

**TEXAS PUBLIC POLICY FOUNDATION**

TAXPAYER PROTECTION PROJECT

# 2025 GUIDE TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

WRITTEN BY

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September 2025



# Table of Contents

- 4     **Proposition 1 (SJR 59):** Creating funds to support the capital needs of educational programs offered by the Texas State Technical College System.
- 6     **Proposition 2 (SJR 18):** Banning taxes on the realized or unrealized capital gains of an individual, family, estate, or trust.
- 7     **Proposition 3 (SJR 5):** Denying bail under certain circumstances to persons accused of certain offenses punishable as a felony.
- 10    **Proposition 4 (HJR 7):** Dedicating a portion of state sales and use tax revenues to the Texas water fund and to provide for the allocation and use of that revenue.
- 13    **Proposition 5 (HJR 99):** Exempting from ad valorem taxation tangible personal property consisting of animal feed held by the owner of the property for sale at retail.
- 14    **Proposition 6 (HJR 4):** Prohibits the Legislature from imposing an occupation tax on certain entities that enter into transactions conveying securities or imposing a tax on certain securities transactions.
- 16    **Proposition 7 (HJR 133):** Providing 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 veteran who died as a result of a condition or disease that is presumed to have been service-connected.
- 18    **Proposition 8 (HJR 2):** Prohibiting the Legislature from imposing death taxes applicable to a decedent's property or the transfer of an estate, inheritance, legacy, succession, or gift.
- 19    **Proposition 9 (HJR 1):** Exempting from ad valorem taxation a portion of the market value of tangible personal property a person owns that is held or used for the production of income.
- 21    **Proposition 10 (SJR 84):** Providing a temporary exemption from ad valorem taxation of the appraised value of an improvement to a residence homestead that is completely destroyed by a fire.
- 22    **Proposition 11 (SJR 85):** Increasing the amount of the exemption from ad valorem taxation by a school district of the market value of the residence homestead of a person who is elderly or disabled.
- 24    **Proposition 12 (SJR 27):** Relating to the authority of the State Commission on Judicial Conduct, the tribunal, and the Texas Supreme Court to more effectively sanction judges and justices for judicial misconduct.
- 26    **Proposition 13 (SJR 2):** Raising the exemption of residence homesteads from ad valorem taxation by a school district from \$100,000 to \$140,000.
- 28    **Proposition 14 (SJR 3):** Creating the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, establishing the Dementia Prevention and Research Fund to provide money for research on and prevention and treatment of dementia, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and related disorders in this state.
- 30    **Proposition 15 (SJR 34):** Parents are the primary decision makers for their children.
- 32    **Proposition 16 (SJR 37):** Voters must be United States citizens.
- 34    **Proposition 17 (HJR 34):** Providing an exemption from ad valorem taxation of the amount of the market value of real property located in a county that borders the United Mexican States that arises from the installation or construction on the property of border security infrastructure and related improvements.
- 36    **References**

## **“Humbly invoking the blessing of Almighty God, the people of the State of Texas, do ordain and establish this Constitution.”**

During November of each odd-numbered year, Texas voters head to the ballot box to decide whether to support or reject amendments to the Texas Constitution. On [November 4, 2025](#), this biennial exercise in democratic decision-making is scheduled to once again take place.

In the past, voters have sometimes left the polling place more confused than when they first arrived. Part of the blame is often due to ballot language that is clunky, complicated, and convoluted. Too, explanatory materials that one might assume should accompany proposed amendments are either difficult to find or missing altogether. Without clear and concise supporting documentation, voters can sometimes find the process more difficult than it should be. The complication of it all may help to explain why so many amendments seem to succeed.

Unlike the U.S. Constitution, the Texas Constitution is an expansive document that is frequently amended. Excluding the upcoming vote, 714 constitutional amendments have been proposed since it was adopted in 1876. Of those, 530 amendments have been ratified by voters, 181 have been defeated, and 3 amendments never made it to the ballot box. In all, amendments proposed to voters have been approved 74.2% of the time. Such a high passage rate is not necessarily a bad thing so long as it is done from the perspective of informed decision-making. That is what this guide hopes to facilitate.

The preamble to the Texas Constitution reads: “Humbly invoking the blessings of Almighty God, the people of the State of Texas, do ordain and establish this Constitution.” This opening passage should remind us of the significance of our founding document and prompt us to not simply vote, but to be maximally informed as we vote. With that in mind, and with the spirit of civic responsibility, please enjoy the Texas Public Policy Foundation’s 2025 Guide to Constitutional Amendments in Texas.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Sindelar'.

**Greg Sindelar**  
Chief Executive Officer

## **PROPOSITION 1:**

Creating funds to support the capital needs of educational programs offered by the Texas State Technical College System ([S.J.R. 59, 2025](#)).

**Background:** The Texas State Technical College (TSTC) System does not have a consistent source of funding. Rather, it depends on the Legislature to provide money through capital assistance construction projects, which vary from session to session. With the growing demand for technical skills in the workforce, stable and long-term funding is needed to ensure sustainability. S.J.R. 59 seeks to address this by amending Article VII of the Texas Constitution, to establish a permanent technical institution infrastructure fund ([S.J.R. 59 Analysis, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** S.J.R. 59 proposes a constitutional amendment providing for the creation of funds to support the capital needs of educational programs offered by the Texas State Technical College System.

Ballot Language:

*“The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the permanent technical institution infrastructure fund and the available workforce education fund to support the capital needs of educational programs offered by the Texas State Technical College System”* ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).

Supporters<sup>1</sup> say<sup>2</sup>:

- The proposed amendment would invest in the state’s need for a skilled workforce by providing dedicated endowment funding for the expansion of Texas State Technical College (TSTC) programs and facilities. TSTC provides technical training for high demand industries across Texas and ensures that students graduate with skills that are aligned to industry needs. The endowment would be a major step in TSTC’s ability to secure capital funds needed to expand capacity, which would improve access to technical education, build a stronger workforce pipeline, and increase economic development opportunities for the state.
- Under the current funding model, TSTC receives only limited funding from the Higher Education Fund and has no ability to collect property taxes, which limits its ability to expand its programs. This makes it difficult for TSTC to meet the demand for skilled workers in Texas. With greater investment, more students would be able to access advanced education and training for high-quality jobs.
- The Legislature has added five new campuses to TSTC since 2012 in areas of the state facing increased demand for an industrial workforce, but TSTC has not been able to develop and grow these campuses to adequately address these local workforce demands. Providing this additional source of funding would better allow TSTC to fulfill these needs and fully develop these campuses.

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1 In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses testified or registered in support of the amendment by the committee: Atkins, Grace (Texas 2036), Bennett, Tony (Self; Texas Association of Manufacturers), Hale, J.D. (Texas Association of Builders), Van Arsdale, Corbin (AGC-Texas Building Branch), Abel, Matt (Texas Economic Development Council), Borskey, Mark (Texas Recreational Vehicle Association), Borskey, Mark (Texas Trucking Association), Borskey, Mark (Association of Equipment Manufacturers), Burdett, Jeff (NFIB), Esparza, John (Self; Texas Trucking Association), Fagan, Jennifer (Texas Construction Association), Husted, Ana (Associated Builders and Contractors of Texas, Inc.), Juergens, Seth (Texas Realtors), Landwehr, Martha (BASF Corporation), Lee, Christopher (North Texas Commission), McDougald, Kolton (Texas Chemistry Council), Meroney, Mike (Self; Texas Association of Manufacturers and Texas Association of Builders), Messer, Judd (Advanced Power Alliance), Montgomery, Elizabeth (Samsung Austin Semiconductor, LLC.), Norman, Jr., M. Scott (Texas Association of Builders), Perkins, Jennifer (Self; Dallas Regional Chamber), Weber, Bri (Texas Solar+Storage Association), Zapata, Mireya (Lumbermen’s Association of Texas).

2 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

Opponents<sup>3</sup> say<sup>4</sup>:

- The proposed amendment would increase government spending where it might not be needed.
- Amending the constitution to create a perpetual source of funding outside the regular appropriation process will remove the discretion of future legislatures to determine proper funding levels.

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3 In the [Senate](#), there were no opponents registered or testifying against this amendment.

4 All quotes cited in this paper in opposition of the amendments we borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council, 2025](#).

## **PROPOSITION 2:**

Banning taxes on the realized or unrealized capital gains of an individual, family, estate, or trust ([S.J.R. 18, 2025](#)).

**Background:** A recent [ruling](#) in the state of Washington has raised concern that capital gains taxes are not prohibited by a state income tax ban. S.J.R. 18 would amend Article VIII of the Texas Constitution to explicitly prohibit taxes on the realized or unrealized capital gains of an individual, family, estate, or trust ([S.J.R. 18 Analysis, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** S.J.R. 18 explicitly prohibits taxes on the realized or unrealized capital gains of an individual, family, estate, or trust.

Ballot Language:

*“The constitutional amendment prohibiting the imposition of a tax on the realized or unrealized capital gains of an individual, family, estate, or trust”* ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).

Supporters<sup>5</sup> say<sup>6</sup>:

- The state constitution currently prohibits a personal income tax, but there is no explicit prohibition against a tax on capital gains. Therefore, without the amendment, a future legislature could potentially enact a tax on capital gains that is structured to avoid the income tax prohibition.
- Texas has long been recognized for its pro-business environment. Capital gains taxes can discourage investments, slow economic growth, and reduce job creation.
- States that impose a capital gains tax often see capital flight where investors and businesses relocate to jurisdictions with more favorable tax policies. To maintain Texas’ status as an economic leader, it is critical to ensure long-term certainty in tax policy by explicitly prohibiting and eliminating any form of capital gains taxation.
- Striving for limited government entails limiting the government’s accessible funds.

Opponents<sup>7</sup> say<sup>8</sup>:

- A constitutional prohibition limits the ability of future legislatures to decide whether to impose a capital gains tax during economic circumstances that current legislators cannot foresee. A capital gains tax would no longer be a potential source of revenue for the state without amending the constitution again.
- The proposed amendment is unnecessary since there is currently no proposal in the legislature to institute a capital gains tax.
- The proposed amendment could reduce tax revenue and encourage business entities to organize as business trusts to avoid paying franchise taxes. The current franchise tax on business trusts that sell assets for a gain could be considered a prohibited capital gains tax that could no longer be collected.

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5 In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses testified or registered in favor of the amendment in committee: Fuller, Drew (Texas Farm Bureau).

6 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

7 In the Senate, there were no witnesses registered or testifying against the amendment in committee.

8 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

### **PROPOSITION 3:**

Denying bail under certain circumstances to persons accused of certain offenses punishable as a felony ([S.J.R. 5, 2025](#)).

**Background:** Currently, magistrates are not allowed to deny bail to many defendants accused of violent crimes, even if there is clear and convincing evidence that the individual remains a threat to the community. S.J.R. 5 amends Article I, Section 11 of the Texas State Constitution to allow magistrates to deny bail in such cases ([S.J.R. 5 Analysis, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** If there is clear and convincing evidence that a defendant is a threat to the community, S.J.R. 5 allows magistrates to deny bail to those accused of the following 9 offenses: murder, capital murder, aggravated assault, aggravated kidnapping, aggravated robbery, aggravated sexual assault, indecency with a child, and human trafficking ([S.J.R. 5 Analysis, 2025](#)).

Ballot Language:

*“The constitutional amendment requiring the denial of bail under certain circumstances to persons accused of certain offenses punishable as a felony”* ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).

Supporters<sup>9</sup> say<sup>10</sup>:

- Establishing a procedure for judges to deny bail in cases involving felonies such as murder, aggravated sexual assault, and human trafficking would prevent high-risk offenders from committing additional crimes while awaiting trial. Pretrial releases on low bail or personal recognizance can allow dangerous individuals to remain in the community, as high-risk 16 defendants who can afford bail may be released even if they pose a significant threat to public safety.
- Since 2021, there have been at least 162 homicide cases filed in Harris County against defendants awaiting trial for a previous offense while free on bond at the time of the homicide.
- Limiting application of the amendment to only the most serious offenses ensures that only the individuals who pose the greatest risk are denied bail.
- Denial of bail is successfully utilized in similar circumstances in the federal court system and in many other states.

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9 In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses testified or registered in support of the amendment in committee: Kahan, Andy (Crime Stoppers), Pressley, Nikki (Texas Public Policy Foundation), Tharp, Jennifer (Self; Comal County Criminal District Attorney), Wilkerson, John (TMPA), Brannan, Ryan (Austin Police Association), Byrd, Mike (Self; The Professional Bondsman of Texas), Carcerano, Eric (Self; Chambers County District Attorney), Fleming, Lauren (Houston Region Business Coalition (HRBC)), Foster, Robin (Harris County Deputies' Organization FOP 39), Good, Ken (Self; The Professional Bondsman of Texas), Hawthorne, Brian (Self; Sheriffs Association of Texas), Hunt, Ray (HPOU), Keener, Justin (Doug Deason), Lee, Cory (Self; Professional Bondsmen of Texas), MARTINEZ, ADRIAN (SAN ANTONIO POLICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION), Montemayor, Irma (Self; Professional Bondsmen of Texas), Morris, Joe (Texas Game Warden Peace Officers Association), Moscoso, Washington (San Antonio Police Department), Ortiz, Carlos (San Antonio Police Officers Association), Parnell, James (Dallas Police Association), Sanders, Joshua (City of Houston), Smith, James (San Antonio Police Department), Stinnett, Sam (Self; Upbring), Szimanski, Jennifer (Self; Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas (CLEAT)), Tittle, Gary (Self; Texas Police Chiefs Association), Williams, M. Paige (Dallas County Criminal District Attorney John Kreuzot).

10 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

- The proposed amendment provides a distinct threshold for denying bail by requiring the state to demonstrate by a preponderance of the evidence that granting bail is insufficient to reasonably prevent a person’s willful nonappearance in court or demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that granting bail is insufficient to reasonably ensure public safety. This places a clear burden on the prosecution and conforms with the burden of proof required for detaining a defendant without bail under the federal Bail Reform Act of 1984, which was found constitutional in *United States v. Salerno*.
- Defendants would have the right to be represented by counsel at bail denial hearings, ensuring legal representation to safeguard the defendant’s rights during this critical stage of the pretrial process.
- A defendant would retain the right to appeal a judge’s decision regarding bail.
- Under the current system, pretrial release is effectively denied by means of bail being set so high that a defendant cannot possibly make it. The proposed amendment provides a more honest way of accomplishing this.

Opponents<sup>11</sup> say<sup>12</sup>:

- The proposed amendment would lead to longer pretrial detentions for individuals who have yet to be convicted of a crime, increasing the financial and personal burdens of detention on these defendants and undermining the presumption of innocence.
- The proposed amendment could be ineffective at addressing its stated goal of increasing public safety, as high pretrial incarceration rates have been shown to be associated with increased recidivism, difficulty reintegrating into the community, and poorer long-term outcomes for defendants.
- The proposed amendment could exacerbate existing racial disparities in the state’s criminal justice system.
- Texas judges already have the discretion to effectively deny bail to potentially dangerous individuals by setting cash bonds at amounts that these defendants cannot pay.
- Texas consistently ranks among the states with the highest pretrial detention rates, suggesting that the current system already provides for substantial pretrial detention.
- Increasing reliance on pretrial detention could exacerbate overcrowding in county jails, which are often understaffed and struggle with limited resources, potentially leading to higher taxpayer costs without commensurate public safety benefits.
- Failing to set a specific timeline by which a bail determination must be made could lead to delays in trial proceedings, causing alleged offenders to be held for longer without meaningful recourse and undermining defendants’ right to a speedy trial.

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11 In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses testified or registered against the amendment in committee: Castillo, Alycia (Texas Civil Rights Project), Graves, Anthony (Self) , Hudson, Nick (American Civil Liberties Union of Texas), Sharif, Amaal (Self), VanZandt, Goldie (Self; Texas Jail Project), Walker, Nate (The Nail Project), Martinez, Justin (Self; Latino Justice PRLDEF), Place, Allen (Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association).

12 All quotes cited in this paper against the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

- A better approach would be to require judges to consider the “least restrictive conditions” that would reasonably ensure public safety and the defendant’s appearance in court. This approach would ensure that pretrial detention is reserved for truly high-risk cases and reduce the risk of unnecessarily lengthy incarceration for lower-risk defendants.
- The proposed amendment requires a judge to consider the criminal history of a defendant when making a decision to deny bail, which means that offenses committed long ago could be used against the defendant, even those that were nonviolent in nature.

## **PROPOSITION 4:**

Dedicating a portion of state sales and use tax revenues to the Texas water fund and to provide for the allocation and use of that revenue ([H.J.R. 7, 2025](#)).

**Background:** Unless things change, Texas will face a severe water shortage within the next 15 years. According to a recent report commissioned by Texas 2036, if current trends continue, Texas could lose 785,000 jobs and \$160 billion in GDP due to water scarcity by the end of the 2030s. In fact, in the Rio Grande Valley alone, water scarcity already costs the state \$993 million in GDP annually. Recognizing the danger a water shortage poses to the Texas economy, Governor Abbot has called for a revenue stream of \$1 billion annually dedicated to addressing the problem. H.J.R. 7 would do just this, amending article VIII of the Texas Constitution by adding Section 7-3 which dedicates \$1 billion in sales and use tax revenues to the Texas Water Fund each state fiscal year beginning with FY 2028 ([H.J.R. 7 Analysis, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** H.J.R. 7 dedicates \$1 billion of sales and use tax revenues annually to the Texas Water Fund each state fiscal year beginning in fiscal year 2028.

Ballot Language:

*“The constitutional amendment to dedicate a portion of the revenue derived from state sales and use taxes to the Texas water fund and to provide for the allocation and use of that revenue”* ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).

## Supporters<sup>13</sup> say<sup>14</sup>:

- Studies have suggested that \$154 billion will be needed over the next 50 years to fully address water infrastructure concerns as the state's population and water demand continue to grow, and the proposed amendment would help provide a sustainable funding mechanism to help address that funding deficit and meet the state's pressing water needs.
- Dedicated funding for water infrastructure would provide a predictable funding stream to improve water planning efforts, promote confidence in the state's ability to tackle its water challenges in the eyes of businesses, and ensure that infrastructure can keep up with demands without increasing pressure on ratepayers. Other types of infrastructure, like transportation, have dedicated funding and are a model for how the state should address water funding.
- Without significant investment in water resources, the risk of shortages could negatively impact quality of life for Texas residents, drive up costs for businesses, and stall economic development, as businesses may choose to establish themselves elsewhere due to concerns about access to water in Texas.

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13 In the [House](#), the following witnesses testified or registered in support of the amendment in committee: Bennett, Tony (Self; Texas Association of Manufacturers), Camino, Marie (The Nature Conservancy in TX), Fowler, Perry (Self; Texas Water Infrastructure Network (TXWIN)), Glass, Tom (Self; Lee County Conservatives) Harward, Heather (Texas Water Supply Partners) Kirkle, Sarah (Texas Water Association) Landin, Taylor (Greater Houston Partnership), Mazur, Jeremy B. (Texas 2036) Oney, Tom (Lower Colorado River Authority) Phillips, Matt (Brazos River Authority) Puig-Williams, Vanessa (EDF) Skrobarkczyk, Ryan (City of Corpus Christi) Stewart, Scott (American Council of Engineering Companies of Texas) Walker, Jennifer (National Wildlife Federation) Young Montgomery, Rebecca (North Texas Commission), Abel, Matt (Texas Economic Development Council), Albright, Steven (AGC of Texas) Aragonez, Alexa (City of Houston) Bender, John (Texas Corn Producers Association) Borskey, Mark (Association of Equipment Manufacturers) Chenelle, Rebekah (Dallas Regional Chamber) Ellmer, Mindy (Tarrant regional water district) Ellmer, Mindy (Gulf coast water authority) Ellmer, Mindy (Gulf coast water authority) Embrey, Ty (Water Environment Association of Texas (WEAT)) Emerick, Jeff (Texas Association of Business) Frazier, Kyle (Texas Desalination Association) Gammage, Sam (Dow) Garcia, Buddy (Self) Goelemon, Kinnan (WaterRuse Association of Texas, Friends of San Saba) Hale, J.D. (Texas Association of Builders) Hamilton, Shannon (Self; Central Texas Water Coalition) Harrell, Logan (Texas Chemistry Council) Harward, Heather (Upper Trinity Regional Water District) Howe, Billy (Texas Farm Bureau) Jones, Neal t. Buddy (Abilene chamber of commerce) Juergens, Seth (Texas REALTORS) Kaplan, Cliff (Texans for Responsible Aggregate Mining) Kelly, David (North TX Municipal Water District) Krogman, Travis (Austin Chamber of Commerce) Lee, Gerald (The Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce) Lewis, Alec (Sabine River Authority) Lindley, Emily (City of Temple) Lopez, Javier (Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance) Lucio, Eddie (North Harris County Regional Water Authority) Mathis, James (Oxy) Miller, Jeff (Gulf Trust), Montgomery, Elizabeth (Samsung Austin Semiconductor, LLC.) Montgomery, Rebecca (Mansfield Chamber) Montgomery, Rebecca (Frisco Chamber) Montgomery, Rebecca (Hurst Euleless Bedford Chamber) Parker, Blaire (San Antonio Water System (SAWS)) Patterson, T. J. (City of Fort Worth) Paylor, Ryan (Texas Independent Producers & Royalty Owners Association (TIPRO)) Pearson, Shea (GBRA) Pearson, Shea (El Paso Water) Posey, Jake (Western Travis County Public Utility Agency) Reed, Cyrus (Lone Star Chapter Sierra Club) Rubinstein, Carlos (Self; RSAH2O LLC) Sledge, Brian (Self; San Antonio River Authority; Red Bluff Water Power Control District; Upper Trinity GCD; Benbrook Water Authority; Prairieland GCD; Wells Branch MUD; Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Conservation Dist.) Sledge, Shauna (Self; City of Bryan, Texas) Steinbach, Stacey (Texas Water Association) Traub, Ariel (City of Garland) Tredway, CJ (Texas Oil and Gas Association) Wier, Andrew (Self; Simsboro Aquifer Water Defense Fund) Williams-Eugene, Nzingha (Victoria Economic Development Corporation) Wynn, Monty (Texas Municipal League) Yanas, Christine (Methodist Healthcare Ministries) Yancy, Justin (Texas Business Leadership Council) Young Montgomery, Rebecca (Greater Arlington Chamber) Zent, Lara (Texas Rural Water Association). In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses testified or registered in support of the amendment in committee: Finley, Trace (Texas Independent Produced Water Association), Ingham, Karr (Texas Alliance of Energy Producers) Mazur, Jeremy (Texas 2036), Puig-Williams, Vanessa (Environmental Defense Fund) Alexander, Laura (Greater Houston Partnership), Aragonez, Alexa (City of Houston), Blake, Frances (Texas Association of Builders), Deline, Steven (Self), Fuller, Drew (Texas Farm Bureau), Holbrooks, Paige (Self; Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association), Islam, Nadia (City of San Antonio), Jackson, Wroe (Texas Association of Manufacturers), Kay, Cicely (Travis County Commissioners Court), Lewis, Alec (Sabine River Authority), Lozano, Michael (Permian Basin Petroleum Association), McCord, Mia (Texas Chemistry Council), Modglin, Jason (Western Midstream) Montgomery, Rebecca (Greater Arlington Chamber), Montgomery, Rebecca (Frisco Chamber), Montgomery, Rebecca (Hurst Euleless Bedford Chamber), Montgomery, Rebecca (Mansfield Chamber), Montgomery, Rebecca (Grapevine Chamber), Montgomery, (Fort Worth Chamber), Murray, Jed (Texas vegetable association), Norman, Jr., M. Scott (Texas Association of Builders), Patterson, T. J. (City of Fort Worth), Pearson, Shea (Guadalupe Blanco River Authority), Pearson, Shea (El Paso Water), Pearson, Shea (Covestro), Perdichizzi, Gabriela (Texas Association of Business), Romo, Joel (Nueces County), Shroberczyk, Ryan (City of Corpus Christi), Sledge, Brian (San Antonio River Authority; Benbrook Water Authority; Upper Trinity GCD), Sledge, Shauna (City of Bryan; Prairieland GCD; Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Conservation District), Troxclair, Caleb (WaterBridge, Permian Resources) Yanas, Christine (Methodist Healthcare Ministries).

14 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

- Because water costs are increasing and water infrastructure projects can be expensive, be complex, and take a long time to complete, it is critical that investment in water infrastructure happen now to help ensure the state’s water security into the future.
- Texas is the eighth-largest economy in the world, there have been multibillion-dollar state surpluses in recent legislative sessions, and 1,600 people a day are moving to Texas. As Texas continues to experience rapid population and economic growth, the state’s water infrastructure investment strategy must keep pace. Strengthening water infrastructure would fuel economic development, support population growth, create jobs, and attract new investments.
- With uncertainty regarding federal funding for the state’s water infrastructure needs, Texas water and wastewater projects require significant investment, and a dedicated revenue source at the state level is a great way to accomplish that.

Opponents<sup>15</sup> say<sup>16</sup>:

- While no opposition to the proposed constitutional amendment was expressed during legislative consideration of the proposal, it was noted that the proposed amendment would not provide sufficient funding to secure the state’s water future given the size of projected water funding needs or address what priority should be given specifically to new water supply development.

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15 In the [House](#), no witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee. In the [Senate](#), no witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee.

16 All quotes cited in this paper against the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

## **PROPOSITION 5:**

Exempting from ad valorem taxation tangible personal property consisting of animal feed held by the owner of the property for sale at retail ([H.J.R. 99, 2025](#)).

**Background:** Animal feed is exempt from taxation during production, transportation, and use. However, feed gets taxed as property if it sits as an inventory at a store. H.J.R. 99 seeks to address this inconsistency, amending Article VIII of the Texas Constitution, by adding Section 1-s. The section authorizes the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation animal feed held by the owner of the property for sale at retail ([H.J.R. 99 Analysis, 2025](#)). Ideally, this amendment would lower feed prices for Texas farmers.

**Overview:** H.J.R. 99 allows the Legislature to exempt animal feed held by an owner that is for sale at a retail location, from ad valorem taxation.

Ballot Language:

*“The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation tangible personal property consisting of animal feed held by the owner of the property for sale at retail”* ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).

Supporters<sup>17</sup> say<sup>18</sup>:

- Under current law, animal feed is not taxed at any point except when it is sitting in a store or store warehouse as inventory. Feed sellers' warehouses are generally fully stocked at the time of year when inventories are appraised for taxation due to the seasonal needs of the agriculture business, resulting in sellers paying exceptionally high taxes due to large inventories and these costs then being passed on to consumers through higher prices. Exempting animal feed held by retailers from property tax would reduce retailer costs and help make animal feed more affordable for Texas farmers and ranchers.

Opponents<sup>19</sup> say<sup>20</sup>:

- Exemptions for animal feed would give an unfair tax benefit to feed sellers, as almost all other forms of inventory are subject to property tax.

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17 In the [House](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Britton, Ted (Self; Texas Farm Bureau) Fuller, Drew (Texas Farm Bureau) Hayter, Russell (Self) Reed, Jimmy (Self; Colony Ranch Supply, Inc). In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Fuller, Drew (Texas Farm Bureau).

18 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

19 In the [House](#), the following witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee: Berel-Harrop, Sarah (Self) Cahn, Adam (Self). In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee: Deline, Steven (Self).

20 All quotes cited in this paper against the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

## **PROPOSITION 6:**

Prohibits the Legislature from imposing an occupation tax on certain entities that enter into transactions conveying securities or imposing a tax on certain securities transactions ([H.J.R. 4, 2025](#)).

**Background:** In 2025, Texas gained its first fully integrated stock exchange. H.J.R. 4 would protect the burgeoning industry by adding Section 30 to [Article VIII](#) of the Texas Constitution, prohibiting occupation taxes on registered securities market operators and taxes on securities transactions ([H.J.R. 4 Analysis, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** H.J.R. 4 prohibits occupation taxes on registered securities market operators and taxes on securities transactions.

Ballot Language:

*“The constitutional amendment prohibiting the legislature from enacting a law imposing an occupation tax on certain entities that enter into transactions conveying securities or imposing a tax on certain securities transactions”* ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).

Supporters<sup>21</sup> say<sup>22</sup>:

- As the Texas Stock Exchange is in the process of being established and other national stock exchanges are considering moving to the state, it is important to prevent the imposition of taxes that would have a detrimental effect on the Texas economy. Imposing a financial transaction tax could negatively affect the growing Texas economy by deterring investment in financial services sector innovation.
- Taxes on financial transactions raise transaction costs, which can lead to decreased trade volume, lower asset prices, less efficient markets, increases in the cost of capital, and increases in the cost of consumer goods.
- The proposed amendment would benefit Texas taxpayers, assure investors that Texas is committed to providing a low-tax, business-friendly environment, and encourage businesses to locate in Texas.
- Many Texans rely on marginal returns on their investments, such as 401(k) plans, IRAs, and pensions, to support them in retirement. Any additional tax on financial transactions, whether on transferring securities or processing trades, would reduce these returns and make it more difficult for Texans to save for the future.
- The proposed amendment provides certainty for investors, including retirees, about their ability to trade securities freely in Texas without undue financial burdens.
- Texas has historically been able to fund critical services without imposing burdensome new taxes.

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21 In the [House](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Lauderback, Bill (TXSE Group Inc (Texas Stock Exchange)), Hodge, Daniel (Texas Stock Exchange). In the [Senate](#), the witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Lauderback, Bill (Texas Stock Exchange).

22 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

Opponents<sup>23</sup> say<sup>24</sup>:

- The proposed amendment would make it harder for future legislatures to make tax policy by prohibiting the types of taxes covered by the amendment.
- The state may experience an economic downturn in the future and could benefit from having a securities transaction or occupation tax to raise revenues at that time.
- Banning possible revenue streams before they exist means that the bulk of local revenue will need to continue coming from property taxes, which burden working class individuals.
- The proposed amendment would primarily benefit the wealthy and allow them to avoid paying their fair share in taxes while Texas families struggle with increased taxes and prices.
- Texas already has the seventh-most regressive tax system in the country, with the bottom 20% of earners paying a greater share of their income in taxes than the top 1%. The proposed amendment would worsen this disparity and signal to working Texans that they are not the state's priority.

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23 In the [House](#), the following witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee: Rhodes, Fran (Self; True Texas Project). In the [Senate](#), the following witness registered or testified against the amendment in committee: Deline, Steven (Self).

24 All quotes cited in this paper against the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

## **PROPOSITION 7:**

Providing 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 veteran who died as a result of a condition or disease that is presumed to have been service-connected ([H.J.R. 133, 2025](#)).

**Background:** If a veteran is 100% disabled due to a service-related incident, they are entitled under Texas law to a property tax break. When such a veteran passes, the surviving spouse is entitled to the same tax break. However, no such tax break exists for the surviving spouse of a veteran who has died from a condition presumed to be service-related. H.J.R. 133 seeks to rectify this by adding Subsections (q) and (r) to Section 1-b, Article VIII of the Texas Constitution, authorizing the legislature to provide a property tax break for these spouses ([H.J.R. 133 Analysis, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** H.J.R. 133 would exempt the surviving spouse of a veteran who has died of a condition presumed under federal law to be service-related from ad valorem taxation of all or part of the market value of their residence homestead.

Ballot Language:

*“The 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 veteran who died as a result of a condition or disease that is presumed under federal law to have been service-connected”* ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).

Supporters<sup>25</sup> say<sup>26</sup>:

- State law providing a property tax exemption for the surviving spouses of veterans with a 100% service-connected disability does not take into account the PACT Act, a 2022 federal law that expanded eligibility for VA health care and benefits for veterans exposed to Agent Orange, burn pits, radiation, and other toxic substances and created new presumptions for certain service-connected conditions. As a result, the surviving spouses of veterans who did not have a 100% disability rating at the time of their death from service-connected causes have been excluded from receiving the property tax exemption. The proposed amendment would correct this discrepancy.
- The proposed amendment ensures that all surviving spouses of veterans who have died due to service-related conditions are treated equally, without arbitrary exclusions based on the date the PACT Act passed.
- By eliminating property taxes for qualifying surviving spouses, Texas demonstrates its commitment to honoring the service and sacrifice of both veterans and their families.
- The proposed amendment would apply only to a narrow population of qualifying surviving spouses and is not expected to have a significant fiscal impact to the state or local governments.

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25 In the [House](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: West, William (The American Legion, Dept of Texas). In the Senate, the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Deline, Steven (Self). In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Deline, Steven (Self).

26 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

Opponents<sup>27</sup> say<sup>28</sup>:

- The expansion of property tax exemptions to the spouses of deceased veterans could burden other taxpayers with disproportionately higher tax rates, especially near military bases and surrounding areas where there are larger populations of veteran families who would qualify for such an exemption.

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27 No witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in either the House or Senate committee.

28 All quotes cited in this paper against the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

## **PROPOSITION 8:**

Prohibiting the Legislature from imposing death taxes applicable to a decedent's property or the transfer of an estate, inheritance, legacy, succession, or gift ([H.J.R. 2, 2025](#)).

**Background:** The Texas Legislature removed the state's inheritance tax in 2015; this House Joint Resolution seeks to completely close the chance of a state death tax being placed on Texans. H.J.R. 2 would end this possibility by amending Article VIII Section 26, "explicitly prohibiting the legislature from imposing estate, inheritance, and death taxes and taxes on the transfer of an estate, inheritance, legacy, succession, or gift" ([H.J.R. 2 Analysis, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** H.J.R. 2 prohibits estate, inheritance, and death taxes, and prohibits taxes on the transfer of an estate, inheritance, legacy, succession, or gift.

Ballot Language:

*"The constitutional amendment to prohibit the legislature from imposing death taxes applicable to a decedent's property or the transfer of an estate, inheritance, legacy, succession, or gift" ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).*

Supporters<sup>29</sup> say<sup>30</sup>:

- Constitutionally prohibiting the imposition of a death tax would help guarantee that heirs and beneficiaries could continue to retain property and assets after the passing of a loved one.
- Death taxes can be burdensome and can lead to inefficient estate planning and tax avoidance strategies.
- The money that a person leaves behind after their death has already been taxed, and the government should be limited in the number of times it can tax the same assets.

Opponents<sup>31</sup> say<sup>32</sup>:

- Amending the state constitution to prohibit a death tax that does not currently exist could hinder future legislatures from acting in the best interest of the state and lead to unintended consequences.
- Constitutional amendments should be reserved for the most critical matters affecting the state.
- This measure is unnecessary because there is currently no proposal in the Legislature to institute a death tax.

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29 In the [House](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Fuller, Drew (Texas Farm Bureau). In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Blake, Frances (Texas Association of Builders), Fuller, Drew (Texas Farm Bureau), Norman, Jr., M. Scott (Texas Association of Builders).

30 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

31 In the [House](#), the following witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee: Rhodes, Fran (Self; True Texas Project). In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee: Deline, Steven (Self).

32 All quotes cited in this paper against the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

## **PROPOSITION 9:**

Exempting from ad valorem taxation a portion of the market value of tangible personal property a person owns that is held or used for the production of income ([H.J.R. 1, 2025](#)).

**Background:** Property taxes in Texas are rising. This is burdensome for everyone but particularly for small business owners. H.J.R. 1 seeks to address this issue by amending [Section 1\(g\)](#), Article VIII of the Texas Constitution to “allow the legislature to exempt from property taxation \$125,000 of the market value of tangible personal property that is held or used for the production of income” ([H.J.R. 1 Analysis, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** H.J.R. 1 allows the Legislature to exempt \$125,000 of value of personal property from ad valorem taxation.

Ballot Language:

*“The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation a portion of the market value of tangible personal property a person owns that is held or used for the production of income”* ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).

Supporters<sup>33</sup> say<sup>34</sup>:

- Increasing the business personal property tax exemption would provide tax relief for businesses in Texas, particularly small businesses, and allow these businesses to reinvest these savings and expand their operations while limiting price increases, thus resulting in economic growth in the state.
- The proposed amendment would incentivize businesses to move to or remain in Texas to take advantage of the business personal property tax exemption and could reduce the need for businesses to move inventory or equipment out of Texas to avoid paying business personal property taxes on these items.
- The proposed amendment would reduce burdens for appraisal districts in Texas by reducing the number of businesses on their appraisal rolls.
- The impact to state and local tax revenue would be minor since most of the revenue from business personal property taxes comes from a small number of large businesses, which would still be required to pay taxes on all business personal property over the threshold amount. The potential economic benefits would outweigh the minimal tax losses.
- With another budget surplus, it is the state’s responsibility to return this surplus money to the taxpayers.

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33 In the [House](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Bragiel, Justin (Texas Hotel and Lodging Association) Burdett, Jeff (NFIB) Fuller, Drew (Texas Farm Bureau) Gessler, Christy (Texas Realtors) Hamer, Glenn (Texas Association of Business) Mauro, Kyle (Texas Association of Property Tax Professionals) McCormick, Travis (Panhandle Producers & Royalty Owners Association) Newton, Chris (Texas Apartment Association) Nezda Orr, Elizabeth (AT&T) Peacock, William (Huffines Libert Foundation) Rabb, Jennifer (Texas Taxpayers and Research Association) Ransdell, James (Self) Wood, Robert (Texas Oil & Gas Association, Texas Chemistry Council, Texas Association of Manufacturers). In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Burdett, Jeff (NFIB), Gessler, Christy (Texas REALTORS), Hamer, Glenn (Texas Association of Business), McCord, John (Texas Retailers Association), Walker, Carl (also providing written testimony) (Texas Taxpayers and Research Association), Fletcher, Kevin (AT&T), Fuller, Drew (Texas Farm Bureau), Lively, Lance (Texas Package Stores Association), Maley, Charles (Self; South Texans’ Property Rights Association), Martinez, Jorge (Self; The LIBRE Initiative), Norman, Jr., M. Scott (Texas Association of Builders), Sheetz, Samuel (Self; Americans for Prosperity), Streufert, Kelsey (Texas Restaurant Association), Wood, Robert (Texas Association of Manufacturers, Texas Chemistry Council, Texas Oil and Gas Association).

34 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

- Paying business personal property taxes can be an onerous process for small businesses since it requires documenting all assets and reporting acquisition prices and dates and depreciation schedules. Tax formulas can be complicated and often overestimate the value of business personal property, and protesting these determinations can be costly and time-consuming. The enabling legislation for the proposed amendment would reduce administrative and compliance burdens for businesses in Texas.

Opponents<sup>35</sup> say<sup>36</sup>:

The increased tax exemption would reduce the amount of taxable property value on local tax rolls. Counties, municipalities, and special districts might have to raise tax rates to cover these losses, which could result in a redistribution of the property tax burden to homeowners.

The increased tax exemption causes a net loss in state general revenue available for other uses by reducing local property tax revenue for school districts, which the state would have to make up from state revenue through the school finance system.

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35 In the [House](#), the following witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee: Grever, Maya (Harris County Commissioners Court). In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee: Deline, Steven (Self), Wheeler, Julie (Travis County Commissioners Court).

36 All quotes cited in this paper against the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

## **PROPOSITION 10:**

Providing a temporary exemption from ad valorem taxation of the appraised value of an improvement to a residence homestead that is completely destroyed by a fire ([S.J.R. 84, 2025](#)).

**Background:** Currently, major changes in property value stemming from fire or other disaster are improperly accounted for in the tax system. S.J.R. 84 seeks to protect homeowners from being taxed for more than their property is worth by amending Section 1-b, Article VIII of the Texas Constitution to “provide for a temporary exemption from ad valorem taxation of the appraised value of an improvement to a residence homestead that is completely destroyed by a fire” ([S.J.R. 84 Analysis, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** S.J.R. 84 allows for a temporary exemption from ad valorem taxation of improvements to residence homesteads which have been destroyed by fire.

Ballot Language:

*“The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to provide for a temporary exemption from ad valorem taxation of the appraised value of an improvement to a residence homestead that is completely destroyed by a fire”* ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).

Supporters<sup>37</sup> say<sup>38</sup>:

- Currently, there is no process to adjust a property appraisal if there is a major change in value because the property is destroyed by a fire. This leaves the property owner liable for taxes on the full value of their property even though it is uninhabitable.
- An unexpected, tragic loss of a home through a fire is devastating to a family. The proposed constitutional amendment provides some immediate financial relief for affected homeowners.

Opponents<sup>39</sup> say<sup>40</sup>:

- No opposition to the proposed constitutional amendment was expressed during legislative consideration of the proposal.

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37 In the [House](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment: Maley, Charles (Self; South Texans’ Property Rights Association).

38 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

39 No witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in either the House or the Senate.

40 All quotes cited in this paper against the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

## **PROPOSITION 11:**

Increasing the amount of the exemption from ad valorem taxation by a school district of the market value of the residence homestead of a person who is elderly or disabled ([S.J.R. 85, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** Currently, residence homesteads of the elderly and the disabled are taxed by school districts at \$110,000 less than their appraised value. S.J.R. 85 amends Section 1-b(c), Article VIII of the Texas Constitution to increase this exemption for over-65 and disabled homestead property owners from \$10,000 to \$60,000 ([S.J.R. 85 Analysis, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** S.J.R. 85 authorizes the Legislature to increase the exemption from ad valorem taxation by a school district which is given to the elderly and the disabled.

Ballot Language:

*“The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to increase the amount of the exemption from ad valorem taxation by a school district of the market value of the residence homestead of a person who is elderly or disabled”* ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).

Supporters<sup>41</sup> say<sup>42</sup>:

- Increasing the residence homestead property tax exemption for individuals who are elderly and disabled would increase housing affordability and provide protection for a vulnerable population. Many individuals who qualify for this exemption live on a fixed income and face rising medical insurance costs. Individuals who are elderly and disabled also often have to make expensive modifications to their homes, such as adding ramps or accessibility features to accommodate walkers, wheelchairs, and other medical devices. The increase would help them to stay in their homes and their neighborhoods. Keeping seniors in the homes they have lived in for decades is especially valuable, as it contributes to continuity and stability in the community.
- The proposed amendment would provide visible and understandable tax relief to a large segment of the state’s population. Homestead exemptions are a particularly beneficial form of tax relief because the affected taxpayers can clearly see the reduction in their tax bill, which encourages support for the tax system overall.
- School districts would not experience a reduction in funding because the state would make up for losses caused by the tax reductions attributable to the increased homestead exemption.

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41 In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Hale, J.D. (Texas Association of Builders), Popp, James (Self; Popp Hutcheson, Ryan LLC), Spataro, Susan (Self), Taylor, Michael (Self; Texas Silver-Haired Legislature), Wuensch, Brandy (Texas Realtors), Norman, Jr., M. Scott (Texas Association of Builders). In the [House](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Deline, Steven (Self) Gessler, Christy (Self; Texas REALTORS) Hale, J.D. (Texas Association of Builders) Maley, Charles (Self; South Texans’ Property Rights Association).

42 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

Opponents<sup>43</sup> say<sup>44</sup>:

- This additional tax cut is unnecessary because the Legislature has already cut property taxes repeatedly in recent years. Spending more state money on tax cuts would reduce state funds available for public services such as school funding, health care, and infrastructure needs.
- The state should not rely too heavily on the temporary surplus in state revenue, which may not be available in the future if there is an economic downturn.
- If the Legislature wants to provide more tax relief, it should do so in a way that benefits people other than just homeowners. An increase in a residence homestead exemption does not benefit renters, who constitute a significant portion of the state's population. Also, tying the increased exemption to individuals over 65 is not necessarily a good proxy for helping low-income individuals, since not all seniors live on low or fixed incomes.
- Mechanisms already exist for an individual over 65 to remain in their home in the event that the individual is unable to pay property taxes, including deferring those taxes to the individual's estate until the death of the individual or obtaining a reverse mortgage.
- The increased exemption will create a recurring financial obligation for the state. If the state does not have sufficient revenue in future years, other budgetary needs may be negatively impacted.

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43 In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee: Deline, Steven (Self). In the [House](#), the no witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee:

44 All quotes cited in this paper against the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

## **PROPOSITION 12:**

Relating to the authority of the State Commission on Judicial Conduct, the tribunal, and the Texas Supreme Court to more effectively sanction judges and justices for judicial misconduct ([S.J.R. 27, 2025](#)).

**Background:** The State Commission on Judicial Conduct is an oversight body responsible for investigating and disciplining judges in Texas. S.J.R. 27 would amend Section 1-a, Article V of the Texas Constitution to change the make-up and authority of the body to more effectively sanction judges and justices for judicial misconduct. Changes include raising the minimum age, staggering terms, increasing the number of citizens on the commission, and affording the commission more disciplinary discretion ([S.J.R. 27 Analysis, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** S.J.R. 27 changes the makeup and authority of the State Commission on Judicial Conduct.

Ballot Language:

*“The constitutional amendment regarding the membership of the State Commission on Judicial Conduct, the membership of the tribunal to review the commission’s recommendations, and the authority of the commission, the tribunal, and the Texas Supreme Court to more effectively sanction judges and justices for judicial misconduct”* ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).

Supporters<sup>45</sup> say<sup>46</sup>:

- The proposed amendment would promote transparency and accountability in the state’s judicial system by reforming the composition and authority of the State Commission on Judicial Conduct (SCJC), which was created to promote the integrity, competence, and impartiality of the judiciary.
- The SCJC has not sufficiently protected the rights of Texas citizens who have experienced the consequences of abuses of judicial power and failures of competence. Complaints often go unresolved for extended periods of time, and judges do not face discipline for wrongdoing. The proposed amendment would institute commonsense reforms that would allow judicial misconduct to be addressed fairly and swiftly.
- The proposed amendment would improve transparency by restricting the option for the SCJC to issue private sanctions and would include more public representation on the SCJC to increase independence and fairness in judicial oversight.

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45 In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Andrews, Kai Founder (Self; Childrens Court), Dickens, Jay (also providing written testimony) (Self), Garza, Robert (Self), Lundy, Jennifer (also providing written testimony) (Self; Texans for Judicial Accountability), Perricone, Christopher (Self), Ross, Kaitlan (Self), Tuter, Patrick (Self), Hatfield, Erika (Self), Hunt, Ray (Self; Houston Police Officers’ Union), Kam, Tom (Self), VAN COMPERNOLLE, JOHN (Self), Wilkerson, John (Texas Municipal Police Association (TMPA)). In the [House](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Dickens, Jay (Self), Dickens, Kennen (Self), Lundy, Jennifer (Texans for Judicial Accountability), Perricone, Christopher (Self), Tuter, Patrick (Self), Bullock, Michael (Austin Police Association) Chapman, Charles Brice (Self), Christian, George (Texas Civil Justice League), Hunt, Ray (Self; Houston Police Officers’ Union), Kershaw, James (Harris County Deputies’ Organization FOP #39), Parkinson, Thomas (Self), Parnell, James (Dallas Police Association), Parsley, Lee (Texans for Lawsuit Reform), Saldana, George (Self), Wilkerson, John (Texas Municipal Police Association (TMPA)), Zachery, George (Self).

46 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

Opponents<sup>47</sup> say<sup>48</sup>:

- The reorganization of the SCJC's composition would have the governor appointing a greater number of commissioners than the Texas Supreme Court, even though the SCJC serves as part of the judicial branch. This could create an opportunity for more politicization and partisanship in the judicial discipline process.
- Since many complaints about judges relate to their actions in trial, a majority of the SCJC commissioners should be judges or justices since these individuals will be best equipped to assess the actions of their peers.

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47 In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee: Deline, Steven (Self), Hoffacker, Daphne (Self), Killalea, Michael (Self; Indivisible 1431), Moore, Jayme (Self), Skinner, Cindy (Self), Van Der Riet, Cathryn (Self). In the [House](#), the no witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee.

48 All quotes cited in this paper against the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

## **PROPOSITION 13:**

Raising the exemption of residence homesteads from ad valorem taxation by a school district from \$100,000 to \$140,000 ([S.J.R. 2, 2025](#)).

**Background:** Currently, Texas residence homesteads are taxed for general elementary and secondary public-school purposes at \$100,000 less than their appraised value. S.J.R. 2 amends Section 1-b(c), Article VIII of the Texas Constitution to increase the exemption from \$100,000 to \$140,000. This amendment is meant to reduce taxes for Texas homeowners ([S.J.R. 2 Analysis, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** S.J.R. 2 increases the amount of the market value of a residence homestead which is exempt from ad valorem taxation for general elementary and secondary public-school purposes.

Ballot Language:

*“The constitutional amendment to increase the amount of the exemption of residence homesteads from ad valorem taxation by a school district from \$100,000 to \$140,000”* ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).

Supporters<sup>49</sup> say<sup>50</sup>:

- Increasing the school district residence homestead property tax exemption would provide Texas homeowners with significant new tax relief, as school taxes amount to the largest share of most property owners’ increasing tax burden. The tax savings will encourage economic growth.
- Taxpayers need additional tax relief since many of the gains from tax relief passed in previous legislative sessions have been lost due to inflation and increases in tax rates by local governments.
- An increase in the homestead exemption would provide broad-based tax relief to all homeowners and would be a meaningful tax benefit to a large number of Texans, particularly elderly homeowners living on fixed incomes and facing increasing health care expenses and rising insurance rates.
- The proposed amendment would benefit the economy by encouraging home purchases and boosting the real estate market. It would help first-time home buyers who often do not have excess money to spend on taxes and normally have substantial mortgage payments in addition to other home expenses.
- The state would make up any loss of local school district taxes as a result of the higher exemption by using general revenue under state aid formulas provided in current law and the enabling legislation.
- The proposed amendment would provide lasting, meaningful tax relief to a broad cross-section of the tax base while ensuring that funding for important priorities is maintained. • Substantial property tax cuts for homeowners could result in lower rents to maintain market competition between owning and renting.

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49 In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Holman, Dixon (Texas Realtors), Mezayek, Sam (Self; Texas Association of Builders), Popp, Jim (Self; Popp Hutcheson), Quintero, James (Texas Public Policy Foundation), Scoma, Charles (Texas Silver Hair Legislature), Spataro, Susan (Self), Zito, Al (Self), Martinez, Jorge (Self; The LIBRE Initiative), Mayville, James (Self; Americans for Prosperity), Sheetz, Samuel (Self; Americans for Prosperity), Tillman, Calvin (Self). In the [House](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Deline, Steven (Self), Gessler, Christy (Self; Texas REALTORS), Hale, J.D. (Texas Association of Builders), Hayter, Russell (Self), Maley, Charles (Self; South Texans’ Property Rights Association), Martinez, Jorge (Self; The LIBRE Initiative), Quintero, James (Texas Public Policy Foundation), Sheetz, Samuel (Self; Americans for Prosperity).

50 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

Opponents<sup>51</sup> say<sup>52</sup>:

- The proposed amendment would substantially reduce the amount of revenue available for funding public services and would exclude renters and commercial property owners from the tax benefits.
- The state would benefit more by investing its current surplus in public services rather than providing more tax cuts.
- Public services and school funding could be jeopardized if the state does not have sufficient revenue in future years to continue reimbursing school districts for taxes lost as a result of the increased exemption.
- Providing tax relief only to homeowners could shift the tax burden to renters and commercial property owners. The Legislature should pursue a tax relief strategy that targets renters and lower-income individuals, such as a renter's rebate program or an exemption tied to household income.
- An increase in the homestead exemption would also increase the number of homeowners who pay no school property taxes at all. These homeowners could be incentivized to vote for higher local tax rates and more bonds because they would not have to bear the burden of those local property tax increases.
- Increasing the homestead exemption will not provide effective property tax relief without a limit on local government spending and tax increases.

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51 In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee: Woodward, Jarrett (Self). In the [House](#), no witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee.

52 All quotes cited in this paper against the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

## **PROPOSITION 14:**

Creating the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, establishing the Dementia Prevention and Research Fund to provide money for research on and prevention and treatment of dementia, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and related disorders in this state ([S.J.R. 3, 2025](#)).

**Background:** S.J.R. 3 amends Article III of the Texas Constitution by adding Section 68 to establish and fund the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas. \$3 billion would be transferred from the state general fund to fund the institute ([S.J.R. 3 Analysis, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** S.J.R. 3 establishes and funds the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas.

Ballot Language:

*"The constitutional amendment providing for the establishment of the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, establishing the Dementia Prevention and Research Fund to provide money for research on and prevention and treatment of dementia, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and related disorders in this state, and transferring to that fund \$3 billion from state general revenue" ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).*

Supporters<sup>53</sup> say<sup>54</sup>:

- Creating the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (DPRIT) would allow for a major investment in research focused on the prevention and treatment of dementia, Alzheimer's disease, and other degenerative neurological disorders, improving the health and quality of life of millions of Texans and benefiting the state's economy.
- The impact of dementia and related diseases is growing due to a rapidly aging population and increased life expectancy, and the need for increased investment in research, prevention, and treatment is urgent.
- Dementia is a leading cause of death in the United States, while Texas ranks high among other states in Alzheimer's cases and deaths. Lack of neurological medical care is especially acute in some regions of Texas, impacting the ability of individuals to receive critical care.
- The proposed amendment would accelerate innovation in dementia research by providing grants through DPRIT, which would be modeled in certain respects after the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT), the state's institute for funding cancer research. CPRIT has successfully attracted excellent cancer researchers and doctors to Texas and provided a significant economic return on the state's investment.

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53 In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: McNeel, Lance (Self), McNeel, Liz (Self), Parikh, Toral (also providing written testimony) (Texas Medical Association), Powell, Beverly (Higher Ed) (Self), Billodeau, Allison (Houston Methodist Hospital), Billodeau, Allison (Texas Assisted Living Association), Cooke, Meredith (Texas Children's Hospital), Creel, Matt (Opportunity Austin), Dudensing, Jamie (Texas Association of Health Plans), Giesinger, Ross (Texas Medical Center), Gregg, Aaron (Alzheimer's Association), Jarrin, Nelson (Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute), Johnson, Angela (Self), Johnston, Catherine (Self), Jones, Alyssa (Baylor Scott & White Health), Kerker, Juliana (HCA Healthcare), Lobsinger Bush, Danielle (Texas Healthcare and Bioscience Institute), Milligan, Maureen (Teaching hospitals of texas), Orum, Eddie (Self; AARP TX), Rekstad, Britta (Self), Villarreal, Faith (Texas Association of Business), Weisman, Ryan (Self), Yanas, Christine (Methodist Healthcare Ministries). In the House, no witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee.

54 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

- DPRIT would help to attract top research talent to Texas, create high-quality jobs, and facilitate collaboration among medical and scientific experts. Additionally, by advancing efforts to mitigate the causes and effects of dementia, DPRIT could help relieve caregiving costs in Texas, which can burden families for many years.
- The state's business-friendly regulatory environment provides advantages that ideally position the state to take on the challenge of combating dementia and to become a major center of biomedical research.
- The state's current budget surplus presents a unique opportunity to provide funding for this research and improve the lives of millions in Texas and beyond.
- DPRIT could facilitate types of research that might not be pursued by private entities alone because they are not especially profitable, such as projects focused on prevention.

Opponents<sup>55</sup> say<sup>56</sup>:

- The proposed amendment would create an open-ended, long-term financial risk for taxpayers outside the proper scope of government, and there are other appropriate priorities for public funds.
- Private industry, nonprofits, and universities are capable of addressing dementia research and treatment without government involvement in research.
- The proposed amendment would create a new state bureaucracy without sufficient accountability measures. Modeled after CPRIT, which has had problems with a lack of accountability in the use of public money, DPRIT could be even more problematic because dementia research is broader and more ambiguous in scope than cancer research and because DPRIT would involve more bureaucratic layers and political appointees, which could increase inefficiency and potential for favoritism in matters such as awarding grants or hiring staff.

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55 In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee: Hemphill, Sheila (Texas Right to Know). In the House, no witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee.

56 All quotes cited in this paper against the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

## **PROPOSITION 15:**

Parents are the primary decision makers for their children ([S.J.R. 34, 2025](#)).

**Background:** Currently, the rights of parents are not explicitly written out in the Constitution. Rather they are protected by federal case law. However, rights found in case law may change overtime as judges' opinions change. S.J.R. 34 seeks to change this by amending Article I of the Texas Constitution, adding Section 37, to affirm the rights and responsibilities of parents ([S.J.R. 34 Analysis, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** S.J.R. 34 affirms the right that parents have to nurture, protect, and make decisions concerning their child's upbringing.

Ballot Language:

*"The constitutional amendment affirming that parents are the primary decision makers for their children"* ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).

Supporters<sup>57</sup> say<sup>58</sup>:

- Enshrining in the Texas Constitution the right of a parent to exercise care, custody, and control of the parent's children would provide a clear and solid legal foundation to protect parental rights.
- Courts have long recognized that parents have a constitutionally protected right to make decisions for their children. Such a fundamental right deserves a securely codified place in the Texas Constitution to ensure that it is not removed or diminished by future judicial decisions.
- By expressly recognizing parental rights and responsibilities in the text of the constitution, the proposed amendment would make parental rights easier to identify for parents and their lawyers, allowing them to cite the Texas Constitution to help defend their rights in court, and would provide clarity that could help avoid costly litigation.
- Protecting the rights of parents helps parents to meet their obligations to care for, nurture, and educate their children.
- The proposed amendment is not intended to expand or diminish any existing parental rights.

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57 In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Brown, Andrew (also providing written testimony) (Texas Public Policy Foundation), Covey, Jonathan (Texas Values), Evans, Michelle (also providing written testimony) (Self; Texans for Vaccine Choice), Newman, Jeremy (also providing written testimony) (Self; Family Freedom Project), Wood, Cecilia (also providing written testimony) (Self), Castilla, Cindi (Self; Texas Eagle Forum), Castle, Mary Elizabeth (Texas Values Action), Litzler, John (Baptist General Convention of Texas Christian Life Commission), Ransdell, Debra (Self), Ransdell, James B (Self), Seago, John (Self; Texas Right to Life), Trainor, Lucy (Self). In the House, no witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee.

58 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

Opponents<sup>59</sup> say<sup>60</sup>:

- The proposed amendment does not do enough to protect children’s rights, which are not expressly addressed by the amendment.
- While not raised during legislative consideration of the proposal, a review of other sources indicates concerns that the amendment language stating that the established parental rights correspond with the responsibility of parents to nurture and protect their children could result in a parent’s rights being conditioned on the government determining that the parent’s responsibility has been fulfilled.

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59 In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee: Stewart, Susan (Self). In the House, no witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee.

60 All quotes cited in this paper against the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

## **PROPOSITION 16:**

Voters must be United States citizens ([S.J.R. 37, 2025](#)).

**Background:** Various municipalities across the country have passed laws allowing non-citizens to vote. S.J.R. 37 amends [Section 1\(a\)](#), Article VI of the Texas Constitution to explicitly prohibit all non-citizens from voting in the State of Texas ([S.J.R. 37, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** S.J.R. 37 expressly prohibits non-citizens from voting.

Ballot Language:

*“The constitutional amendment clarifying that a voter must be a United States citizen”* ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).

Supporters<sup>61</sup> say<sup>62</sup>:

- The Texas Constitution’s express list of persons not qualified to vote includes people under age 18, those who are determined mentally incompetent, and certain persons convicted of felonies, but it does not list noncitizens, which could suggest that citizenship is not a priority qualification to vote in Texas.
- The proposed amendment does not expand state authority, as the Election Code already requires a voter to be a citizen of the United States. Codifying this voting requirement in the Texas Constitution would serve to improve voter confidence, eliminate confusion, and provide clear guidance for enforcement.
- The right to vote is a sacred liberty that servicemen and servicewomen, minority communities, and naturalized immigrants have worked hard to secure and demands a high standard for its security. The proposed amendment would provide important additional protection of this right.
- As some cities in other states have allowed noncitizens to vote in local elections, this measure safeguards Texas against this trend.
- Other states, varying in political ideology, geography, and demographics, have adopted constitutional amendments to prohibit noncitizens from voting.

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61 In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: DeVore, Chuck (Texas Public Policy Foundation), Kolean, Charlie (Self; Americans for Citizens Voting), Mattingly, Kaden (Self), Sargent, Bill (Self), Taef, Brian (Self), Carlisle, Glenn (Self), Carter, David (Self), Cheshire, Cary (Self), Eller, Andrew (Self; State Republican Executive Committeeman SD24, Self), Evans, Michelle (Self), Georgatos, Debbie (Self), Glass, Tom (Self), Hunt, Daniel (Self; SREC Committeeman SD3), Mattingly, John (Self), Trainor, Lucy (Self), Turner, Michael (Self), Turner, Shann (Self), Ward, Rhonda (Self; SREC Committeewoman SD3). In the House, no witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee.

62 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

Opponents<sup>63</sup> say<sup>64</sup>:

- The proposed amendment is unnecessary because state and federal laws already limit the right to vote to American citizens. Improper voting by noncitizens is rare, and passing a redundant constitutional amendment could confuse voters who might be led to believe that noncitizen voting is a bigger problem than it is.
- The amendment could lead to uncertainty among certain voters, especially those in historically marginalized communities, about their voting status and could inhibit some eligible people's participation in the democratic process.
- Consideration of this measure could potentially contribute to anti-immigrant rhetoric and actions.
- Passing an unnecessary constitutional amendment sets a precedent for nonessential expansion of state authority through constitutional amendments, which should be reserved for limited, necessary uses. Amending the Texas Constitution is not appropriate for taking a symbolic stand or responding to trends.

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63 In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee: French, Emily (also providing written testimony) (Common Cause Texas), Hale, Kevin (also providing written testimony) (Self; The Libertarian Party of Texas), Ames, Ethan (Self), Barbour, Sarah (Self), Blanton, Dana (Self), Cohen, Sarah (Self), Cook, Elizabeth (Self), Cruz, Brenda (Self; Texas Democratic Party), Darby, Karen (Self), Erisman, Wendy (Self), Favret, Mary (Self), Hollingsworth, Sidney (Self), Ibarra, Mary (ACLU of Texas), KNIGHT, ANITA (Self; TX Impact), Lozano, Sofia (Common Cause Texas), Miller, Cyral (Self), Ramirez, Javier (Self), Reese, Kayla (Self), Seastrunk, Kia (Self), Walter-Mahoney, Melanie (Self), Warms, Veronikah (Texas Civil Rights Project), Zielke, Mariah (Self). In the House, no witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee.

64 All quotes cited in this paper against the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

## **PROPOSITION 17:**

Providing an exemption from ad valorem taxation of the amount of the market value of real property located in a county that borders the United Mexican States that arises from the installation or construction on the property of border security infrastructure and related improvements ([H.J.R. 34, 2025](#)).

**Background:** The Texas Facilities Commission often builds border infrastructure on private land. This can lead to an increase in that land's appraised property value. H.J.R. 34 would amend Article VIII of the Texas Constitution, by adding Section 1-y, to ensure that the Legislature may exempt from ad valorem taxation a portion of the market value of real property in a county that borders the United Mexican States that arises from the installation/construction of border security infrastructure and related improvements on property. This joint resolution aims to protect those who have generously dedicated portions of their property for use by the Texas Facilities Commission ([H.J.R. 34 Analysis, 2025](#)).

**Overview:** H.J.R. 34 would authorize the legislature to exempt border security-related improvements on real property from ad valorem taxation.

Ballot Language:

*"The constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of the amount of the market value of real property located in a county that borders the United Mexican States that arises from the installation or construction on the property of border security infrastructure and related improvements" ([Texas Secretary of State, 2025](#)).*

Supporters<sup>65</sup> say<sup>66</sup>:

- As a result of state and federal initiatives to stop illegal border crossings and other border crime, infrastructure such as walls, roads, and surveillance systems has been built to enhance security and enforcement. While these projects are critical to the state's security, they should not place an unexpected and unfair tax burden on Texans who own the land on which the infrastructure is built. The proposed amendment ensures that any increase in a property's appraised value due to the border security infrastructure will not result in higher property taxes.
- The proposed amendment would incentivize property owners to volunteer their property for border security enhancements. Some landowners may hesitate to install border security measures on their property due to potential increases in taxable property value, but providing for an exemption for the assessed value of the property associated with the border security infrastructure would encourage private property owners to support border security efforts without facing increased tax burdens.
- Individuals who volunteer to help establish and maintain border security infrastructure on their property should not be punished through higher taxes on their property but should be rewarded for contributing to the government's efforts to secure the southern border.

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65 In the [House](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Fuller, Drew (Texas Farm Bureau), Maley, Charles (Self; South Texans' Property Rights Association). In the [Senate](#), the following witnesses registered or testified in support of the amendment in committee: Maley, Charles (Self; South Texans' Property Rights Association), Roach, Blake (Texas Farm Bureau).

66 All quotes cited in this paper in support of the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

- The tax exemption would be provided for the value of the infrastructure installed on the property and any increase in property value from the improvements. It would not reduce the appraised value of the existing property.
- The proposed amendment would not require a property owner to install border security infrastructure and would only apply to property in counties along the Texas-Mexico border.

Opponents<sup>67</sup> say<sup>68</sup>:

- The state should not provide tax exemptions that incentivize further border security infrastructure construction on private land, especially state-supported construction of walls or the installation of surveillance equipment.
- The proposed amendment would narrow the tax base and could shift the tax burden onto other property owners by removing property value from the tax rolls.
- The Texas Legislature should focus on providing broad-based tax relief rather than carving out certain limited exemptions.
- Local governments might have to adopt higher tax rates to offset the potential losses from the exemption.

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67 In the [House](#), the following witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee: Rhodes, Fran (Self; True Texas Project). In the [Senate](#), no witnesses registered or testified against the amendment in committee.

68 All quotes cited in this paper against the amendments were borrowed from [Texas Legislative Council](#).

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**Israel Meyers** is currently a junior at the University of Kansas where he studies History. After his undergraduate he hopes to study Law.

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