

Kendall County

REPUBLICAN PARTY

Buck Rogers
Kendall County Republican Party Chair

Constitutional Amendment Election

Howdy Folks,

On Tuesday, November 7th, Texans will vote on 14 proposed amendments to the state constitution. To put a legislatively referred constitutional amendment before voters, a two-thirds (66.67%) vote is required in both the Texas State Senate and the Texas House of Representatives.

On 14 September and 05 October, the Kendall County Republican Party held Forums to review the 14 constitutional amendments. Participants joined in a straw poll after each presentation to get the *Pulse of the Party* on these amendments. I present the propositions with a pro/con comment including the strength of each vote. *Unanimous for (100%); Strongly Favor (+75%); Favor (+50%); Oppose (+25%); Strongly Oppose (-25%)* I, also, summarize the straw poll results at the end of the article.

Proposition 1 (HJR 126): Protecting the right to engage in farming, ranching, timber production, horticulture, and wildlife management.

Pro: The proposed amendment officially recognizes the authority of the state or a political subdivision to regulate protected activities in order to preserve or conserve the state's natural resources.

Con: By using vague terminology such as "generally accepted practices" and "wildlife management practices," the proposed amendment will lead to confusion or abuses by certain entities.

Kendall Straw Poll: Prop 1- Strongly Favor.

Proposition 2 (SJR 64): Authorizing a local option exemption from ad valorem taxation by a county or municipality of all or part of the appraised value of real property used to operate a child-care facility.

Pro: Providing local governments with the authority to offer a tax exemption for property used to operate an eligible child-care facility may free up resources that could be used to hire and retain staff, which would help to reduce the prevalence of child-care deserts in Texas communities.

Con: Tax exemption authority can be easily abused by local governments and recipients. It may be interpreted as a government handout of taxpayer funds.

Straw Poll: Prop 2 - Strongly Oppose.

Proposition 3 (HJR 132): Prohibiting the imposition of an individual wealth or net worth tax, including a tax on the difference between the assets and liabilities of an individual or family.

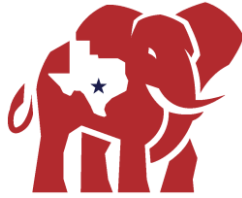
Pro: Wealth taxes discourage economic innovation and investment and can lead to stagnation.

Con: This measure is unnecessary because a wealth tax has not been proposed in Texas.

Straw Poll: Prop 3 – Unanimous for.

Proposition 4 (HJR 2 from the second special session): Property Tax Relief. Addressed in previous Boerne Star *Write of Center* column August 5, 2023.

Straw Poll: Prop 4 – Unanimous for.



Kendall County

REPUBLICAN PARTY

Proposition 5 (HJR 3): Relating to the Texas University Fund, which provides funding to certain institutions of higher education to achieve national prominence as major research universities and drive the state economy.

Pro: Providing a predictable and sustainable source of funding for high-quality research at universities in Texas that do not have access to the Permanent University Fund will help ensure that the future workforce needs of the state are met and that the state's economy continues to grow.

Con: Concern about the use of money from the economic stabilization fund (often referred to as the "rainy day fund") to fund higher education initiatives since that fund was not designed for such purposes.

Straw Poll: Prop 5 – Strongly Oppose

Proposition 6 (SJR 75): Creating the Texas water fund to assist in financing water projects in this state.

Pro: The creation of the Texas water fund would further the state's investment in water infrastructure and would give the Texas Water Development Board flexibility in allocating financial assistance through existing and newly created funds to address issues with existing water infrastructure and support new water supply projects across the state for years to come.

Con: The Texas Water Development Board should be able to address the state's water needs without the creation of new programs.

Straw Poll: Prop 6 – Oppose

Proposition 7 (SJR 93): Providing for the creation of the Texas energy fund to support the construction, maintenance, modernization, and operation of electric generating facilities.

Pro: Creating the Texas energy fund would enable the Public Utility Commission of Texas to provide loans and grants to finance or incentivize the construction, maintenance, modernization, and operation of electric generating facilities, including associated infrastructure, necessary to ensure the reliability or adequacy of the state's electric power grid.

Con: Providing funding to increase the reliability of the Texas grid would be more appropriate through the rate payer system as opposed to providing state subsidies funded by all taxpayers.

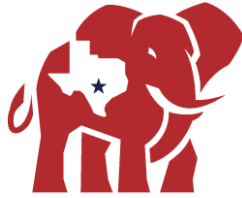
Straw Poll: Prop 7 – Favor

Proposition 8 (HJR 125): Creating the broadband infrastructure fund to expand high-speed broadband access and assist in the financing of connectivity projects.

Pro: Establishing a fund to support broadband expansion and infrastructure investment would provide resources to close the digital divide in Texas, which in turn could help to improve quality of life and lead to increased economic growth. Without reliable access to broadband Internet, millions of Texans are at a disadvantage in accessing certain educational and health care services that are increasingly going virtual.

Con: The broadband infrastructure fund should be required to prioritize projects that develop fiber optic broadband infrastructure, which may be faster, safer, and more durable and reliable than wireless broadband.

Straw Poll: Prop 8 – Strongly Favor



Kendall County

REPUBLICAN PARTY

Proposition 9 (HJR 2 from the regular session): Authorizing the 88th Legislature to provide a cost-of-living adjustment to certain annuitants of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas.

Pro: Funding a COLA for TRS retirees will provide the state's retired teachers with much-needed relief and is a wise use of the state's surplus revenue.

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

Straw Poll: Prop 9 – Strongly Favor

Proposition 10 (SJR 87): Authorizing the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation equipment or inventory held by a manufacturer of medical or biomedical products to protect the Texas healthcare network and strengthen our medical supply chain.

Pro: Despite not having a corporate or individual income tax, Texas has a high effective tax rate for medical manufacturers as compared to other states. Taxes on medical and biomedical manufacturing inventory discourage capital investment in and the expansion of this industry in Texas.

Con: Exempting certain types of businesses from taxes puts a greater burden on the remaining taxpayers. Exemptions like this have governments picking winners and losers.

Straw Poll: Prop 10 – Strongly Oppose

Proposition 11 (SJR 32): Authorizing the legislature to permit conservation and reclamation districts in El Paso County to issue bonds supported by ad valorem taxes to fund the development and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities.

Pro: The issuance of bonds to fund parks and recreational facilities in these districts in El Paso County would help to address the need for more parks and open spaces in the county and improve the quality of life for county residents. It could also make the county more competitive for Texans considering moving to El Paso. The decision to assess property taxes to support the issuance of bonds for that purpose is left to the discretion of each district and its voters.

Con: The proposed amendment would give certain conservation and reclamation districts in El Paso County the unnecessary authority to assess property taxes. In 2011, a similar amendment was defeated by a margin of 52% to 48%. State of Texas protecting El Paso County from more property taxes!

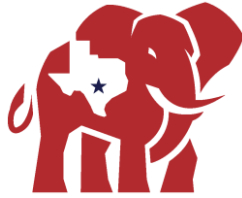
Straw Poll: Prop 11 – Strongly Oppose

Proposition 12 (HJR 134): Providing for the abolition of the office of county treasurer in Galveston County.

Pro: Galveston County is well suited to successfully operate without a county treasurer as the county has a number of other officers, including an auditor, CFO, and purchasing agent, who perform duties that are performed by the county treasurer in other counties.

Con: A stand-alone office of county treasurer that is headed by a person directly elected by county voters provides essential checks and balances in the operation of county government. Eliminating one county office and absorbing its functions into other departments sets a bad precedent and could lead to the concentration of power within the county.

Straw Poll: Prop 12 – Strongly Oppose



Kendall County

REPUBLICAN PARTY

Proposition 13 (HJR 107): Increasing the mandatory age of retirement for state justices and judges.

Pro: Because people are living and working longer than in decades past, it is appropriate to allow judges and justices to serve beyond the current mandatory retirement age of 75.

Con: The current state of senior political figures age, health, and mental acuity should give us pause, before we concentrate the power of judgement and the purse into an aging judiciary.

Straw Poll: Prop 13 – Strongly Oppose

Proposition 14 (SJR 74): Providing for the creation of the centennial parks conservation fund to be used for the creation and improvement of state parks.

Pro: Establishing a dedicated state fund for the purchase of land to develop new state parks would provide a stable and long-term funding source that will empower the state to protect Texas’ unique natural resources and cultural history while making them accessible to our growing population.

Con: There are other ways to create and improve state parks. This amendment is just an excuse to spend more money without having it show up in the budget. Give the money back to the taxpayer. One of the proposed funding sources for this conservation fund is the “Texas Rainy Day Fund”.

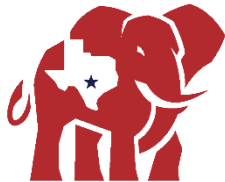
Straw Poll: Prop 14 – Strongly Oppose

Kendall County Republicans

Well, there you have it, the most interesting discussions centered around the Prop 6 Water and Prop 7 Energy. It is evident that these issues are at the forefront of our Hill Country residents and the impact on their lives TODAY!

The Pulse of the Kendall County Republicans on these 14 amendments is founded on fiscal conservatism. They want to reduce taxes and have accountable spending. Their desire is for any elected representative who wants to spend their tax dollars; to vote on the distribution of funds and not leave it to some bureaucratic state agency to decide.

*Cheers, Buck Rogers, Chairman
Kendall County Republican Party
(210) 842-7506*



Proposition Summary:

- | | |
|-----------|------------|
| 1. For | 8. For |
| 2. Oppose | 9. For |
| 3. For | 10. Oppose |
| 4. For | 11. Oppose |
| 5. Oppose | 12. Oppose |
| 6. Oppose | 13. Oppose |
| 7. For | 14. oppose |