will try and convince Floridians that this initiative will not result in special elections. Take Palm Beach County for example, where 1,500 plan changes were proposed in 2003. The only alternative to special elections – waiting up to two years to vote on an excessive number of proposals in a regular election – isn't realistic or probable.

The bottom line is that Hometown Democracy does not belong in the Florida Constitution. The proposed amendment is just another example of special interest groups using Florida's broken ballot initiative process to amend our state Constitution for their benefit. The Florida Chamber is actively monitoring this initiative as well as nearly 40 other proposed ballot initiatives attempting to make the 2008 ballot.

There are two ways you can help us defeat the Hometown Democracy:

- Vote "YES" on Amendment 3 this November. If voters approve Amendment 3, all future constitutional amendments must receive at least 60 percent of the vote for approval.
- Sign up for ChamberWatch at www.floridachamber.com, to stay informed on the issue and find out more about how you can help.

Together, we can defeat this proposed amendment and safeguard Florida's future.

For free, non-partisan information about constitutional amendments and the process by which they get on the ballot, visit www.VoteSmartFlorida.org.