

STATE OF FLORIDA  
CONSTITUTION REVISION COMMISSION  
2017 - 2018  
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The Public Hearing for the State of Florida  
Constitution Revision Commission, commencing at 1:00  
p.m. on the 27th day of February 2018, was held at the  
University of West Florida Conference Center & Ballroom,  
11000 University Parkway, Building 22, Pensacola,  
Florida, reported by David A. Deik, CP, CPE,  
Professional Reporter.

APPEARANCES

CONSTITUTION REVISION COMMISSION MEMBERS:

CARLOS BERUFF, CHAIRMAN

DON GAETZ, PRESIDENT COMMISSIONER

LISA CARLTON, COMMISSIONER

HANK COXE, COMMISSIONER

EMERY GAINNEY, COMMISSIONER

BRECHT HEUCHAN, COMMISSIONER

DARLENE JORDAN, COMMISSIONER

ARTHENIA JOYNER, COMMISSIONER

ROBERTO "BOBBY" MARTINEZ, COMMISSIONER

JOHN STEMBERGER, COMMISSIONER

JACQUI THURLOW-LIPPISCH, COMMISSIONER

T. NICOLE WASHINGTON, COMMISSIONER

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

1  
2  
3 THE CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon, everyone.  
4 If everybody will take their seats. If  
5 everybody will take a few seconds and either  
6 turn off your phone or put them on vibrate, we'd  
7 appreciate it because we want to make sure that  
8 everybody that comes here who wants to speak is  
9 heard.

10 Today is our fourth stop across the State  
11 of Florida on what we call the "road to the  
12 ballot."

13 We are pretty excited because we've been  
14 to four other parts of the state, listened to  
15 600 people at this point.

16 We're happy to have you here. Before I  
17 begin, I want to thank the University of West  
18 Florida for giving us this wonderful facility,  
19 and all of the electronic gadgets we don't have  
20 to pay for, so it saves the taxpayers a bunch of  
21 money.

22 (Light audience applause.)

23 THE CHAIRMAN: We try to do that. There's  
24 only one venue we needed to pay for on this  
25 whole trip.

1           My name is Carlos Beruff. I was appointed  
2           by the Governor, Rick Scott, as the Chairman of  
3           this Commission. And I'm going to introduce all  
4           the Commissioners that are here with me today.

5           On my far right is Commissioner  
6           Thurlow-Lippisch. Next to her, Commissioner  
7           Jackson, Commissioner Jordan, President  
8           Commissioner Gaetz.

9           On my left, Commissioner Carlton,  
10          Commissioner Martinez, Commissioner Joyner.

11          And then behind me, Commissioner Heuchan,  
12          Commissioner Stemberger.

13          Let me see. Is that it? Did I get  
14          everybody?

15          (Audience applause.)

16          THE CHAIRMAN: I did. Thank you.

17          If everyone would stand, the invocation  
18          will be lead by Commissioner Gaetz.

19          Thank you.

20          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Lord, thank you for  
21          bringing us together today in a spirit of public  
22          service to listen, to learn, to respond to the  
23          voices of Florida citizens.

24          Thank you for this beautiful day. Thank  
25          you for the Florida sunshine, for the



1 opportunity to serve.

2 Please bless all of those who came here  
3 today. Keep them safely in your hands and  
4 safely home to their families.

5 In your name we pray, Amen.

6 AUDIENCE: Amen.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Jordan will  
8 lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

9 (Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Everybody who is signed up  
11 will be heard and in the order that they signed  
12 up, so there's no preferential treatment here.  
13 It's whoever gets here first gets the first  
14 opportunity to speak.

15 There's a microphone in the front and a  
16 microphone about halfway back in the aisle for  
17 your convenience. If there's someone who can't  
18 get to the microphone, we'll find a way to get  
19 one to you.

20 Everyone's allowed to speak for two  
21 minutes. And we're primarily focused on the 37  
22 pending proposals that have made it through  
23 committees.

24 I'm now going to pass the gavel to  
25 Commissioner Gaetz. This is his part of the

1 world. He'll do it better than I can.

2 Thank you.

3 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
4 Mr. Chairman, and welcome Chairman Beruff and  
5 all the Commissioners to Pensacola and to  
6 Northwest Florida and to the Central Time Zone,  
7 which we here call correct time.

8 (Audience laughter and applause.)

9 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: As the Chairman  
10 indicated, we will hear from everyone who wishes  
11 to speak. We have a large number of people who  
12 have asked to speak and have signed up.

13 And so far the last person who's signed up  
14 is somebody named Barbara Mayall. And I'm an  
15 advocate for Barbara, and that's why I want to  
16 make sure she has plenty of time to present her  
17 ideas, so we will hold to the two-minute time  
18 limit.

19 You'll see your time before you on the  
20 screen. And ask you to respect Barbara and all  
21 the other people behind you who wish to speak,  
22 so I don't mean to be impolite, but when you run  
23 out of time, I will thank you, and we'll move on  
24 to the next speaker.

25 What we'd like to do is, we'd like to call

1 out five people at a time so that we'll have  
2 someone on deck and we won't lose any time.

3 So first we'll begin with Peggy Pettit,  
4 and then Sharon Davidson, and then Jan Boyd, and  
5 followed by Janet Robb and Rhonda Skipper.

6 Ms. Pettit, it's nice to see you again,  
7 and you're recognized.

8 MS. PETTIT: Thank you.

9 Thank you, Mr. Chair and Commissioners.

10 My name is Peggy Pettit, and I work with a  
11 hospice that employs 5,000 health care  
12 professionals and administrative staff  
13 throughout Florida.

14 We cared for 33,864 patients in Florida in  
15 2017. Close to 700 volunteers devoted their  
16 time to these patients and their families.

17 I am here to respectfully request that  
18 Proposal 54 be amended and that hospice be  
19 removed from the proposal.

20 I have been a hospice nurse and  
21 administrator for 35 years. In those years, I  
22 have worked in and managed hospice in 20  
23 different states.

24 From this viewpoint, I will tell you that  
25 hospice in Florida works and is, in large part,

1           due to COM.

2           The regulatory structure tied to CON does  
3           create a framework that ensures hospice  
4           operators develop and operate programs that have  
5           in place all the elements needed to comply with  
6           the state and federal regulations.

7           In other states, we see lower quality of  
8           care, unethical marketing tactics, and confusion  
9           for patients and families as they are steered  
10          toward hospice relationships, thus removing the  
11          perception of choice for the patient.

12          Some markets in other states have hundreds  
13          of hospices -- LA County has hundreds  
14          literally -- many caring for as little as 5 to  
15          20 patients, without a perfectly trained staff  
16          and ratios that end up providing little service  
17          to the patients and their families.

18          If hospice CON is eliminated, the ability  
19          of AGA to monitor the compliance with the new  
20          programs without a hugely inflated annual budget  
21          is unimaginable.

22          It has been estimated that as many as  
23          1,000 to 1,200 hospices could apply for and be  
24          licensed within the first two to three years.  
25          It is possible that rural markets would lose the

1 vital hospice services they need.

2 This issue is a legislative one and does  
3 not belong in the Constitution. If the CON were  
4 eliminated, it may prove to be a mistake. There  
5 is little that could be done for 20 years to  
6 change it back. A mistake with a hospice  
7 patient can never be recovered. There is no  
8 turning back.

9 The safety and quality of care of those  
10 terminally ill could be significantly  
11 jeopardized through the removal of the hospice  
12 COM.

13 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
14 Peggy.

15 MS. PETTIT: Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: And as Ms. Pettit  
17 did, would you please indicate the proposal  
18 number that you're speaking about when you  
19 begin, and that will allow the Commissioners to  
20 follow along.

21 Ms. Davidson.

22 MS. DAVIDSON: Hi. Good afternoon.

23 My name is Sharon Davidson, and I'm the  
24 Hospice Director of Community & Volunteer  
25 Services with Big Ben Hospice in Tallahassee,

1 Florida.

2 I respectfully ask the CRC to amend  
3 Proposal 54 to remove hospice.

4 Today I come to you representing over 400  
5 hospice volunteers in the Big Bend area.  
6 Although these volunteers could not be here  
7 today because they are serving hundreds of our  
8 patients, they have asked that I share with you  
9 some of their thoughts and concerns.

10 "Large for-profit companies with deep  
11 pockets could come into the area and undercut  
12 the local hospice operating on a thin margin,"  
13 to the point driving that small operation out.

14 "Once that occurs, the larger corporation  
15 may or may not have that local personal  
16 commitment in the rural counties." Phil Welsh,  
17 a veteran who has volunteered as a hospice  
18 direct patient volunteer since 2003.

19 "Rural patients will not have access to  
20 hospice care with a repeal of the CON because  
21 other hospice providers who will come in will  
22 only want the metropolitan counties. This has  
23 happened with the repeal of the Home Health  
24 CON." Mary Azano, retired nurse and hospice  
25 volunteer since 2005.

1 With respect for this committee and your  
2 time, I will not continue to read all of the  
3 comments that I've been given, so I will end  
4 with this quote, "Hometown hands are the  
5 genuine." Muriel Phillman, a volunteer since  
6 1994.

7 Again, I respectfully ask the CRC to amend  
8 Proposal Number 54 to remove hospice.

9 Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, Ms.  
11 Davidson.

12 And next, I believe it's Jane Gail Boyd?

13 MS. BOYD: Yes.

14 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you.

15 MS. BOYD: Thank you, Mr. President.  
16 Thank you, all the Commissioners for your time  
17 today.

18 I am here as a volunteer for Big Bend  
19 Hospice, but I'm also speaking as a family  
20 member and a Registered Nurse.

21 I oppose the elimination of the hospice  
22 CON via the Florida Constitutional amendment.  
23 So I want to respectfully ask you to amend  
24 Proposal 54 to remove hospice.

25 I've had three family members cared for by

1 hospice, most recently my mother, who expired  
2 about a year and a half ago.

3 And I would tell you, even though I'm a  
4 Registered Nurse and spent my career in health  
5 care, hospice was right there for me, both  
6 professionally and personally, as a family  
7 member.

8 I also want to say that I'm very concerned  
9 about what would happen. I have been in the  
10 health care field for 42 years. And I will tell  
11 you I've seen what happened when we did remove  
12 the CON for home health.

13 We now have a moratorium in the state  
14 because of the fraud and abuse with home health  
15 care. And I would hate to see that happen in  
16 hospice.

17 A hospice license is not that hard to get  
18 and not that expensive. It's easy to set up a  
19 storefront and become a provider. But that  
20 doesn't always equal quality of care for  
21 patients. And I will tell you, I know a lot  
22 about quality of care.

23 The last but not least point I want to say  
24 is, I live in the only county in the state,  
25 Jefferson County, that does not have a red



1 light. And I'm very concerned about what  
2 happens to rural health care.

3 So obviously those are my three points:  
4 One as a family member, one as a professional  
5 nurse working in health care for 42 years, and  
6 third as a rural resident.

7 Please oppose and amend out hospice from  
8 Proposal 54.

9 Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, Jane Gail.

11 Our next, Janet Robb.

12 MS. ROBB: My name is Janet Robb, and I'm  
13 here on behalf of Proposal 88.

14 I have worked in health care for 18 years  
15 and currently am retired. Have volunteered for  
16 10 years.

17 A year ago I had surgery and needed to go  
18 to a health care facility for rehab. I had the  
19 most excellent care you could ever ask for.

20 The patients have good hearts. They work  
21 hard. And the whole facility works hard. And  
22 the food was excellent. I had been offered many  
23 choices. And so I'm here on behalf of that to  
24 ask you to vote no for Proposal No. 88.

25 Thank you.

1 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

2 Rhonda Skipper. The Honorable Rhonda  
3 Skipper.

4 MS. SKIPPER: Good afternoon.

5 Thank you for taking the time to hear from  
6 us today.

7 My name is Rhonda Skipper, and I serve as  
8 tax collector for the citizens of Walton County.

9 I have over 36 years of public service.  
10 And I hope I've done that with great humility,  
11 grace and honor.

12 Tax collectors just have a bad stigma with  
13 their title because of the title, but we  
14 don't -- We have no authority to levy a tax, to  
15 grant an exemption.

16 Our part is to serve with honor and  
17 dignity and to create a place our customers can  
18 come in, feel safe to do their business with.

19 I'm asking that you support Proposal 13  
20 and allow us to continue to serve the people  
21 with great care and with great warmth, and  
22 respect the process that we have in place now  
23 and honor those laws and those processes because  
24 we don't have any influence in the process of  
25 levying taxes and fees.

1                   So with that, I would leave you with  
2                   Numbers 20, 18 and 19 that says, "What's in a  
3                   man that seeks the truth and to do the right  
4                   thing?"

5                   So today I hope that you will support  
6                   Proposal 13.

7                   Thank you.

8                   COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
9                   ma'am.

10                  And next, Jack Oliver, followed by Jean  
11                  Honeycutt, followed by Marvin Honeycutt, and  
12                  then Robert Windham, please, and then Lilly  
13                  Eubanks.

14                  Mr. Oliver, you're recognized, sir.

15                  MR. OLIVER: Yes. My name is Jack Oliver.  
16                  I'm the founder and director of Floridians for  
17                  e-verify now, from North Palm Beach.

18                  In the 2010 Governor's race, Kenneth Rick  
19                  Scott identified a major problem facing  
20                  Floridians.

21                  We have over 700,000 illegal immigrants in  
22                  the state. They're costing us billions of  
23                  dollars and they're taking legal residents'  
24                  jobs.

25                  Candidate Scott then identified a

1 solution. Said Rick will require all Florida  
2 employers to use the free e-verify system to  
3 ensure that their workers are legal.

4 Eight years later, we have a million  
5 illegal immigrants taking legal residents' jobs,  
6 and the cost of Florida's taxpayers has tripled.

7 Why? Because the Florida legislature has  
8 failed to do what every other state in the  
9 southeast has done, pass mandatory e-verify to  
10 protect their legal workers and legal businesses  
11 and taxpayers.

12 We urge this Commission to place our  
13 proposed e-verify amendment, Number 29, on the  
14 2018 ballot and allow the voters of Florida to  
15 do what the state legislature has refused to do  
16 now for over a decade, to protect the jobs and  
17 the tax dollars of hardworking Floridians.

18 Thank you.

19 And I have 250 postcards, petitions. Who  
20 do I give them to?

21 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: That young lady right  
22 there will take them.

23 And thank you very much, Mr. Oliver.

24 (Audience applause.)

25 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: And excuse me.

1           The approach that we've used in other  
2           hearings, in order to save time and be  
3           respectful to everyone is, we would ask you to  
4           refrain, if you can, from applause or outbursts  
5           of support or opposition.

6           And I think that there were cards that you  
7           got or could get at the beginning. There they  
8           are. And if you want to show your support for a  
9           particular speaker or point of view, you can  
10          wave the green card.

11          And if you're troubled, and you want to  
12          show you opposition, you can wave the red card.  
13          But we would ask, in respect to all of our  
14          fellow citizens, that we give them the  
15          opportunity to speak without interruption.

16          And with that, Jean Honeycutt.

17          MS. HONEYCUTT: I'm here to ask you to  
18          place Proposal 29, the mandatory e-verify  
19          amendment, on the 2018 ballot.

20          Florida is the only state in the southeast  
21          that does not have a mandatory e-verify, thus  
22          making it a magnet attracting large numbers of  
23          illegal immigrants here for Florida jobs.

24          Florida voters want immigration changes.  
25          A poll -- opinion research poll showed that by a

1 margin of three to one Florida voters want  
2 immigration reduced.

3 The Federation of American Immigration  
4 Reform Poll shows that 74 percent of all workers  
5 want an e-verify law in Florida.

6 E-verify does not reduce employment. A  
7 March 2017 report regarding employment in states  
8 with e-verify laws since 2008 found that all  
9 states that have had enacted or expanded  
10 e-verify, all except one showed a drop in  
11 unemployment.

12 The U.S. Chamber of Commerce in testimony  
13 before Congress in 2013 endorsed mandatory  
14 e-verify.

15 I end my presentation to you,  
16 Commissioners, with a question. Our proposal  
17 will help save the lives of Florida citizens and  
18 help reduce greatly other serious crimes  
19 committed against them by illegal aliens.

20 It will save taxpayers, Florida taxpayers  
21 billions of dollars annually.

22 Will you vote yes to put Amendment 29, the  
23 mandatory e-verify law, on the November ballot?

24 Thank you.

25 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,

1 ma'am.

2 Marvin Honeycutt.

3 MR. HONEYCUTT: Turn this thing around.

4 I want to thank you, Commissioners, for  
5 hearing us speak.

6 I am Marvin Honeycutt. And I do support  
7 e-verify because I really feel that our area  
8 needs this because we seem to have more people  
9 unemployed that used to do construction work  
10 than they are now because they just seem like  
11 that all of the unskilled laborers have -- have  
12 gone to the illegals for -- to do these jobs.

13 And I just think it's imperative that --  
14 that we do have e-verify so that this can be  
15 rectified.

16 Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
18 sir.

19 Robert Windham.

20 MR. WINDHAM: Good afternoon.

21 I'll be addressing Proposal 29. I believe  
22 the most important question about the remaining  
23 37 proposals is which will be the most  
24 beneficial to the people of Florida.

25 And I believe that Proposal 29 would be

1 the most beneficial because it will literally  
2 save lives.

3 Data shows illegals murdered almost 3,000  
4 people in Florida between 2008 and 2014.  
5 Research has proven e-verify moves illegals out  
6 of the state.

7 And that means that if our proposal  
8 becomes law, the murder rate by illegals in  
9 Florida would decrease dramatically.

10 If our proposal becomes law, it would  
11 dramatically reduce the rate of serious crimes,  
12 such as rape, assault, burglary and vehicular  
13 homicide committed by illegals against the  
14 people of Florida because e-verify would result  
15 in a corresponding and dramatic reduction in the  
16 rate of serious crime committed against the  
17 people of Florida by illegals because they will  
18 leave.

19 If our e-verify proposal becomes law, then  
20 it would save taxpayers \$6.3 billion paid last  
21 year in K through 12 education, incarceration,  
22 health care and general services to illegals in  
23 Florida because illegals will leave.

24 If our e-verify law becomes a proposal --  
25 proposal becomes law, the student-teacher ratio



1 would improve because illegals will leave  
2 Florida, taking hundreds of thousands of  
3 school-age children with them.

4 If our e-verify proposal becomes law, it  
5 would increase unemployment in Florida because  
6 the more than 550,000 jobs encumbered by  
7 citizens -- by illegals will become available to  
8 the citizens of Florida.

9 If e-verify becomes law, there will be a  
10 dramatic decrease in voting in our elections by  
11 illegals because the illegals will leave  
12 Florida.

13 I ask that you give the people of Florida  
14 the chance to vote on our e-verify proposal and  
15 to pass it.

16 All the citizens of Florida would receive  
17 the benefits I have described and Florida will  
18 become a better and safer place to live.

19 Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

21 Next, Lilly Eubanks.

22 MS. EUBANKS: I urge you to oppose  
23 Proposal 45, which would provide public funding  
24 for private schools and remove much-needed funds  
25 from our public schools.

1 Democracy is based on having a  
2 well-educated electorate. Without one,  
3 Democracy will fail.

4 What has made us great has been the free  
5 public education of all people, rich and poor  
6 alike.

7 One of our biggest educational failures  
8 was when we allowed segregated schools, where  
9 students did not receive an education equal to  
10 those in other schools.

11 We should have learned from that  
12 experience that there is no such thing as  
13 separate but equal education.

14 However, by giving public funds created by  
15 public tax dollars to private schools, we are  
16 turning back the clock to having segregated  
17 schools.

18 Private schools don't have the same  
19 requirements or oversight that public schools  
20 have. Many private schools are in the business  
21 of making money, not offering educational  
22 opportunities that are best for kids.

23 When students bring educational funding  
24 from the government to private schools, then  
25 leave that private school later, the money

1 doesn't go back to the public school the child  
2 returns to.

3 I recommend that the Commission view the  
4 documentary film "A Backpack Full of Cash" to  
5 see the damage these for-profit schools are  
6 doing to public education.

7 It is the public responsibility of  
8 government to provide a good public education to  
9 all the people.

10 As a retired teacher, I know that public  
11 school graduates are successful, contributing  
12 members of our communities. In fact, they are  
13 the backbone of our communities.

14 The students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas  
15 High School are an outstanding example of the  
16 quality of public education.

17 Every tax dollar you give to a private  
18 school is one less that goes to our already  
19 underfunded public schools.

20 The government needs to stop trying to  
21 undermine the public school system, and instead  
22 needs to give public education the support it  
23 deserves.

24 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much.

25 MS. EUBANKS: Once again, I urge you to

1 oppose Proposal 45.

2 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Our next speakers  
3 will be Judi Lightfoot; Carol -- I believe it's  
4 Sweeley or Swelley, 3387 Gulf Breeze Parkway.  
5 Then Laura Meyer. Then Veronica Braggs-Landrum,  
6 and then Mary Lynn Beck.

7 Ms. Lightfoot, you're recognized.

8 MS. LIGHTFOOT: I'd like to talk about  
9 Proposal 88.

10 My name is Judi Lightfoot, and I am a  
11 resident of Pensacola. And as a senior citizen  
12 and a volunteer with American Senior Alliance,  
13 I've been interested in senior issues for quite  
14 some time.

15 I was pleased to see the article that ran  
16 in our local newspaper yesterday that talked  
17 about the good care that our local nursing homes  
18 are giving to the residents.

19 I'm worried that Proposal 88 would have a  
20 bad effect on that quality of care because it  
21 would give attorneys a greater ability to sue  
22 nursing homes and assisted-living facilities.

23 More lawsuits mean money taken away from  
24 those facilities. And their residents rely on  
25 resources to improve their long-term care

1 services.

2 Not to be cynical, but as altruistic as  
3 Proposal 88 appears to be, I firmly believe the  
4 only ones who will truly benefit from Proposal  
5 88 are the attorneys.

6 I don't believe our state constitution is  
7 the place to make changes to our court system or  
8 to dictate who and how businesses, including  
9 nursing homes, can or should be sued.

10 When it's my time or my family's members'  
11 time to consider nursing home care, I want to be  
12 sure there continues to be a high quality --  
13 there continues to be high-quality facilities  
14 that can support us.

15 I ask that you vote no on Proposal 88.

16 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you for your  
17 testimony.

18 And Carol -- I apologize if I have  
19 mispronounced your name.

20 MS. SWEELEY: That's fine.

21 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Please come forward.  
22 There's a mic right here.

23 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Oh, okay. I see, you  
24 ma'am.

25 And you're recognized. Thank you for

1           being here.

2                   MS. SWEeley: All right. I'm a resident  
3 of the Bay Research Senior Living &  
4 Rehabilitation Center.

5                   And I urge you to be against Proposal 88.  
6 It is those proposals who made bad nursing homes  
7 and resident day care and nursing homes.

8                   Why do we have -- What we need is adequate  
9 funding. We can't continue more success than  
10 what we receive.

11                   And I just want you to be against Proposal  
12 88.

13                   COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much  
14 for being here, ma'am. We're very grateful for  
15 your taking the time.

16                   MS. SWEeley: Yes.

17                   COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Next, Laura Meyer.

18                   MS. MEYER: Hi. My name is Laura Meyer.  
19 And I'm asking you to vote against Proposal 88.  
20 Thank you.

21                   COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

22                   And Veronica Braggs-Landrum.

23                   MS. BRAGGS-LANDRUM: Yes. Hi.

24                   I'm a activities director at a nursing  
25 home facility in Gulf Breeze. And I ask you to

1 please vote against Proposal 88.

2 Thank you.

3 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

4 Mary Lynn Beck. Ms. Beck.

5 MS. BECK: My name is Lynn Beck. And I'm  
6 here to ask that you vote against Proposal 88.

7 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am, for  
8 your testimony.

9 Our next appearances will be from Kristin  
10 Knapp. Then John Donovan, Brian Ranelli, Mary  
11 McWilliams, and John Boren.

12 MS. KNAPP: Good afternoon. I'm --

13 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Ms. Knapp.

14 MS. KNAPP: Hello. Good afternoon.

15 I'm Kristin Knapp with the Florida Health  
16 Care Association.

17 And I am here to speak in opposition to  
18 Proposal 54, which would eliminate certificate  
19 of need for nursing homes.

20 In 2014, the legislature reformed the  
21 Nursing Home Certificate of Need Law. And as a  
22 result we have over 30 new nursing homes being  
23 built or in the process of being built here in  
24 our state.

25 This is great for our seniors because it

1 ensures that these nursing homes are being built  
2 in areas where there is a demonstrated need for  
3 health care administration. For example, in  
4 rural areas.

5 What happens if you eliminate certificate  
6 of need, is that you'll end up with a dual  
7 health care system.

8 You would have the new nursing homes being  
9 built in areas where there may not necessarily  
10 be a need. They would be more boutique-style  
11 nursing homes.

12 And what would happen is the lower  
13 Medicaid nursing homes would no longer be able  
14 to compete. And this would be bad for our  
15 low-income seniors.

16 Certificate of need in nursing homes does  
17 a good job of ensuring a balance between home-  
18 and community-based services and nursing home  
19 care.

20 And Florida has done a great job of making  
21 sure that seniors are able to stay in their  
22 homes to receive that care as long as possible.

23 And that's what we want. We want people  
24 to get the care where they're -- where they're  
25 able to receive it most.



1           Also, for example, a certificate of need  
2           was eliminated in the State of Texas, which has  
3           a very similar senior population as we do in  
4           Florida.

5           They end up now having more -- twice as  
6           many nursing homes for the same amount of  
7           seniors as we do here in our state.

8           And that has resulted in poor quality, so  
9           what we want to do is keep certificate of need,  
10          the reform laws that we have today.

11          And I ask you to vote against Proposal 54.

12          Thank you.

13          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
14          Ms. Knapp.

15          John Donovan.

16          MR. DONOVAN: Hello. My name's John  
17          Donovan, and I've been involved with hospice now  
18          for nearly 10 years, both professionally and  
19          personally.

20          I respectfully ask the CRC to amend  
21          Proposition 54 to remove hospice, simply because  
22          quality would be impacted.

23          Hospice is one of the few areas of health  
24          care that still has an individualized approach,  
25          where patient and family are the most important

1 part of that care plan.

2 Health care has changed over time, as we  
3 all are familiar with. Hospice still recognizes  
4 the patient as an individual. Removing the CON  
5 would take that away.

6 I've had family on hospice in two states,  
7 one in Florida in Fort Lauderdale and one in New  
8 England, a state that did not have a CON.

9 When my relative in the Northeast was  
10 looking for somebody to stay at the bedside  
11 while his mom passed away from cancer and  
12 couldn't find anybody because they said, "We  
13 don't provide that," and didn't feel the  
14 necessity to provide that -- something built  
15 into a federal benefit -- in Fort Lauderdale,  
16 when my mom was there needing somebody as her  
17 mom passed away, they had a social worker, they  
18 had a nurse bedside because it was about them.

19 And that's what we live in and the CON  
20 would take away from the State of Florida.

21 So I respectfully ask the CRC to amend  
22 Proposition Number 54 to remove hospice.

23 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you.

24 MR. RANELLI: Good afternoon. I'm here to  
25 speak on behalf of amendment 54.

1 I'm an advocate for hospice, not only as  
2 hospice professional but as someone who's  
3 trusted hospice to care for their own mother and  
4 their own family members over this time.

5 I'm here this afternoon to politely  
6 request Proposition Number 54, the amendment  
7 to -- amendment to remove hospice be removed.

8 Studies show that when CON has been  
9 abolished, access and quality are negatively  
10 affected.

11 I worry about those in rural areas, and I  
12 also worry about those here in our own community  
13 having access to high-quality hospice care.

14 When other states have abandoned the CON,  
15 it has adversely affected hospice care. This is  
16 not an easy decision, and, furthermore, it is a  
17 difficult decision to reverse.

18 Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much.

20 Mary McWilliams.

21 MS. MCWILLIAMS: Hi. My name is Mary  
22 McWilliams. I am a family and hospice advanced  
23 Registered Nurse practitioner and have practiced  
24 in hospice and palliative care for the last 10  
25 years. I hold national board certification in

1 my field as a nurse practitioner.

2 I respectfully ask to amend Proposition 54  
3 to remove hospice.

4 Hospices only have the current CON process  
5 to guarantee quality. Patients who need  
6 end-of-life care do not complain if their needs  
7 are not met.

8 There's no way to assess patient  
9 satisfaction with the process. No second  
10 chances. We have to get it right the first  
11 time.

12 Many of the patients that I see are in the  
13 rural and underserved areas. Just yesterday, I  
14 put 188 miles on my car with rural --  
15 much-needed rural visits.

16 Many of these families could lose access  
17 to hospice services if certificate of need is  
18 removed.

19 Lastly, my father is a hospice patient.  
20 At 99 years of age, he's a World War II veteran.  
21 He deserves the good end-of-life care that he's  
22 getting.

23 So I respectfully ask CRC to amend  
24 Proposition 54 to remove hospice.

25 Thank you.

1                   COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, Ms.  
2                   McWilliams.

3                   Mr. -- Is it Boden or Boren, or . . .

4                   MR. BODEN: Boden.

5                   COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Boden. I had it  
6                   right the first time. That's rare.

7                   MR. BODEN: Yes.

8                   I'm John Boden, and I am a hospice medical  
9                   director for the last eight years.

10                  And I respectfully ask the CRC to amend  
11                  Proposition 54 to remove hospice.

12                  I believe that with the removal of the  
13                  hospice CON, that the quality of services will  
14                  decline.

15                  It will become a complaint-driven industry  
16                  and make it difficult to erase the negative  
17                  connotation that often comes along with hospice  
18                  for most people.

19                  There are no second chances for  
20                  end-of-life care. Additionally, hospice  
21                  hurts -- excuse me -- hospice saves taxpayers  
22                  money by reducing ER visits and hospital  
23                  readmissions.

24                  Locally hospital readmissions are about 18  
25                  percent -- understand that's been working in

1 inpatient palliative care for the last several  
2 years as well -- where hospice readmissions are  
3 less than 7 percent.

4 I respectfully ask the CRC to amend  
5 Proposition Number 54 to remove hospice.

6 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, Doctor.

7 Our next testifiers will be, in this  
8 order, Dr. Carolyn -- I think it's Zonig,  
9 followed by Jennifer Hayter, Larraine Head,  
10 Richard Stone, and Jonathan Johnson.

11 I apologize, ma'am, if I got your name  
12 wrong.

13 DR. ZONIG: No worries. I'm Dr. Carolyn  
14 Zonig.

15 And, Commissioners, I'd like to thank you  
16 very much for the opportunity to speak to you  
17 today.

18 I'm speaking against Proposal 4 and  
19 Proposal 72.

20 Proposal 4 would delete the no-aid  
21 provision and allow the state government to  
22 direct taxpayer dollars toward any church or  
23 religious organization, undermining the historic  
24 protection against government entanglement with  
25 religious -- religion and religious

1 institutions.

2 Proposition 72 -- or Proposal 72 would  
3 make it almost impossible to raise new tax money  
4 in our state that has no income tax.

5 Commissioners, I attended publicly funded  
6 state university and medical school. And the  
7 patients who taught me were all receiving  
8 publicly funded government insurance.

9 I have benefited greatly from the  
10 appropriate use of public funds, as I imagine  
11 have many of you, so I'm baffled at this  
12 continued assault on our public funds.

13 As we saw in Parkland, Florida, we don't  
14 even now have the resources in our public  
15 schools to deal with troubled students like  
16 Nikolas Cruz.

17 I don't want my taxpayer money going to  
18 the pockets of privateers who plan to make big  
19 money off of charter schools.

20 Commissioners, I would like you to  
21 represent the voices of those who cannot take a  
22 day off work, drive 100 miles, and wait in line  
23 for two minutes of your time.

24 I want my tax money to level the playing  
25 field for those who have not had all the

1 benefits as I.

2 Please vote no on Proposition 4 and  
3 Proposition 72.

4 And, Commissioners, before you place any  
5 of these amendments on the ballot, ask yourself,  
6 just who are you representing?

7 I would ask you to please be the voice for  
8 the most vulnerable among us.

9 Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, Doctor.

11 Next, Jennifer Hayter.

12 MS. HAYTER: Yes. Jennifer Hayter.

13 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Hayter. I apologize.

14 MS. HAYTER: That's quite all right.

15 I'm here today to ask that you vote no on  
16 Proposal 88.

17 I've worked in long-term care for the last  
18 23 years, 18 of which has been right here in  
19 Pensacola.

20 I'm currently serving as the Life  
21 Arrangement Director at Arcadia Health & Rehab,  
22 and I serve as the state president of my  
23 professional organization, which is Florida  
24 Health Care Activity Coordinators' Association.

25 I'm here today with coworkers, a family



1 member, and many of my residents, including my  
2 president of resident council, Ms. Susan Ard.

3 And we're here today to tell you that this  
4 proposal pretends to be about resident rights,  
5 but really it's about opening doors for more  
6 litigation against our facilities like mine, who  
7 are entrusted to take care of our vulnerable  
8 seniors.

9 This proposal will require increases in  
10 liability insurance for facilities, which cost  
11 money, stripping valuable resources, like people  
12 and money, which is not the way to help seniors.

13 I'm here to tell you what happens when  
14 costs go up and income doesn't in a nursing  
15 home. The residents suffer. Residents are  
16 affected personally by the loss of personnel and  
17 the loss of operating budgets in ancillary  
18 departments like the life enrichment department,  
19 the activities department, the dietary  
20 department.

21 Every time expensive requirements come  
22 into nursing homes, either the staffing of these  
23 departments is decreased or our operating  
24 budgets are decreased, which directly impacts  
25 the programs and the supplies that we're able to

1 provide for our residents. We end up cutting  
2 out programs that improve the quality of life.  
3 Laws like this don't improve quality of care.  
4 They only jack up the costs.

5 Only people can improve care, people like  
6 me and my coworkers, who are dedicated to  
7 helping these seniors. So we strongly urge you  
8 to support our seniors by voting against  
9 Proposal 88.

10 Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

12 Next, Laraine Head.

13 Ms. Head.

14 MS. HEAD: Hi. I'm Larraine Head, and I'm  
15 here as a voice for my mother who's 98 years  
16 old, been in a nursing home for five years.

17 I wish you to vote against Proposal 88.

18 The thing is, when the person ahead of me  
19 said the costs go up, the money is passed on to  
20 the resident or the family member who's paying  
21 it.

22 And already their care is so expensive  
23 that other things -- the quality of care will go  
24 down, so I please ask you to please vote against  
25 Proposal 88.

1 Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

3 Richard Stone.

4 MR. STONE: Hi there. I'm Rich Stone. I  
5 have -- I want to thank y'all, first of all, for  
6 your service in these important positions of  
7 public trust on the Commission, and thank you  
8 for being in Pensacola today.

9 I've spent my career over the last 38  
10 years making service to the Escambia County  
11 citizens and motorists and the Tax Collector's  
12 Office my life's work.

13 And one thing that I've learned, amongst  
14 many through these years, is that it is so  
15 critical -- and I'm talking about Proposal 13,  
16 selection and duties of certain county  
17 officers -- it is so critical to maintain these  
18 elected positions.

19 Every decision every day is trying to  
20 achieve a balance between the service levels we  
21 provide for our citizens and motorists and the  
22 costs of providing those services, every  
23 decision every day.

24 And you need someone accountable, through  
25 the election and reelection of the people who

1 are getting it right. We can't have no-waits in  
2 these offices.

3 We're providing ever-expanded services,  
4 whether it's concealed weapons licenses or  
5 hunting and fishing licenses, or birth  
6 certificate issuance, or everything that's been  
7 added, driver's license most notably.

8 The bottom line is, it is a balance, that  
9 you want to elect someone to achieve the right  
10 way to do it. You want to hold them accountable  
11 to the election process.

12 And I would love to see that in the  
13 Constitution by your support of Proposition --  
14 of Proposal 13.

15 Thanks for that moment to speak.

16 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much.

17 Jonathan Johnson.

18 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you for allowing me to  
19 address you. And I also support Proposal 13.

20 I also work in the Tax Collector's Office.  
21 I am a Senior Deputy Tax Collector, and I've  
22 worked with the public for about 11 years.

23 And I can tell you that having dealt with  
24 people on a one-on-one basis, it is important  
25 that they are able to hold their elected

1 officials responsible.

2 Our entire system of government is built  
3 on the idea that people get to make the choice  
4 by electing people that are worthy of that  
5 trust.

6 And I think if we were to not have elected  
7 officials in these constitutional offices, we  
8 would ultimately undermine the public trust  
9 because we would no longer be able to hold them  
10 responsible.

11 Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
13 sir.

14 Our next testifiers will be Agnes -- I  
15 believe it's Furey, followed by Marty McDonnell,  
16 Steve Hough, James Calvins and Pat Tuthill.

17 Is it Agnes Furey?

18 MS. FUREY: Furey. That is correct.

19 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am, for  
20 being here, and you're recognized.

21 MS. FUREY: I'm here to speak in support  
22 of Proposition 96.

23 I'm a survivor of violent crime. My  
24 daughter and my grandson were murdered.

25 It's important to me that victims have a

1 right to speak and be heard.

2 We have rights in statute. Unfortunately,  
3 sometimes each Circuit has their own way of  
4 administering those rights, and it's not as  
5 uniform as it could be.

6 And I'm concerned that if it's not in the  
7 Constitution, it can be changed, and we can lose  
8 some of the rights that we have.

9 I believe that victims and survivors are  
10 primary stakeholders in our criminal justice  
11 system. Survivors speak.

12 Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
14 ma'am.

15 Marty McDonnell.

16 MR. McDONNELL: Good afternoon.

17 My name is Marty McDonnell. I'm an  
18 attorney in Tallahassee, and I currently serve  
19 as the Chairman of the Executive Council of the  
20 Criminal Law Section of the Florida Bar.

21 And I'm here to speak, with all due  
22 respect to the last speaker -- my sympathies --  
23 but I'm here to speak on behalf of the Criminal  
24 Law Section in opposition to Prop 96.

25 The Criminal Law Section, by way of brief

1 background, is comprised of judges, prosecutors,  
2 defense attorneys and law professors. We have  
3 about 2,400 members.

4 In January of this year, the Executive  
5 Council met, discussed Proposal 96, deliberated  
6 upon it, and voted by a vote of 29 to 3 to  
7 oppose it.

8 We recognize, as the people who work in  
9 the court system every day, the importance of  
10 victims' rights. We're not insensitive to them,  
11 and many of us champion those rights.

12 Currently in the Florida Constitution,  
13 Article 1, Section 16 recognizes victims' rights  
14 and the Florida Victim Rights Act, which is in  
15 Chapter 96, Florida Statutes, that explicitly  
16 lists approximately 30 separate victims' rights.  
17 Your staff analysis correctly points that out.

18 And I ask you again to take the time and  
19 review the staff analysis and determine for  
20 yourselves whether Florida has an adequate  
21 victims' rights act.

22 There are sections of Proposal 96 that the  
23 Criminal Law Section just cannot stand behind.

24 And I ask you to take into consideration  
25 the opinions of the people who practice in those

1 courts every day and respectfully vote in  
2 opposition to Prop 96.

3 Thank you.

4 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

5 Steven Hough.

6 MR. HOUGH: My name is Steve Hough. I'm  
7 speaking on P-62 and P-97.

8 According to the CRC Website, open  
9 primaries was the second most popular issue  
10 brought before this Commission.

11 And I believe the applause and green cards  
12 for our speakers throughout the process is  
13 evident of overall support for attendees.

14 It's easy to understand, when a poll last  
15 March showed 70 percent of Floridians, including  
16 Democrats, Republicans and Independents alike  
17 agreed that the CRC should put an open primaries  
18 initiative on the 2018 ballot.

19 20 -- excuse me -- 84 percent of  
20 Florida -- Florida's elections are now decided  
21 in the primaries, which shuts out 27 percent of  
22 the electorate.

23 The ideal of government of, by, and for  
24 the people has become a punch line.

25 We were glad to see Commissioner Plymale



1 sponsor a proposal to close the right-end  
2 loophole. It's a flagrant abuse of the 1998  
3 amendment. And P-11 is an important  
4 anticorruption measure.

5 Commissioner Thurlow-Lippisch gave a  
6 lengthy, impassioned speech before the Ethics  
7 and Elections Committee, in which she said the  
8 system was not only corrupt but a fraud.

9 Chair Coxe of the Elections -- Ethics and  
10 Elections Committee said that he believed the  
11 Commission had an opportunity and an obligation  
12 to do what it could to increase the number of  
13 people able to vote in our primaries.

14 He also said he believed this Commission  
15 has the skill, the talent and the intelligence  
16 to make whatever tweaks necessary to allay the  
17 concerns of others on an open-primaries  
18 resolution. I agree with him. And I hope the  
19 rest of the Commission is listening.

20 Considering the activities among young  
21 people, in the aftermath of the Parkland  
22 shooting, it behooves us to consider that 50  
23 percent of millenials are registered, and we  
24 must ask ourselves: What will they do once they  
25 realize they have no meaningful vote?

1           Claw back P-62, give it a fair hearing,  
2           and then determine if it's something that, in  
3           fact, the voters should have a final say.

4           Additionally P-97 appears to be a failed  
5           attempt to make it next to impossible --

6           COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much.

7           MR. HOUGH: -- vote no on 97.

8           Thank you.

9           COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you. Well  
10          done.

11          James Calkins, please.

12          MR. CALKINS: How you doin' today?

13          I am from Navarre, Florida, and I would  
14          like to speak against Proposal 11.

15          I think that -- I am a Republican. And it  
16          is my belief that if you want to vote in the  
17          Republican primary, you should join the  
18          Republican party.

19          And I think it would be the same way for  
20          the other parties. I am staunchly against  
21          Proposal 11, so I think -- think y'all need to  
22          knock that one out.

23          Also Number 13. I think the -- that our  
24          sheriff needs to be able to represent us. And I  
25          believe in order to do that, we need elected

1 sheriffs.

2 I think -- I think this is a great  
3 proposal, Proposal 13, to make sure -- ensure  
4 that our sheriffs are elected and not appointed.

5 I'd -- I'd much rather have representation  
6 by someone who is elected that we can vote for,  
7 that we can hold accountable than somebody  
8 that's appointed.

9 So that's Number 13. I'm in favor.

10 Now, Number 29, I am fully in favor. Now,  
11 this is e-verify. Now, we have examples of  
12 states that don't have e-verify, and we have  
13 examples of states that do have e-verify.

14 The southeast is an area that -- We are  
15 the only state in the southeast that doesn't  
16 have e-verify.

17 Look at California. Do we want to become  
18 like California and have millions of illegal  
19 immigrants flooding the airways? Crimes? Tent  
20 cities? I mean, California is a disaster.

21 Please pass e-verify. It's one of the  
22 most important issues in our state. It's upheld  
23 by the Supreme Court in Arizona. It's  
24 successful in multiple states.

25 There's no fear, no danger in implementing

1 this, so please support e-verify.

2 Thank you.

3 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

4 Pat Tuthill.

5 MS. TUTHILL: Good afternoon,

6 Commissioners.

7 You've heard from me before in  
8 Tallahassee. And I'm a national victims'  
9 advocate and a public policy activist nationally  
10 and in Florida.

11 I'm here to speak on behalf of E. D.  
12 Maria, who could not be here today.

13 And as I testified before, I'm a survivor.  
14 My daughter was murdered.

15 And Ms. Daria -- Ms. Daria hadn't [sic]  
16 been a victim of sexual assault, for five years  
17 with a child, in domestic violence for 20 years,  
18 feels qualified and comfortable to oppose  
19 Prop -- Proposal 96, Marsy, and in support of  
20 Marsy's law.

21 She was in an abusive relationship for 20  
22 years. Her husband was a lieutenant colonel in  
23 the Air Force and threatened her if she ever  
24 left.

25 She finally left, returned to college,

1       earned her master's degree in mental health,  
2       became a mental counselor and a victim advocate  
3       for Okaloosa County Sheriff's Department.

4               Over a ten-year period, she served  
5       thousands of victims, provided them with as many  
6       excellent services as she could.

7               However, there was one major problem.  
8       Many times victims were not notified the  
9       accused, the defendant, was released. And the  
10      family, parents could not -- and children -- get  
11      to a safe place to be protected. The defendant  
12      [sic] was stalked and followed the victim.

13              Excuse me. Also, today that Victim  
14      Assistance Center has been closed and the  
15      victims have to go to court.

16              They sit in the same room with the  
17      aggressor, where they are intimidated. They  
18      lived in fear, and they are threatened.

19              Marsy's Law for Florida is long overdue.  
20      It needs to be put on the ballot, where victims'  
21      rights are in place and adhered to, not just  
22      empty words.

23              Victims need to feel and to know that the  
24      State of Florida, through Marsy's Law will keep  
25      them informed and safe, that those

1 Constitutional rights are not just for the  
2 defendants. We want equal rights.

3 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
4 Ms. Tuthill. We appreciate your testimony.

5 Our next five speakers will be  
6 Aletta Jarrett, Todd Thomson, Ellen Roston,  
7 Janet deLorge and Vivian Faircloth.

8 Aletta Jarrett, please.

9 You are recognized, ma'am.

10 MS. JARRETT: Good afternoon.

11 My name's Aletta Jarrett.

12 I'm a homicide survivor. I lost my  
13 father, a doctor, and my brother, a nurse, to a  
14 brutal for-hire slaying by my father's office  
15 manager who was embezzling.

16 She orchestrated her boyfriend to enter my  
17 family's home, the home I grew up in, for a  
18 hired hit man, to shoot them in the head,  
19 assassination style, while they were sleeping in  
20 their beds.

21 This happened in Miami-Dade County. There  
22 were four defendants, two full trials, two  
23 pleas. The court proceedings went 12 years.

24 In the first trial, the jury found him  
25 guilty of first degree murder.

1 Well, in Florida, first degree murder is  
2 an automatic life in prison without parole, and  
3 the judge immediately sentences him at the end  
4 of the trial.

5 I was not informed that I could speak. No  
6 one told me about a victim impact statement. In  
7 fact, to put insult upon injury, the defendant  
8 was permitted to address the family in the  
9 courtroom. He was unapologetic and blamed it on  
10 the other guy.

11 If I had constitutional rights to speak to  
12 guarantee my right to be heard, I don't think I  
13 would have been revictimized, and this horrible  
14 tragedy in the courtroom would not have  
15 happened.

16 The lawyers keep saying, "With all due  
17 respect, we don't need an amendment to the  
18 Constitution because of this -- this is already  
19 in the statute."

20 If the statutes were working, we would not  
21 be here. I would not be here. The statutes are  
22 not working. We need to toughen it up with a  
23 Constitutional right.

24 If Marsy's Law is passed, victims will not  
25 have to worry about being overlooked in the

1 criminal justice system, like I was.

2 And on behalf of all victims and their  
3 families in Florida, I implore you to support  
4 Marsy's Law. Do not let the criminal justice  
5 system revictimize us.

6 Thank you so much for listening. And  
7 please give us our Constitutional right to be  
8 heard.

9 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
10 ma'am.

11 (Light audience applause.)

12 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Again, in respect of  
13 everyone on both sides of all issues, if you  
14 could use the cards, I think that would help  
15 your cause better.

16 Todd Thomson.

17 MR. THOMSON: President Gaetz, Chairman  
18 Beruff, Commissioners, welcome to Pensacola.

19 First, I am Todd Thomson. I'm here on  
20 behalf of the Greater Pensacola Chamber of  
21 Commerce.

22 Welcome to Pensacola. Thank you for  
23 coming and hearing our citizen input in this  
24 important process we only get to do once every  
25 20 years.



1 I'm here on two issues that our board of  
2 directors has taken a position on.

3 Issue one, Proposal 29, we are against.  
4 And it's not so much the policy. It's the place  
5 and the process.

6 We think that this is an important issue  
7 that needs to be worked on by our federal  
8 government and by our state government.

9 Putting it in the Constitution, it could  
10 make it difficult for our -- especially our  
11 smaller businesses that just may not know the  
12 process.

13 So, you know, Proposal 91, we are in  
14 favor. We don't have to remind the people in  
15 this room what happened here almost eight years  
16 ago with Deepwater Horizon.

17 It's very important that we keep our  
18 beaches safe and protected, and also our  
19 military missions.

20 Oil drilling in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico  
21 could have a negative impact on our military  
22 missions from here all the way over to Tyndall  
23 Air Force Base.

24 So we would ask you, even though it's only  
25 nine miles, I think it sends an important

1 message to the federal government, who is now  
2 considering opening up this area of the Gulf for  
3 exploration and drilling.

4 Thankfully, our local Congressman and our  
5 Governor have been very forward and aggressive  
6 in trying to protect us, but if we're up on 91,  
7 it sends a strong message to Washington, D.C.  
8 that Florida does not want to see oil drilling  
9 close to our shores, impacting tourism and our  
10 military mission.

11 Thank you very much.

12 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, Todd.

13 Next, Ellen Roston.

14 MS. ROSTON: I'm Ellen Roston with the  
15 League of Women Voters of the Pensacola Bay  
16 Area.

17 We urge the CRC to preserve the present  
18 ability of Floridians to amend their  
19 Constitution and oppose Proposal 97.

20 It is already extremely difficult to pass  
21 any constitutional amendment in Florida. We  
22 have one of the highest voter approval  
23 thresholds in the county.

24 The threshold was raised from 50 percent  
25 to 60 percent in 2006. Many states only require

1 a simple majority.

2 Under Proposal 97, the 60 percent  
3 threshold for passage is calculated from the  
4 number of people voting in the election, not the  
5 number of people voting on the issue.

6 This proposal turns an abstention or --  
7 and even accidental failure to vote into a no  
8 vote. It creates a situation where a voter's  
9 will would be designated without his or her  
10 knowledge or consent. I urge you to vote no on  
11 Proposal 97.

12 Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

14 Janet . . . Is it deLorge?

15 MS. deLORGE: Thanks.

16 I am here and asking you, the members of  
17 the CRC, to oppose Proposal Number 72, which  
18 would require that two-thirds of the members of  
19 each House of the Florida legislature approve  
20 any new tax or even any increase in fees.

21 This proposal would also say that the same  
22 two-thirds required would need to be implemented  
23 to remove any outdated tax or fee.

24 Some of the reasons for my opposition:  
25 First is that I think this proposal is a

1 solution looking for a problem.

2 It does not seem that in Florida we have a  
3 problem with taxation. Florida does not have a  
4 state income tax. It's a low-tax state. And  
5 much of our general revenue is generated from  
6 tourism.

7 The legislature in our state meets every  
8 year, and they have the opportunity to impose  
9 taxes, review taxes, or eliminate taxes and  
10 fees.

11 Funding . . . Putting this two-thirds  
12 amendment on the ballot would mean that --  
13 Excuse me.

14 As more people move into the State of  
15 Florida, we need to have a tax system that is  
16 flexible and that can address the needs of the  
17 people who live here.

18 Finally, if the Florida legislature  
19 becomes as polarized as the nation seems to be  
20 at this time, you know they would never pass any  
21 sort of amendment.

22 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

23 MS. deLORGE: Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Vivian Faircloth.

25 Ms. Faircloth, you're recognized.

1 MS. FAIRCLOTH: Thank you for this  
2 opportunity to speak.

3 I am Vivian Faircloth, and I live in  
4 Pensacola.

5 I urge you to oppose Proposal 97.

6 In the November 2008 election, a total of  
7 8,351,358 voters voted in that election.

8 The Florida Marriage Protection Amendment,  
9 which was number 2 then, passed with over 60  
10 percent, a total of 7,900,980 electors voted on  
11 that measure. It would not have passed under  
12 the proposed changes.

13 Amendment Number 3 on that same year  
14 passed with over 60 percent of the electors  
15 voting for the measure, which involved changes  
16 to the assessed value of residential real  
17 property. It would have failed under the new  
18 rules, as it garnered 52 percent of the total  
19 voting in that election. There were 1,159,558  
20 people who chose not to vote for that amendment.

21 Please do not take action that could make  
22 it much harder for ordinary citizens, as well as  
23 the CRC and the Florida Taxation and Budget  
24 Reform Commission to amend our Constitution.

25 Please vote no for Proposal Number 97.

1 Thank you.

2 And furthermore, hashtag number "again."

3 Thank you.

4 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you.

5 Our next speakers will be Cynthia  
6 McDonald, followed by Betty Black, Laurie Hood,  
7 Donna Banks and Crockett Hood.

8 Cynthia McDonald, you're recognized.

9 MS. McDONALD: My name is Cynthia  
10 McDonald, and I'm a Restorative CNA at Rosewood  
11 Health Care Rehab. And I've worked there for 15  
12 years.

13 I urge you to vote against Proposition 88.

14 You've heard it said many times -- and  
15 I'll say it again -- this proposal is more about  
16 suing nursing homes than improving the care in  
17 nursing homes.

18 Rosewood is a five-star facility. We  
19 provide excellent care. And what we don't need  
20 is additional legislation to improve on the care  
21 that we give.

22 What we need is adequate funding to  
23 continue the care and services that we provide.

24 Vote against Proposal 88.

25 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

1 Betty Black.

2 Ms. Black, thank you for being here, and  
3 you're recognized, ma'am.

4 MS. BLACK: I'm a veteran of Rosewood  
5 Health Care & Rehab. I've been there 15 years,  
6 and I'm the president of the residents' council  
7 for 15 years.

8 I urge you to vote against Proposal 88.  
9 This proposal is more about suing nursing homes  
10 than improving residents' care in the nursing  
11 homes.

12 Rosewood is a five-star center, and we  
13 receive great care there.

14 And I can't agree with that. We do not  
15 need additional demonstration to improve care.

16 What we need is adequate funding to  
17 continue the care and service that we receive.

18 Please vote against Proposition 88.

19 Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

21 Laurie Hood.

22 MS. HOOD: Hi. My name is Laurie Hood.  
23 And I am the founder and president of Alaqua  
24 Animal Refuge in Freeport, Florida, the largest  
25 animal rescue, rehabilitation, adoption

1 sanctuary in Northwest Florida.

2 I am here today to ask you to vote yes on  
3 Proposal 67.

4 I would like to welcome you today and  
5 thank the Commission for visiting us in the  
6 Panhandle.

7 The work that I do allows me the  
8 opportunity to work with different groups and  
9 organizations.

10 Alaqua has become a recognized leader in  
11 animal welfare issues and animal cruelty  
12 prevention.

13 We work side by side with law enforcement,  
14 the State Attorney's Office, animal control,  
15 legislatures, and many other groups who share  
16 our mission.

17 In fact, our work has been chosen by  
18 National Geographic for a TV series that follows  
19 the daily challenges on these issues that we  
20 have and will air this spring.

21 I am here to say that the animal welfare  
22 community in Northwest Florida and in the  
23 Panhandle and beyond is very strong.

24 We care about this issue. This is not an  
25 issue -- I'm sorry. This is an issue based on



1 values, and it is important in every community,  
2 not only those with racetracks.

3 My life work has stemmed from the case of  
4 just one dog that moved me enough to stop the  
5 cycle of cruelty for others who were destined to  
6 follow the same path.

7 There is power in the story of just one  
8 dog. And today you will hear some of those  
9 stories.

10 I thank you for your time and  
11 consideration.

12 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much.

13 (Light audience applause.)

14 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Donna Banks.

15 MS. BANKS: Yes, sir.

16 I'm Donna Banks, and I live in Destin,  
17 Florida. And I'm here to speak on behalf of  
18 Pretty Gorgeous.

19 Gorgeous was born on March 11, 2011 in a  
20 litter with just one other little extra puppy.

21 When she was a few months old, she got the  
22 first of two ear tattoos to distinguish her from  
23 her sibling.

24 At around 18 months old, Gorgeous was  
25 hauled to the Orange Park Kennel Club, where she

1 was kept in a warehouse-style kennel compound  
2 with rows of stacked metal cages that held  
3 hundreds of dogs.

4 Like all female racing greyhounds, she was  
5 likely given regular doses of anabolic steroids  
6 to prevent a loss of race days.

7 On November 30, 2013, Gorgeous ran her  
8 95th and final race. According to track notes,  
9 she was trampled and fell early.

10 But the state investigated her death and  
11 found that she suffered a related injury from  
12 racing and was destroyed by the track  
13 veterinarian. She was only two years old.

14 On behalf of Pretty Gorgeous, please vote  
15 yes for the dogs on Proposal 67.

16 Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Banks.

18 Next, Crocket Hood.

19 MS. HOOD: Hello. My name is Crocket  
20 Hood. I live in Walton County. And I am here  
21 to speak of RCK Untouchable.

22 Untouchable was born May 2, 2011. He was  
23 one of 11 puppies, with 4 brothers and 6  
24 sisters.

25 When he was 19 months old, he was trucked

1 to Southwind Park in Arkansas to begin racing.

2 After a few weeks, he was transferred to  
3 Florida. In all, he would race 103 times at 6  
4 different tracks.

5 Like all racing greyhounds, Untouchable  
6 lived in a kennel compound with hundreds of  
7 other dogs.

8 He was fed raw 4D meat that is deemed  
9 unfit for human consumption and contains  
10 charcoal.

11 On December 12, 2014, Untouchable ran his  
12 final race at Sarasota Kennel Club. His  
13 trainer, William Suggs, who currently has 10  
14 greyhound deaths on his record, told a state  
15 investigator that Untouchable was injured during  
16 the 9th race.

17 An explanation [sic] found a compound  
18 fracture of the right hoof, and Untouchable was  
19 killed. He was just 3 years old.

20 On behalf of Untouchable, please vote yes  
21 for Proposal 67.

22 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, Crocket.  
23 Thank you for being here today.

24 Our next testifiers will be in this order:  
25 Emily Mitchell, followed by John Holguin, Justin

1 Gordon, I believe from Fort Walton, Ben Anderson  
2 and Margaret Albrecht.

3 Ms. Mitchell, you're recognized.

4 MS. MITCHELL: Hi. My name is Emily  
5 Mitchell. I live here in Pensacola, and I'm  
6 here to speak on behalf of Poor Poor Pitiful Me.

7 Poor Poor Pitiful Me was born on May 20,  
8 2013. There were five puppies in her litter,  
9 two sisters and two brothers.

10 When she was 18 months old, Poor Poor  
11 Pitiful Me was hauled to Palm Beach Kennel Club,  
12 where she was in the control of greyhound  
13 trainer Monica Smith Rego, who testified before  
14 you and defended dog racing a few weeks ago.

15 Poor Poor Pitiful Me only raced eight  
16 times before she died.

17 On the afternoon of November 18, 2014,  
18 Poor Poor Pitiful Me was entered into a race at  
19 the Palm Beach Kennel Club.

20 According to track notes, the lor  
21 (phonetic) functioned. Poor Poor Pitiful Me  
22 attempted to jump the rail, and she was  
23 electrocuted. Poor Poor Pitiful Me was just 18  
24 months old when she died.

25 On behalf of Poor Poor Pitiful Me, please

1 vote yes for the dogs on Proposal 67.

2 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

3 John Holguin.

4 MR. HOLGUIN: Good afternoon, Mr.

5 President, Commissioners. Thank you for being  
6 here today. Appreciate your time.

7 My name is John Holguin. I am here today  
8 to show my support for Proposal 13.

9 Just one example of the constitutional  
10 officers that are listed in the five is the Tax  
11 Collector. They do many state services.

12 We collect real estate taxes, driver's  
13 license, and . . . But one that you might not  
14 know about is the personal -- or tangible  
15 personal property tax.

16 Only sheriffs and tax collectors can seize  
17 and sell a citizen's property. For tax  
18 collectors, this arises when a citizen does not  
19 pay their tangible personal property tax.

20 This is an awesome power, but with great  
21 power comes great responsibility.

22 Do you really think the citizens would  
23 want to leave -- force, seize and sale of a  
24 person's property in the hands of an unelected  
25 bureaucrat taking a direct order from the

1 government that receives revenue from the  
2 seizure and sale?

3 Ask you today to vote yes on 13 and put it  
4 on the ballot and let the citizens decide.

5 Thank you.

6 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much.

7 Justin. And I apologize.

8 MR. GORDON: Gordon.

9 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Gordon.

10 MR. GORDON: Yes.

11 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you.

12 MR. GORDON: Thank you, Commissioners, for  
13 allowing us here to speak today.

14 I'm here today to show my support for  
15 Proposal 13.

16 Proposal 13 protects democracy and the  
17 right to Florida citizens to elect their county  
18 officers and officials.

19 Elected tax collectors specifically are  
20 sealed between the local governments that levy  
21 and impose the taxes and the citizens who pay  
22 those taxes.

23 Furthermore, Florida law requires that  
24 property tax collection be free from even the  
25 appearance of undue influence between the county

1 that imposes the taxes and the collector who  
2 collects them.

3 The appearance of undue influence most  
4 definitely exists when a county abolishes the  
5 office of the tax collector, and their duties  
6 are transferred to an appointed bureaucrat  
7 within that county.

8 In these cases, the same government that  
9 levies and imposes the tax is also responsible  
10 for the collection of that tax.

11 This leads to the loss of accountability  
12 and transparency, increase in the appearance of  
13 corruption and cronyism, and most important the  
14 independence afforded by the state constitution  
15 is destroyed.

16 All Floridians understand that the simple  
17 and fair concept of good government is one  
18 wherein an independently elected official is  
19 directly responsible to the citizens.

20 Thank you for your time. And I  
21 respectfully request your favorable support of  
22 Proposition -- Proposal 13.

23 Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much.

25 The Honorable Ben Anderson.

1 MR. ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. President,  
2 Commissioners.

3 My name is Ben Anderson. I am the elected  
4 Tax Collector of Okaloosa County, and I'm also  
5 the president elect of the Florida Association  
6 of Tax Collectors.

7 Today I wanted to share with you to vote  
8 yes for Proposal 13.

9 The duties and responsibilities of a tax  
10 collector involve both the local and state  
11 services that are provided to its citizens.

12 On the local level, we collect ad valorem  
13 tax. We provide business licenses. We collect  
14 tourism tax and non-ad valorem tax.

15 On the state level, many of you know that  
16 we're very involved with the delivery of  
17 registrations of vehicles and vessels in the  
18 state, driver's license.

19 In fact, we work with numerous state  
20 departments and agencies here in Florida: The  
21 Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles,  
22 the Department of Revenue, the Department of  
23 Agriculture, the Department of Vital Statistics,  
24 and Fish & Wildlife. We deliver state services  
25 to the local level.



1           Proposition 13 will not encroach on home  
2 rule. It's very important to note: In fact  
3 what Proposition 13 will do, it will maintain  
4 the accountability of elected officials to  
5 deliver home rule services, such as the state  
6 services to the local citizens. And that's  
7 important.

8           We find that we deliver service, we feel,  
9 in a appropriate customer-service attitude and  
10 base. And the quality of service, we think, is  
11 very good.

12           We want to be held accountable for these  
13 specific duties of constitutional officers. You  
14 have the sheriff in public safety; tax  
15 collectors, the trust of money; supervisor of  
16 elections, the integrity of the election  
17 process; property appraisers, independent values  
18 from those taxing authorities; and the Clerk,  
19 unbiased court services.

20           Please vote yes on Proposal 13.

21           Thank you.

22           COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much.

23           Margaret Albrecht.

24           MS. ALBRECHT: Hello. I'm here about open  
25 primaries, Proposal 62.

1           3.4 million Florida taxpayers are  
2 registered NPA, like me. We pay for the  
3 primaries, but we can't vote in them.

4           Almost every southern state has open  
5 primaries. Florida is down there with West  
6 Virginia and Kentucky as a state that doesn't  
7 have open primaries. Alabama has open  
8 primaries. Mississippi has open primaries.

9           It is embarrassing that Florida is more  
10 backwards than Alabama and Mississippi.

11           (Audience laughter.)

12           MS. ALBRECHT: Open primaries are going to  
13 happen. 73 percent of Florida voters want them.  
14 That's enough to get it on the ballot and get it  
15 passed.

16           So open primaries are either going to  
17 happen because of you or in spite of you. Stop  
18 disenfranchising the voters. Support open  
19 primaries and be on the right side of history.

20           And here's something else I found out  
21 about today. Proposal 97, changing the  
22 amendments.

23           The Constitutional Amendment process is an  
24 important remedy for Florida citizens. It  
25 works. If it ain't broke, don't fix it. And

1 this isn't broken, so don't mess with it.

2 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

3 Carey Theil, followed by Kate MacFall, Max  
4 Harmony, Jaye -- I think it is Shimms, and Tracy  
5 Greene.

6 MR. THEIL: Mr. Chairman, Commissioners,  
7 Carey Theil with Greyhound Protection Group,  
8 USA.

9 I am speaking today on behalf of DDM's  
10 O'Ryan. This is a photograph of O'Ryan. She  
11 was born on September 14, 2013, in a litter with  
12 10 puppies.

13 At a young age, she was tattooed and  
14 trained to race. When she was 19 months old,  
15 she was shipped to Orange Park Kennel Club in  
16 Jacksonville, where she would eventually race 60  
17 times.

18 At Orange Park, O'Ryan was kept in a  
19 warehouse-style kennel compound with nearly  
20 1,000 other dogs. She was confined in a metal  
21 cage with carpet remnants or shredded paper as  
22 bedding, like all racing greyhounds in Florida,  
23 for more than 20 hours per day.

24 On January 25, 2016, O'Ryan raced for the  
25 last time. According to a state investigator

1 report, O'Ryan rolled in the turn coming out of  
2 the starting box and broke his neck.

3 The track veterinarian told investigators  
4 O'Ryan, quote, was nonresponsive, unquote, and  
5 he believed the injury to be a fractured neck or  
6 spine, unquote. O'Ryan was just two years old  
7 when he died.

8 On behalf of O'Ryan and all the dogs that  
9 died in this industry, I ask you to vote yes for  
10 the dogs on Proposal 67.

11 Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

13 Kate MacFall.

14 MS. MacFALL: Hi there. I'm Kate MacFall,  
15 Humane Society of the United States --

16 VOICE IN THE AUDIENCE: Louder.

17 MS. MacFALL: -- speaking in support of  
18 Proposal 67.

19 I want to thank you, President Gaetz and  
20 Commissioner Heuchan, for your incredible  
21 support for the dogs.

22 Speaking on behalf of W.W. Flicka. This  
23 is a picture of Flicka here. Flicka was born on  
24 May 2, 2013, on the Kansas Breeding Farm, owned  
25 by Julia Ward, the President of the NGA, the

1 National Greyhound Association.

2 She had three brothers -- three sisters  
3 and one brother. When they were 18 months old,  
4 Flicka and her littermates were sent to  
5 racetracks.

6 One of Flicka's sisters, M.D. Toro, was  
7 sent to Mexico's infamous Caliente Track, where,  
8 after running 300-plus races, she is still  
9 racing today.

10 Meanwhile, Flicka was sent to Orange Park  
11 in Jacksonville, where she raced 169 times. She  
12 became internationally known after she tested  
13 positive for cocaine seven times between January  
14 and May of 2017.

15 Her trainers were charged with 24  
16 greyhound cocaine positives, which they are  
17 still fighting in court today.

18 Flicka won the race in this photo and  
19 tested positive for cocaine after. This was one  
20 of 70 greyhound cocaine positives over the last  
21 decade in Florida.

22 Flicka raced the last time on June 1,  
23 2017. Her current whereabouts are unknown.

24 On behalf of Flicka, please vote yes for  
25 the dogs and Proposal 67.

1 Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

3 Next, Max -- I believe it's Harmony; is  
4 that correct?

5 MR. HARMONY: Yes.

6 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Come forward. You're  
7 recognized.

8 MR. HARMONY: Good afternoon,  
9 Commissioners, fellow citizens.

10 I have a few issues I'd like to talk  
11 about, so I'll talk about each of them briefly.

12 First of all, I'd like to say that I'm  
13 very happy to hear that Proposition 22 is  
14 unlikely to be discussed any further.

15 I just want to encourage you not to revive  
16 it. It is a great violation of the rights of  
17 Floridians.

18 As far as propositions that are still  
19 being offered, Proposition 4, the no-aid  
20 provision was recently re -- recently on the  
21 ballot, in fact, and was -- it's -- it was  
22 rejected by the voters because it's a  
23 restriction on people's religious freedom. So I  
24 believe that it should not go back on the  
25 ballot.

1 I'm also opposed to Proposition 29, which  
2 is -- requires all employers in the state to use  
3 the e-verify system, which has been rejected  
4 repeatedly by the state legislature already.  
5 There's no reason to use it when the state has  
6 already said no to it.

7 I'm also opposed to Proposition 72 by  
8 requiring a two-thirds vote in connection with  
9 tax increases that are necessary for critical  
10 programs.

11 As far as Proposition 96, although I  
12 support victims' rights, I believe this is the  
13 wrong approach by -- And it restricts the due  
14 process rights of the Florida citizens and  
15 places an undue burden on state attorneys.

16 Proposition 97, as well, goes against  
17 standard principles of voting, that you actually  
18 have to vote for your vote to be counted, and it  
19 creates even more difficulty in passing  
20 amendments that might be necessary for the  
21 state.

22 So I hope that you'll consider this.

23 Thank you for your time.

24 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you for your  
25 testimony.

1           And Jay -- I apologize. I can't make out  
2           your last name properly.

3           MR. SCAMMS: Scamms.

4           COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Okay. Thank you very  
5           much.

6           You're recognized.

7           MR. SCAMMS: Thank you. I'm -- I'm -- I'm  
8           here from Tallahassee.

9           And I understand you're not currently  
10          considering Proposal 22, but I wanted to speak  
11          in opposition to that.

12          The state constitution of Florida, through  
13          its declaration of rights, has a very  
14          well-worded explanation of the citizens' right  
15          to privacy.

16          And the only reason that someone would  
17          want to change that wording would be to possibly  
18          deny the rights of various parties of the  
19          population.

20          So I urge the Commission to oppose  
21          Proposal 22.

22          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you  
23          for your testimony.

24          Tracy Greene.

25          MS. GREENE: Hi. Good afternoon.



1           My name is Tracy Greene. I'm the vice  
2 president of operations for Southern Health Care  
3 Management, and I've been a nursing home  
4 administrator for almost 20 years.

5           I'm here to discuss Proposal 88. Proposal  
6 88 was created by trial attorneys as a way to  
7 sue nursing homes for an unlimited amount of  
8 money.

9           They are doing this under the guise of a  
10 resident bill of rights which already exists.  
11 Florida's nursing homes rank second in the  
12 nation in the number of five-star-rated  
13 facilities.

14           Over 60 percent of Florida's nursing homes  
15 have a four- or five-star staffing rating.

16           Lawsuits do nothing to improve care. This  
17 proposal would only serve to increase liability  
18 costs, taking valuable resources away from the  
19 vulnerable population that we serve.

20           Working in a nursing home is a calling,  
21 and we take great pride in the work we do and  
22 care deeply about the residents we serve.

23           The Florida legislature, as well as  
24 Congress, has already enacted a Residents' Bill  
25 of Rights.

The amendment in Proposal 88 does not belong in the state constitution.

Please vote no on Amendment 88.

COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much, ma'am.

We'll take five more speakers, and then we'll take a short break.

So our next five speakers will be Bill Young, followed by Paula Montgomery, Ray Hudkins, Samuel McClay, and then James Phillips.

Mr. Young.

MR. YOUNG: Hello. My name is Bill Young. I'm a resident of Pensacola. I'm a retired career government aquatic biologist/environmental scientist.

And I'm here to propose an amendment that reads as follows, the title of which is "Coastal Hurricane Surge Protection Amendment":

This amendment serves to protect Florida's beaches and coastal areas from destruction by hurricanes.

It recognizes that with rising sea level and larger and more intense hurricanes, beaches and coastal areas are becoming more vulnerable to destruction and damage caused by hurricane

1 surge.

2 Also, it recognizes the value and  
3 importance of healthy dune systems in protecting  
4 coastal areas, including land and waterways and  
5 their development, from destruction and damage  
6 caused by hurricane surge.

7 It provides a mechanism whereby oceanfront  
8 property -- private property that experiences  
9 extensive erosion or its dune structure  
10 experiences extensive damage from hurricane  
11 surge is required to be purchased at fair market  
12 value and placed in public domain as  
13 conservation and public-use land in perpetuity.

14 For an oceanfront property where a  
15 structure does not exist, the property shall be  
16 acquired when the waterline is landward of the  
17 30-year erosion projection line.

18 For an oceanfront property on which a  
19 residential home or business structure does not  
20 exist -- I mean, does exist -- the property  
21 shall be acquired if the damage to the structure  
22 is equal to or greater than 50 percent.

23 When either of these thresholds is  
24 exceeded, the respective county in which the  
25 property is located will have first option to

1 purchase it. If the county doesn't exercise its  
2 option, the State of Florida shall purchase it.

3 Provision could be made by this amendment  
4 whereby a state program similar to FEMA's flood  
5 hazard mitigation -- mitigation grant program  
6 would provide matching funds for county  
7 acquisition --

8 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you.

9 MR. YOUNG: -- of properties.

10 Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
12 sir.

13 MR. YOUNG: And thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Next speaker is Paula  
15 Montgomery.

16 MS. MONTGOMERY: Hi. Good morning. I  
17 want to thank you for hearing me.

18 I'm speaking both for myself and also for  
19 the League of Women Voters in opposition to  
20 Proposal Number 71.

21 Charter schools were originally supposed  
22 to supplement the usual public schools for  
23 specific needs that were identified in that  
24 particular area.

25 The league has studied charter schools

1 statewide and also public schools. And our  
2 results show that charter schools do no better  
3 than other public schools in general.

4 In fact, they frequently do significantly  
5 worse, as far as student outcomes and money  
6 management are concerned.

7 These disappointing results also include  
8 racial resegregation and questionable financial  
9 and other practices.

10 When there are unmet needs in a district,  
11 the people in the district are the ones most apt  
12 to be able to identify those needs and which  
13 particular charter, if any, could fill those  
14 needs.

15 A different entity located in Tallahassee  
16 or elsewhere would not be familiar with what was  
17 already available, and they would not be able to  
18 monitor very well what was going on within the  
19 charter schools that got approved.

20 Local control is the best way to address  
21 these questions.

22 I oppose Proposal 71, both for myself and  
23 also for the League of Women Voters.

24 Thank you.

25 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

1 Bill Hudkins. I'm sorry. Ray Hudkins.

2 MR. HUDKINS: Welcome home, Commissioner  
3 Gaetz.

4 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you.

5 MR. HUDKINS: My name is Ray Hudkins.

6 I live here in Pensacola. And I like to  
7 say I live crawling distance from McGuire's.

8 (Audience laughter.)

9 MR. HUDKINS: Listen to the kids on gun  
10 control. The CRC has a chance to make history.  
11 Put an amendment on the 2018 ballot.

12 The constitution is the right place  
13 because the legislature is incapable of standing  
14 against special interests; and a constitutional  
15 amendment would make it permanent, obviously.

16 We should ban the sale of any weapons of  
17 mass murder, ban the sale and possession of  
18 high-capacity magazines, strengthen background  
19 checks to include mental illness, close  
20 loopholes and more.

21 I also speak on Proposal 62, which you've  
22 heard briefly about. It deserves a hearing  
23 before the full CRC.

24 You've heard that 3.4 million NPA number  
25 over and over, and I'm sure you're tired of

1 hearing that, but did you know that 11 counties  
2 in the State of Florida already have more NPA  
3 voters than either Republican or Democratic  
4 counterparts? And it's growing, so this is  
5 something we really shouldn't ignore.

6 I commend Commissioner Schifino for making  
7 a case for open primaries, but as fast as it  
8 came over -- or through the General Provisions  
9 Committee, took less than one hour to arrive at  
10 a seven to zero vote.

11 Commissioner Schifino was not allowed to  
12 fully defend his proposal because he had to go  
13 share with the Judicial Committee at the same  
14 hour. The full CRC needs to hear Prop 62.

15 In my remaining time, I ask you kill  
16 Proposal 72 and 97.

17 Colorado tried it, a Proposal 72 approach,  
18 with disastrous results. According to the  
19 Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Colorado  
20 fell from 35th to 49th in the nation in K  
21 through 12 spending. Don't make the same  
22 mistake.

23 Proposal 97 is totally unnecessary. I  
24 looked quickly at the 2012 election and found an  
25 example of a veteran's disability amendment that

1 passed with 63 percent of the vote.

2 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

3 MR. HUDKINS: Prop 72 would not -- would  
4 have altered that.

5 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you.

6 MR. HUDKINS: Thank you for hearing me.

7 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Yes, sir.

8 Samuel McClay.

9 MR. McCLONE: Samuel McClone. I'd like  
10 to --

11 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: I apologize, sir.  
12 Could you pronounce your last name again?

13 MR. McCLONE: McClone.

14 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: I apologize to you.

15 MR. McCLONE: I'd like to urge you to vote  
16 no on 67. Not only would it get rid of jobs in  
17 Florida, but it also would give the power back  
18 to the casinos, where they don't have any  
19 responsibilities now.

20 The dogs are having such a bad time. Put  
21 the blame on them for not doing their jobs.  
22 Thanks.

23 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

24 James Phillips.

25 MR. PHILLIPS: I'd like you to vote no on



1 Proposition 67.

2 Greyhound racing, since it's inception to  
3 the present day, has always been in complete  
4 control of the tracks themselves.

5 For 50 years, there was zero complaints of  
6 dog abuse or mistreatment from the trainers,  
7 while the tracks boasted of state-of-the-art  
8 facilities and fully promoted the sport.

9 The track made millions and millions of  
10 dollars, and took very good care of their  
11 athletes and attracted the best dogs in the  
12 country.

13 However, since these tracks have been  
14 granted the ability to have another form of  
15 gambling, i.e., poker rooms, which they were  
16 granted only by using the influence of the  
17 greyhound racing to get those grants, the tracks  
18 have made vast improvements to their poker  
19 facilities but absolutely zero funds to the  
20 promotion of greyhound racing or improvements to  
21 the greyhound care and or facilities themselves.

22 The very day that these tracks were  
23 granted licenses to have poker rooms, they began  
24 to detract and demote greyhound racing, and no  
25 improvements were made to the greyhound facility

1 side of business, but instead, failed to make  
2 any improvements whatsoever for the dogs, to the  
3 point of even cutting back on funds for such  
4 improvements.

5 They simply wanted a divorce from the  
6 industry which created them in the first place.  
7 Florida used to boast of having the best  
8 greyhounds in the country, and the people  
9 responded by record attendance to the events.

10 Now Florida greyhound tracks can no longer  
11 make those claims, and again the public  
12 responded in kind.

13 Since tracks have complete control of how  
14 much -- how each facility is run, then we must  
15 place complete responsibility for the poor  
16 treatment of the athletes squarely upon the  
17 shoulders of the tracks themselves.

18 Since tracks have created these atrocities  
19 and failed at efforts to decouple themselves  
20 from dog racing, even to the point of  
21 providing --

22 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.  
23 Thank you have very much for your testimony.

24 And if there's anybody who has additional  
25 testimony beyond what they can deliver verbally,

1           you are welcome to provide it to the Commission,  
2           and all members of the Commission will see it  
3           and review it.

4                     Thank you very much, sir.

5                     When we come back from our break --

6                     MR. PHILLIPS:   Excuse me.   How do I do  
7           that?

8                     COMMISSIONER GAETZ:   By this young lady  
9           right at the front will be happy to take any  
10          materials that any of you would like to provide  
11          to the Commission.

12                    When we come back, we'll hear from Margie  
13          Purkerson, Dianne Kramel, Ron Davis, Greg Ungru  
14          and Pam Childers.

15                    We stand in recess for about five minutes.

16                    (Brief recess.)

17                    COMMISSIONER GAETZ:   Thank you very much,  
18          Mr. Chairman.

19                    As we indicated, our next speaker will be  
20          Margie Purkerson, I think it is.   And as she's  
21          coming forward, we've had several people ask how  
22          many more folks we have to speak.

23                    And the answer is, many more than who have  
24          already spoken.   So the best is yet to come.

25                    Ms. Purkerson.

1 MS. PURKERSON: Yes. My name is Marjorie  
2 Purkerson from Santa Rosa County.

3 Thank you so much for allowing me to  
4 speak.

5 I wanted to urge all of you to please vote  
6 for Proposal 91 to ban oil and natural gas  
7 drilling in the coastal waters of Florida.

8 I can attest to the negative impact of  
9 offshore drilling.

10 My husband and I visited the State of  
11 Texas and Palo Alto, Florida in 1996. We drove  
12 there. We had never been to the State of Texas.

13 We were thinking we were going to a  
14 beautiful beach. And when we arrived at our  
15 destination, we looked at and saw oil wells out  
16 in the Gulf.

17 And the whole water -- the whole shore was  
18 black. And the sign on the hotel said, "Please  
19 wash off all the oil off your body before you  
20 enter the hotel." What an impression that left  
21 us.

22 Then we ended up in Pensacola, Florida,  
23 one of the most beautiful beaches in the whole  
24 State of Florida. It is impacted. It was --  
25 That's why we moved here because of the beauty

1 of our beautiful beach.

2 And I don't ever want that to go away. I  
3 want it to stay as beautiful as it is for my  
4 grandchildren, and for me, and for everybody.  
5 It brings a lot of tourism to our state. It's a  
6 big moneymaker.

7 So please vote yes on Proposal 91.

8 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
9 ma'am.

10 And next, Dianne Krammel.

11 Ms. Krammel.

12 MS. KRAMMEL: It's Krammel. Yes.

13 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Krammel. I'm sorry,  
14 ma'am.

15 MS. KRAMMEL: That's quite all right.

16 I'm here to speak in support of Proposal  
17 91 that would ban oil and gas drilling in  
18 Florida waters.

19 I have lived in Pensacola for more than 58  
20 years, and have grown up here loving our  
21 beaches. I'm going to talk about the almighty  
22 dollar because it seems it's always money that  
23 wins over people and the environment.

24 But maybe money won't win this time.  
25 Maybe the idea of money, or should I say the

1 idea of losing money, will keep oil drilling off  
2 our Florida coast.

3 Tourism is the number one industry of  
4 Florida. It is a major economic driver in our  
5 economy.

6 More than 80 million tourists visited  
7 Florida in 2017. But you want to know what can  
8 kill tourism and the millions and millions of  
9 dollars those tourists bring to Florida  
10 overnight? Another BP oil spill on our Florida  
11 coast.

12 I witnessed firsthand the horrible effects  
13 and consequences of the BP oil spill in 2010  
14 right here on our beloved beaches of Pensacola.

15 It almost killed our tourist industry out  
16 there that year. It was a devastating blow to  
17 our local economy. And many people, from  
18 waitresses to business owners, suffered as a  
19 result.

20 I saw the heartbreaking oil covering our  
21 beautiful snow-white beaches, the dead birds  
22 covered in oil, the dead dolphins washed up on  
23 our beaches.

24 The BP oil spill dealt a major blow to the  
25 fishing industry. What we still don't know is

1 the long-term effects this will have on our  
2 environment.

3 What the oil industry is hoping is out of  
4 sight and out of mind. But for those of us who  
5 have lived through the BP oil-spill nightmare,  
6 we will never let that be out of our mind.

7 And to take matters -- And to make matters  
8 worse, Trump wants to open virtually all federal  
9 waters to offshore drilling, even as his  
10 administration is working to relax safety  
11 regulations designed to prevent a repeat of the  
12 BP oil spill.

13 The changes -- and to reduce unnecessary  
14 regulatory burdens on offshore oil and gas  
15 drilling, in response to Trump's orders to  
16 reduce regulatory costs and increase domestic  
17 energy, according to the proposed rule, thus  
18 putting money over people and money over --

19 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
20 ma'am.

21 Our next speaker is Ron Davis.

22 And then following Mr. Davis, Greg -- I  
23 think -- it's Ungru.

24 MR. DAVIS: Thank you, Commissioners.

25 I'm here today not to speak about a

1 specific proposal but rather about process.

2 Part of the job with your style and  
3 drafting committee is going to be to reduce a  
4 number of proposals into a fewer number of  
5 amendments.

6 I understand that the intention of that is  
7 to reduce voter fatigue, so the voters don't  
8 have to read as many amendments and vote on as  
9 many amendments, but that process really  
10 concerns me.

11 I know in 1998, I believe there were 34  
12 proposals that got combined into only 9  
13 amendments.

14 I think many people in this room probably  
15 don't realize that there could be a situation  
16 where they need to vote on amendments that  
17 contain proposals that they strongly support and  
18 proposals that they strongly oppose, yet they  
19 only have one vote on that amendment. I think  
20 that's a concern.

21 I ask respectfully, for those proposals  
22 which you receive a lot of input for, positive  
23 and negative, that those proposals not be  
24 combined in amendments, that people be given the  
25 opportunity to vote up or down on the things



1           that they care about.

2                   I've watched a lot of these proceedings.  
3           I watched the recordings of them. I'll just  
4           take two as an example of things that I've seen  
5           a lot of input on.

6                   One is Proposal 67, which we've seen some  
7           people here today about that. I've seen a lot  
8           of people in favor of the greyhound proposal.

9                   One is Proposal 94, which would defund the  
10          tobacco program. Seen a lot of people speak in  
11          opposition to that.

12                   If those two are combined into a single  
13          amendment, that would pit the welfare of  
14          greyhounds versus the welfare of people. I  
15          don't think we want to do that.

16                   I think citizens deserve the right to vote  
17          on clean, single-issue amendments.

18                   I think that combining these proposals  
19          would really be kind of an affront to our  
20          democratic process.

21                   So I ask that you let the citizens of  
22          Florida vote on these issues and vote on the  
23          specific issues that they are concerned about.

24                   I thank you for your time, and I thank you  
25          for your service.

1                   COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
2                   sir.

3                   Greg, thank you very much for being here.  
4                   And you're recognized.

5                   MR. UNGRU: Thank you.

6                   My name is Greg Ungru.

7                   I'm here to address Proposal 96, Marsy's  
8                   Law.

9                   Other speakers at these public hearings  
10                  have talked about the deposition provision of  
11                  this proposal and how the proposal would harm  
12                  the process of defendants.

13                  They've also talked about a panel of  
14                  judges, prosecutors and attorneys, who have  
15                  voted to oppose equal rights for victims.

16                  It is important for this Commission to  
17                  know this is a group of the Florida Bar, the  
18                  same Florida Bar who opposed any victims' rights  
19                  to the state constitution 30 years ago, rights  
20                  that at the time were considered progressive but  
21                  are now either antiquated and unenforceable.

22                  I would like the Commission to know that  
23                  not every state attorney agrees with them.

24                  I would like to read a portion of a letter  
25                  from State Attorney Brad King of the Fifth

1 Judicial Circuit.

2 It says, in part, "I have been the elected  
3 State Attorney for 28 years and a prosecutor for  
4 36.

5 "As a long-serving State Attorney, I was  
6 asked if prohibiting depositions of victims  
7 would lead to a return of preliminary hearings  
8 as that process existed before our more modern  
9 discovery process.

10 "The argument is that years ago, a deal  
11 was struck. If depositions were allowed, there  
12 would be no need for preliminary hearings. If  
13 depositions aren't required and preliminary  
14 hearings would somehow be reinstituted, I cannot  
15 see that occurring."

16 The criminal system has changed  
17 dramatically from the 1970s when these changes  
18 were made. We now have audio and video recorded  
19 statements of most all victims, as well as other  
20 witnesses, which can serve to inform the defense  
21 as to the facts in any case.

22 I believe that the rights of victims  
23 should be part of the constitution. It is a  
24 document that sets forth the most compelling  
25 rights bestowed on our citizens.

1           It is time that we recognize that the  
2           rights of victims should not be subordinated to  
3           the criminals.

4           Thank you very much.

5           COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Pam Childers.

6           Ms. Childers, good to see you.

7           MS. CHILDERS: Welcome.

8           I'm Pam Childers. I'm the elected  
9           Comptroller and Clerk of the Circuit Court for  
10          Escambia County.

11          I'm here today to ask for your support of  
12          Proposal 13.

13          I'm a CPA. I've spent my career in city  
14          government before being elected as Clerk and  
15          Comptroller.

16          I believe in the value of the segregation  
17          of duties. I have reviewed many internal  
18          situation where I drew a conclusion that it  
19          would have been handled better or would have not  
20          gotten to a certain point had one entity, one  
21          person, one division had all the power.

22          When checks and balances and when there is  
23          segregation of duties and when the  
24          constitutional officers have to answer to the  
25          public, we tend to have a better-run system that

1 is reliable and trustworthy.

2 As a comptroller, my county knows that the  
3 contracts they sign, the agreements they make,  
4 how they spend their money will be reviewed by  
5 my office. There's no sliding or fudging.

6 We operate by the rules. You might think  
7 that there's no value in this because of the  
8 required audits.

9 However, it's a financial audit, not a  
10 fraud audit. And it doesn't look at every  
11 transaction. It is a report of fair  
12 presentation, using a statistical sample.

13 The people of Escambia County expect me,  
14 as Comptroller, to scrutinize and verify every  
15 transaction, just as a mom would scrutinize  
16 their daughter going to the mall.

17 The creators of our constitution  
18 understood the value of separation of powers and  
19 duties. This is the foundation upon which the  
20 people fill their trust in government. Please  
21 do not let that erode.

22 Thank you for listening, and I ask for  
23 your support for Proposal 13.

24 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
25 ma'am.

1 Susan Woolf, followed by Sonia -- I  
2 believe it's Stratemann, Karen Simmonos, Conwell  
3 Hooper and Stephen Jordan.

4 Ms. Woolf.

5 MS. WOOLF: Thank you.

6 Good afternoon. I'm Susan Woolf, General  
7 Counsel for the Escambia County Clerk, Circuit  
8 Court, and Comptroller.

9 I'm speaking in support of Proposal 55.  
10 Proposal 55 is designed to remedy the funding  
11 shortfall that plagues the clerks in Florida.

12 When Article 5, Section 14 of the  
13 constitution was amended by the CRC in 1998, the  
14 intent was to create a system for funding the  
15 court side of Clerk operations, through the  
16 collection of user fees and costs.

17 Since 1998, the climate has changed and  
18 the funding model no longer works. The pay to  
19 play model over time has failed for several  
20 reasons.

21 First, the primary source of funding,  
22 traffic citations, has decreased by 40 percent  
23 over the past 10 years.

24 There are multiple types of cases that do  
25 not pay any filing fee, including adult and

1 juvenile criminal cases, domestic violence  
2 cases, juvenile dependency and mental health  
3 cases, and civil litigants who are deemed to be  
4 unable to pay.

5 Generally, the heaviest workload for the  
6 Clerk is spent on cases that do not pay filing  
7 fees.

8 Simultaneously, the Clerk's budgets have  
9 decreased by almost \$63 million in the last five  
10 years, while more mandates are being placed on  
11 the Clerks.

12 We've transitioned from paper to  
13 electronic records. We've had increased demands  
14 on access to those records and confidentiality  
15 of the records.

16 There's an increased need for technology  
17 and the personnel who can address the technical  
18 issues and an increased demand for higher  
19 educated, more skilled personnel.

20 For these reasons, I ask for the support  
21 of Proposal 55 so that the Clerks can continue  
22 to provide the level of service expected by the  
23 governmental stakeholders and the public.

24 Thank you very much.

25 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

1           Our next speaker is Sonia -- And I think  
2           it's -- Is it Stratemann?

3           MS. STRATEMANN:   Stratemann.

4           COMMISSIONER GAETZ:   Stratemann.   I'm  
5           sorry, ma'am.

6           MS. STRATEMANN:   I say it better than my  
7           husband.

8           My name is Sonia Stratemann, and I'm  
9           speaking in support of Proposal 67.

10          My family and I have been rescuing  
11          greyhounds for 14 years.   And we've had over  
12          2,000 come in.

13          We've seen so much, you can't even  
14          imagine.   It's become very commonplace for us --  
15          I've become pretty unreactive over a lot of it.  
16          I don't cry a whole lot anymore, which I feel  
17          guilty about.

18          We had a gentleman bring a dog in, a  
19          pregnant dog, to me.

20          And he said, "We usually just drown the  
21          puppies."

22          I'm glad to take her.   I didn't even cry.  
23          It just is common.

24          We had a dog two years ago come in.   I was  
25          called about a track -- a track vet had three



1 dogs that were supposed to be euthanized.

2 And I told another adoption group that I  
3 would take them. I did not know one of them had  
4 a broken leg. I had taken a lot, so I was glad  
5 to -- glad to do it.

6 I did not know until the dog came to us,  
7 one of the dogs had a horribly infected ureter.  
8 One of the dogs was perfectly healthy, and was  
9 euthanized.

10 And the other dog. The leg -- It's hard  
11 to describe. The leg is so badly broken -- I  
12 mean, imagine, like, the leg -- it -- it flush  
13 to the ground. Didn't even have a splint on it.  
14 And it had been two weeks since the break. And  
15 this is from the track vet.

16 And I did contact a board member of the  
17 NGA. She contacted the owner, who is the  
18 president of the NGA.

19 I never heard from the owner, not once  
20 about this dog. Not a donation. Nothing at  
21 all. She actually had another trainer send me  
22 more dogs after that.

23 It does not matter what you say. This is  
24 how these people are. And we are crying because  
25 nothing goes through the legislature.

1                   And we are begging you. Please, please do  
2                   this for the dogs. I'm begging you. Nothing  
3                   ever, ever gets done. We have watched this.

4                   Thank you.

5                   COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, Ms.  
6                   Stratemann.

7                   Karen Simmons.

8                   Similar Simmonos.

9                   MS. SIMMONOS: Hi. Good afternoon.

10                  Thank you, Commissioners.

11                  I'm here to ask for -- to support  
12                  Proposition 67. I've been involved with  
13                  greyhound rescue and adoptions for over a  
14                  decade.

15                  I've had 10 personal greyhounds myself,  
16                  and I've had many, many fosters and have helped  
17                  place hundreds of greyhounds in South Florida.

18                  I can talk for days about how wonderful  
19                  they are, but I want to talk to you about an  
20                  instance with a hauler and a greyhound in South  
21                  Florida.

22                  Our group was known as one of the very few  
23                  that would take in momma dogs. We accepted them  
24                  into our program for the reward of racing strong  
25                  in their careers.

1           They get sent to farms to breed until  
2           they're no longer of any use to the breeders and  
3           owners. Then they're tossed away.

4           A hauler from the farms with many puppies,  
5           ready to be put into the horrors of racing,  
6           arrived at the Palm Beach Kennel Club compound  
7           where we went and then picked out the momma  
8           dogs.

9           As we went to unload them from the  
10          haulers, the urine-soaked straw that permeates  
11          through those haulers, with no air conditioning  
12          whatsoever -- And these dogs have been living  
13          for a considerable amount of time were then  
14          loaded into our cars.

15          As we're loading them into our cars, we  
16          then see new dogs that are done racing heading  
17          back into that same urine-soaked straw, going  
18          back into the farms and then breed as their  
19          reward for racing.

20          Well, we brought these dogs back. We took  
21          ticks off of them, bleeding all over us and  
22          everything. Their teeth were disgusting. Their  
23          breath was horrific. Their condition was  
24          horrific. They were standing -- They were  
25          soaked in urine.

1           We bathed them. We fed them. We got them  
2           in the proper kennel. One of them, Minimus, she  
3           was so horrific. Her teeth were nearly falling  
4           out.

5           We had to then take her the next day for  
6           extractions with a vet and to get proper care.

7           She then went immediately home with  
8           another volunteer, who then took her in. She  
9           only lasted another year to the age of 10  
10          because of her condition and how horrible that  
11          she had been surviving for so many years in our  
12          industry.

13           COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

14           Conwell Hooper.

15           Mr. Hooper.

16           MR. HOOPER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and  
17          members of the Committee.

18           My name is Conwell Hooper. I'm the  
19          Executive Director of the American Senior  
20          Alliance.

21           Before I get started, I wanted to tell you  
22          how grateful we are for your service and for  
23          giving us an opportunity to come visit with you  
24          today.

25           We are a nonprofit organization. We're

1           headquartered in Georgia. We're currently  
2           operating in six states: Louisiana,  
3           Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee and  
4           Florida. We're simply providing advocacy for  
5           senior citizens.

6                     I shared that because some of you weren't  
7           at the last meeting where I had a chance to  
8           visit.

9                     We have serious concerns about Proposal 54  
10          that repeals the certificate of need process for  
11          health care facilities and nursing centers.

12                    We believe this would be a major problem  
13          for nursing centers who care for our vulnerable  
14          senior citizens.

15                    We are working hard to ensure our seniors  
16          receive the quality and affordable care and  
17          dependable services. And Proposal 54 would put  
18          the quality care our seniors receive at risk.

19                    Florida is fortunate to be home of 3.5  
20          million seniors, and many more planning to move  
21          here in the near future.

22                    We can't afford to consider moving down  
23          the slippery slope.

24                    The CON process that we currently operate  
25          under does a superb job of managing growth, when

there's a demonstrated need for beds, especially in rural areas across the Sunshine State.

Our nursing centers are facing shortages for nurses and certified nursing assistants. So the last thing we need to do is endanger our senior citizens, putting the care at risk with this measure.

We ask you to please think about our older Americans when considering Proposal 54 and vote no.

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

Stephen Jordan.

MR. JORDAN: Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Stephen Jordan, and I'm a retiree living in the Pensacola area.

I'm here to speak in opposition to Proposition 4.

Proposition 4 would repeal a longstanding provision of the Florida Constitution that prohibits the use of public funds for religious institutions.

I have objections on three fronts. The first one is personal. I really don't want my tax dollars going to selected religious

1 institutions, whether they are ones I favor or  
2 ones I do not favor.

3 The second line of opposition is, I think,  
4 practical and civic. I believe that the effect  
5 of this measure would be to divert funds from  
6 public education, which I think is harmful not  
7 only to public education but also to fairness  
8 and equality.

9 My third line of objection is based on a  
10 great principle. The First Amendment to the  
11 Constitution of the United States protects  
12 everyone's religious freedom, but it also  
13 prevents the passing of laws that respect an  
14 establishment of religion.

15 And I believe that Proposal 4 would, in  
16 effect, violate the First Amendment of the  
17 Constitution.

18 Religious freedom and the separation of  
19 church and state are two of the bedrock  
20 principles of this country upon which it was  
21 founded.

22 So thank you. I appreciate the  
23 opportunity to speak.

24 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you for your  
25 testimony, sir.

1           Our next five testifiers will be Jackie  
2           Hartstein, John D. Chapman, Steve -- I think  
3           it's Bahmer or Bahmer -- Sara Latshaw and  
4           Richard Branch.

5           Ms. Hartstein.

6           MS. HARTSTEIN: Hi.

7           Thank you for allowing me to speak today.  
8           I'm from Milton, Florida, and I'm here in  
9           opposition to Proposal 4.

10          I have two reasons to be that way, and  
11          they're both conflictual, but I'll give them to  
12          you.

13          As a parent, I have my children raised in  
14          parochial schools. I never considered another  
15          taxpayer's need to help me with my personal  
16          decision, my personal responsibility to raise my  
17          kids in parochial schools.

18          And believe me, there's a lot of fiscal  
19          responsibility. It's not just tuition, folks.  
20          I had witnessed an alum take his child to the  
21          kindergarten registration first day.

22          Kindergarten class is already closed.  
23          What do you do? Well, he turns around and says  
24          to the nun, "I can write you a check right now  
25          for eight years' tuition." We're talking



1 thousands of dollars. And, of course, the  
2 miracle happened. The kindergarten teacher  
3 opened up the class and a desk was found.

4 They are a specialized business. They do  
5 what they do very well. They've been around a  
6 long time, and they don't need your tax dollars.

7 On the other hand, I'm a special educator,  
8 retired. I worked with children with  
9 psychiatric and emotional problems.

10 They don't want my kind of students at the  
11 school. You know, they say to me, "You need  
12 that one, that one and that one."

13 They don't have to follow the federal laws  
14 under the Idea Act or Section 504, the  
15 Rehabilitative Act.

16 They don't seek federal funds, but I'm a  
17 little bit concerned about state dollars going  
18 to schools that don't have to accept or educate  
19 disabled students.

20 Under the federal law, they should get a  
21 free and appropriate education, no matter where  
22 they go, but not private schools.

23 So please take our tax dollars and put  
24 them where we need them. Give them scholarships  
25 for higher education, if you want to do that or

1 help the public schools that need them  
2 desperately.

3 Thank you very much. I made it.

4 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you. You did  
5 very well.

6 Mr. Chapman, you're recognized, sir.

7 MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you for allowing me to  
8 speak on this issue.

9 I'm here to support project 29. My name  
10 is John D. Chapman. I'm retired military. I've  
11 served nearly 43 years of military service. And  
12 the reason they tell you that is, I want you to  
13 believe -- I believe -- I stand up for the  
14 things I believe in.

15 And that's why I'm here. I'm for number  
16 29, e-verify. I think it's very important for  
17 the State of Florida to keep track of the people  
18 that are here to work.

19 And I'm sure they would all like to live  
20 here. I understand there's a lotta-lotta  
21 duplications and Social Security numbers.

22 And the employers, they take the  
23 information as required by the state, but they  
24 don't do anything but leave it in their office  
25 in case they're asked for it.

1           And I believe they should put it into the  
2 computer system and it will eliminate the  
3 duplication of Social Security numbers and --  
4 and would make everybody a lot happier.

5           And I just want to thank all of you. I've  
6 been watching you. You're paying close  
7 attention. And I don't know how you keep track  
8 of all the programs that are coming in, not --  
9 you know, not in line. Next step. And I just  
10 compliment you on being able to do that.

11           And also all the people that come up here  
12 and stand up for what they believe in. I  
13 could -- It's very educational for me.

14           And I could support a lot of them in both  
15 ways, one way or the other.

16           But again, thank you very much.

17           COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, and thank  
18 you for your service, sir.

19           Steve Bahmer.

20           Did I get that right?

21           MR. BAHMER: Close, Mr. President.

22           Thank you. Steve Bahmer, President and  
23 CEO, Leading Age Florida.

24           Happens all the time, believe me.

25           First I want to thank you also, as the

1 previous speaker did, for your important service  
2 on this Commission and for the opportunity to  
3 address you this afternoon.

4 As President of Leading Age Florida, I  
5 represent about 250 senior-living providers  
6 across the State of Florida. That includes  
7 assisted-living providers and nursing homes.  
8 And on their behalf I'm here today to ask you to  
9 vote against Proposal 88.

10 First, I want to point out that the  
11 nursing homes, which I am privileged to  
12 represent, and their assisted-living facilities,  
13 are not the caricature of the nursing home and  
14 assisted-living facility that you've heard in  
15 your previous workshops and public meetings.

16 Our members are mission driven. They're  
17 largely not for profit. Many of them are  
18 faith-based organizations. Residency is and has  
19 always been their number one concern.

20 And as you've heard in every other public  
21 meeting, they provide the highest quality of  
22 nursing home care anywhere in the State of  
23 Florida.

24 An average CMS star rating of over four  
25 among our members and multiple governors are the

1 evidence of the quality of care they provide.

2 At best, Proposal 88 is redundant and  
3 unnecessary. As you've heard, resident rights  
4 are already invested in the federal and state  
5 law. Nursing homes are already bound to abide  
6 by those laws. This proposal adds nothing in  
7 the way of resident rights.

8 Furthermore, the proposal does not include  
9 a single provision that would improve the  
10 health, safety or quality of life of any nursing  
11 home resident, particularly given that the state  
12 and federal laws already exist.

13 What Proposal 88 does do is include an  
14 invitation for trial lawyers to sue nursing  
15 homes, seeking "remedies without limitation."

16 If residents' rights are truly a concern,  
17 then this issue should be taken up and debated  
18 in the appropriate venue, the Florida  
19 legislature.

20 The proposal simply does not exist in the  
21 Florida Constitution. Pardon me. The proposal  
22 simply does not belong in the Florida  
23 Constitution.

24 I respectfully ask you this afternoon to  
25 vote against Proposal 88.

1                   And thank you very much for your time.

2                   COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, Mr.  
3                   Bahmer.

4                   Sara Latshaw.

5                   MS. LATSHAW: Hi. My name is Sara  
6                   Latshaw. I'm the Deputy Political Director of  
7                   the ACLU of Florida.

8                   Thank you guys so much for serving on this  
9                   Commission and also for your commitment to  
10                  transparency.

11                  I'm here today to urge you to vote no on  
12                  Proposal 29, known as the e-verify proposal.  
13                  The Florida legislature has tried to do this  
14                  several times, and they have failed. And I  
15                  think that's because Florida officials recognize  
16                  that this is bad for business.

17                  The Florida Constitution should not be  
18                  used as a second bite at the apple for failed  
19                  legislation that undermines Florida's businesses  
20                  and places insurmountable obstacles in front of  
21                  workers who actually can work in the State of  
22                  Florida. We know e-verify is a flawed system.

23                  There are typos. There are -- It's not  
24                  updated with name changes if people get married.  
25                  And this causes people who are eligible to work

1 in Florida to have barriers to employment.

2 Additionally, it burdens employers with an  
3 error-prone system, and this leads to  
4 discriminatory hiring practices. It will cause  
5 employers not to hire people with  
6 foreign-sounding names, for fear of having to  
7 interact with the error-prone e-verify system.

8 I know a bunch of folks that claim that  
9 e-verify will stop undocumented workers from  
10 working in Florida, but you know these folks are  
11 already hiring people and taking advantage of  
12 undocumented labor. I don't think this is going  
13 to stop them.

14 Finally, with my few seconds remaining, I  
15 just wanted to thank you-all for putting  
16 Proposal 22 on the table. I hope that you will  
17 keep it there. I think it would be a shame to  
18 take away Florida's exclusive right to privacy  
19 from so many citizens that protect so many areas  
20 of our lives, and trying to undermine women's  
21 access to reproductive health care.

22 Thank you for your consideration.

23 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

24 Richard Branch.

25 MR. BRANCH: Hi. I'm Rick Branch from

1           Pensacola.

2                   Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

3                   I am asking you to please oppose Proposal  
4           4. The no-aid provision for more than 130 years  
5           has ensured our tax dollars have respected the  
6           delineation between the church and the state  
7           here in Florida.

8                   As a minister at a congregation of more  
9           than 3,000 members here in Pensacola, I want to  
10          assure you that there is wisdom keeping the  
11          state out of the church and the church out of  
12          the state.

13                  United Methodist Church, of which I am a  
14          member, has been a strong proponent of public  
15          schooling. The national church much has stated,  
16          "We have a moral responsibility to support,  
17          strengthen and reform public schools. They have  
18          been and continue to be both an avenue of  
19          opportunity and a major cohesive force in our  
20          society.

21                  "Public funds should be used for public  
22          purposes. We also caution that government aid  
23          to primary and secondary religious schools  
24          raises constitutional problems and could  
25          undermine the private schools independence



1 and/or compromise their religious message."

2 It is neither wise nor fair to take money  
3 from our public education and put them into  
4 religious schools.

5 The State of Florida and religious  
6 institutions in Florida are all concerned about  
7 the social welfare of Floridians.

8 Currently organizations such as the Jewish  
9 Federations, Catholic Charities, and Lutheran  
10 Social Services work well with the state within  
11 the framework of the no-aid provision.

12 The citizens of Florida strongly rejected  
13 an attempt to repeal the no-aid provision six  
14 years ago. So I hope you will vote no on  
15 Proposal 4.

16 I also want to quickly advocate for your  
17 inclusion, if it's even possible at this point,  
18 for common sense gun control measures.

19 I appreciate the measures that Governor  
20 Scott put forward last week. I anticipate that  
21 our representatives won't be as open-minded  
22 about his proposal, so what better way to honor  
23 the victims and the courageous survivors of the  
24 Parkland shooting than to give Floridians an  
25 opportunity to vote on the measures that

1 Governor Scott proposed.

2 Thank you for your time.

3 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

4 Bob Johnson, followed by Jason -- I think  
5 it's Futral, Elizabeth Hill, Michelle Moore and  
6 Elizabeth Watkins. Those are our next speakers.

7 Bob Johnson, you're recognized.

8 Mr. Johnson.

9 (No response.)

10 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Mr. Johnson?

11 (No response.)

12 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Jason -- Is it  
13 Futral?

14 (No response.)

15 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Mr. Futral, from  
16 Grant Street or Grant Drive in Pensacola.

17 (No response.)

18 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Libby Hill, you're  
19 recognized.

20 MS. HILL: I have stuck it out, Mr.  
21 President and Commissioners.

22 I am here with the Florida Federation of  
23 Republican Women.

24 I'd like you to know that our organization  
25 is supporting two proposals. One, we would like

1 to see the Blaine Amendment stricken from the  
2 Constitution. That's Proposal 4.

3 And I would just say to people here, with  
4 a wealthy church, you may not need it. Think of  
5 a poor church in a minority neighborhood that  
6 cannot get a grant for a playground because the  
7 land is part of the church property.

8 We also support Proposal 67, which  
9 prohibits wagering on greyhound racing or any  
10 other dog races. And this is not an issue of  
11 gambling, but one of animal abuse.

12 Here in the Panhandle, we have a greyhound  
13 dog track. And we are aware of the appalling  
14 conditions and inhumane treatment of these  
15 greyhounds.

16 You have heard the story. I won't tell  
17 more, but your committee votes that you've had  
18 already on this proposal have been very  
19 encouraging.

20 We are frustrated by the state  
21 legislature. They bend to the lobbying efforts  
22 of the breeders and promoters. And this is not  
23 affecting any of their gambling, just the dogs.

24 I would wager, in fact, the Democrat women  
25 and, indeed, any persons of conscience will

1 support Proposal 67. It should be on the  
2 ballot.

3 Thank you.

4 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
5 Libby.

6 Michelle Moore, followed by Elizabeth  
7 Watkins.

8 Ms. Moore, you're recognized.

9 MS. MOORE: Thank you, and good afternoon.  
10 My name is Michelle Moore, and I am here in  
11 opposition of Proposal 67.

12 I am representing myself and all of the  
13 retired racers I have rescued since 1989. I  
14 know veterinarians. I know trainers, hundreds  
15 of them, owners. None of these people are  
16 permitting these dogs to be abused.

17 I would like to show you a photograph of  
18 one of my retirees that I adopted over the  
19 years. His name is Moose. He had 75 races here  
20 in Florida.

21 He's not dead. He's sleeping like a dead  
22 cockroach because that's what greyhounds do when  
23 they feel secure. This dog is totally not  
24 afraid. This is Moose. He's eating his  
25 Thanksgiving turkey dinner from my sister's

1 mouth. This is not an abused dog. These are my  
2 two greyhounds that I currently have.

3 If this proposal passes, these greyhounds  
4 will become extinct. Who's going to breed them?  
5 Who's going to breed them? AKC greyhounds are  
6 not the same demeanor as these dogs.

7 Here's another photograph of my supposedly  
8 abused dogs. This is my dog Ringo, who is  
9 sleeping with a cat. These dogs are not abused.

10 These trainers and veterinarians and  
11 owners are not going to allow abuse of these  
12 dogs. The owners want to make money. Why would  
13 they allow somebody to mistreat a dog?

14 And I have owned these dogs since 1989  
15 after they have left the track. And they are  
16 the most wonderful creatures on the planet.

17 Please go and visit a track. Come to my  
18 house and see the track in my back yard. Don't  
19 vote on this proposal.

20 Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

22 Elizabeth Watkins.

23 MS. WATKINS: Hello. And thank you,  
24 Commissioners.

25 My name is Elizabeth Watkins, and I'm here

1 on behalf of the American Cancer Society Cancer  
2 Action Network, in opposition to Proposal 94 and  
3 in support of Proposal 65.

4 As you know, the legislature is currently  
5 in session. In the coming days, they will start  
6 to build a budget in the state's next fiscal  
7 year.

8 They will decide how much to allocate to  
9 routine biomedical research programs, as  
10 research funds devoted to tobacco-related  
11 illnesses and the Bankhead Colon Cancer Research  
12 Program. There's also separate funding  
13 specifically for pediatric cancer research.

14 At any time, the legislature has the  
15 ability to invest more money in cancer research,  
16 and over the last years have done so.

17 They have multiple sources on which to  
18 draw and do not need a constitutional amendment  
19 to make it happen. They could literally do it  
20 tomorrow.

21 So why is this body considering Proposal  
22 94 that would do irreparable harm to a program  
23 that has consistently delivered on its promise  
24 of driving down the smoking rate, saving the  
25 state money, and preventing deaths from

1 tobacco-related diseases?

2 Why are we even assessing diverting money  
3 from cancer prevention to cancer research, when  
4 the state has already proven that they can find  
5 funding for cancer research without using dollar  
6 set-asides for Tobacco-Free Florida?

7 There's a total of \$362,000,000 in tobacco  
8 settlement money that comes to Florida each and  
9 every year. And the state is only required to  
10 spend 15 percent on that tobacco prevention and  
11 education.

12 We are very pleased that Commissioner  
13 Nunez wants the legislature to spend more money  
14 on cancer research. We couldn't agree more, but  
15 there are plenty of other places to find it.

16 Please oppose Proposal 94.

17 Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

19 Our next testifiers will be Doreen Swartz,  
20 Ronan Kirnan, Bill Fletcher, Samuel Bearman and  
21 Alan Bookman.

22 Doreen Swartz, are you here, ma'am?

23 Please come forward. You're recognized.

24 MS. SWARTZ: Could he go first, please?

25 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: I'm sorry, sir. What

1 is your name?

2 MR. BOOKMAN: Mr. Bookman.

3 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: I don't think . . .

4 Alan Bookman?

5 MR. BOOKMAN: That's me.

6 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: All right. Mr.

7 Bookman, we'll take you out of order, if that is  
8 the preference of this young lady.

9 MR. BOOKMAN: Commissioner, thank you very  
10 much. I also thank all the members of the  
11 Commission for coming to Pensacola and the  
12 Panhandle.

13 I stand here to ask you to reinvigorate,  
14 put back on the table Proposal Number 42,  
15 concerning judicial nominating commissions.

16 I have the pleasure of serving on the  
17 First Circuit JNC, the First District Court of  
18 Appeal JNC. And I can tell you the JNC's work.

19 Reubin Askew had this dream 50 years ago.  
20 Article 5, Section 11 was created in the Florida  
21 Constitution, which created the JNCs, the 26  
22 JNCs.

23 What was not put in the constitution but  
24 was put in the statute for how Commissioners  
25 were selected. And over the years, the



1 legislature has played with that. And the  
2 legislature is playing with that as we speak  
3 today.

4 Governor Askew envisioned JNCs to serve as  
5 follows: Three members appointed by the Florida  
6 Bar, three members appointed by the Governor,  
7 and those six people get together and select  
8 three other people for nine.

9 I served on one of those committees that  
10 worked extremely well. In the early 2000s, that  
11 was changed. The Governor now appoints all  
12 nine, four of which comes from recommendations  
13 from the Florida Bar, which pending before the  
14 legislature now is that the Governor will  
15 appoint five, the Speaker of the House will  
16 appoint two, the President of the Senate will  
17 appoint two, and there will be some  
18 recommendations from the Florida Bar, but the  
19 Speaker and the President of the Senate do not  
20 have to pay any attention to the recommendations  
21 of the Florida Bar.

22 I'm a lawyer, just for full disclosure.  
23 We cannot continue to play with the way judicial  
24 commissioners are selected. We have to  
25 depoliticize the process.

1           The Commission being here right now is  
2           democracy in action. In order to have  
3           democracy, we need to have three independent and  
4           separate branches of government, and we have to  
5           depoliticize the process.

6           And the way to depoliticize the process is  
7           to put 42 back on the agenda, which was voted  
8           six to one in favor by the judiciary, your  
9           committee, but four to three against by your  
10          executive committee. Let the people decide, not  
11          your executive committee.

12          Thank you very much.

13          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

14          And now, Ms. Swartz, would you like to  
15          testify, ma'am?

16          MS. SWARTZ: I apologize for the delay.

17          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Not at all.

18          MS. SWARTZ: I'm Doreen Swartz. And thank  
19          you for coming to Pensacola.

20          I urge you to vote for open primaries.  
21          You have the power to make changes that would  
22          enable all qualified electors to vote in primary  
23          elections regardless of party affiliation.

24          In Florida, 27 percent of registered  
25          voters are prohibited from primary elections

1 because they do not register -- did not register  
2 as Democrats or Republicans.

3 It lets voters choose a candidate  
4 regardless of party affiliation and choose other  
5 candidates for each of the parties.

6 In closing, I would urge everyone to view  
7 American Creed on PBS tonight.

8 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
9 ma'am.

10 Ronan Kirnan. Mr. Kirnan.

11 MR. KIRNAN: Thank you very much.

12 I'm actually here to speak briefly in  
13 support of two proposals, Proposals 96 and 97.

14 There is no reason victims should not be  
15 protected under our state constitution.

16 Amendment 96 was written in a way to  
17 ensure that the rights of the accused are not  
18 changed but that victims' rights are given very  
19 clear constitutional support and protection.

20 The reason I support Proposal 97 is  
21 because I feel that the Florida Constitution is  
22 a sacred document which should only be amended  
23 in extenuating circumstances and only through  
24 informed consent.

25 I hope all of you will support Proposal

1 97.

2 Thank you.

3 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much.

4 Bill Fletcher.

5 MR. BEARMAN: No, sir.

6 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: No, you're not Bill  
7 Fletcher. I know Bill Fletcher.

8 MR. BEARMAN: Not today.

9 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Mr. Fletcher, are you  
10 here?

11 (No response.)

12 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Okay. Samuel  
13 Bearman.

14 MR. BEARMAN: Yes, sir. Thank you.

15 My name is Samuel Bearman, and I'm here  
16 speaking in support of Proposition 88.

17 I'm an attorney. And over the past 15  
18 years, I've represented hundreds of families of  
19 nursing home residents.

20 I can tell you that the perspective I have  
21 is that each of those families had residents who  
22 experienced falls or pressure sores or  
23 malnutrition or dehydration.

24 The earlier speaker speaking against  
25 Proposition 88 talked about this is a

1 lawsuit-oriented proposition.

2 I can tell you that if there were no  
3 signs, no actions reflecting neglect or  
4 reflecting abuse in nursing homes, there would  
5 not be any lawsuits.

6 No lawyer -- no lawyer -- is going to go  
7 forward with a claim that's frivolous.

8 VOICE IN THE AUDIENCE: Can't hear.

9 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Just a moment.  
10 Please stop the clock.

11 Do we have a communication problem that  
12 you can help us with?

13 Commissioner Jordan opines that we may  
14 have a battery problem.

15 Do we have another mic?

16 MAINTENANCE: Testing. One, two.  
17 Testing. Testing.

18 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: There we go.

19 MR. BEARMAN: As I was saying, no attorney  
20 is going to go --

21 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: You may reorient the  
22 time, Commissioner.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. BEARMAN: Thank you.

25 No attorney is going to go forward with a

1 claim that has no basis to it. I'm not, nor are  
2 any other members of the Bar going to spend the  
3 time and the effort and the money to prosecute a  
4 case that doesn't have merit to it.

5 The owners of many of the nursing homes in  
6 this state are big businesses. Many of these  
7 nursing homes are cash cows for them. The  
8 biggest expense for a nursing home typically is  
9 staffing.

10 And so what happens is, in every instance  
11 that I've seen where there's been neglect or  
12 abuse, it's always a function of understaffing  
13 because understaffing the facilities is able to  
14 save money.

15 The constitution -- I was taking a look at  
16 the Florida Constitution this morning. It  
17 presently has a section on lotteries. It has a  
18 section on net fishing. It has a section on  
19 cruel and inhumane confinement of pigs during  
20 pregnancy.

21 If those sections are appropriate to be in  
22 the constitution, certainly a section on  
23 protecting nursing home residents should be in  
24 the constitution.

25 Along with babies, nursing home residents

1 are our most vulnerable residents.

2 We simply ask that you support Proposition  
3 88 in a way that gets it on the ballot and  
4 allows the voters of the State of Florida to  
5 make a decision about whether or not it should  
6 become part of the constitution.

7 The present system is not working. If  
8 it's constitutionally mandated, we hope the  
9 owners of the nursing homes will pay attention.

10 Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

12 Our next testifiers will be Rivers H.  
13 Buford, Nancy Forester, Barbara Buss, Barbara  
14 Mayall, Mike Folzman.

15 Mr. Buford. Good to see you.

16 MR. BUFORD: Thank you, Mr. President.

17 My name is Rivers Buford. I'm with the  
18 American Heart Association.

19 And first let me say that the American  
20 Heart Association receives no funding from the  
21 Tobacco-Free Florida Initiative, 94, which is  
22 what I'm speaking on first. And then  
23 Commissioner Carlton's 65.

24 We're in support of 65 and opposed to 94,  
25 to get that part out of it.

1 Article 10, Section 27 of the Florida  
2 Constitution specifically requires 15 percent of  
3 the funds go from the tobacco settlement, based  
4 on the CDC's best practices of Comprehensive  
5 Tobacco Control Program.

6 This amendment was done in 2006. It  
7 passed by 60 percent or more, when only 50  
8 percent was required, so it was truly a  
9 citizen-driven initiative with great support.

10 The best management practices of the CDC  
11 are not arbitrary. They're created by  
12 subject-specific individuals in the Office of  
13 Smoking and Health.

14 Based on the data that they receive, they  
15 regularly update the publications so the states  
16 don't have to do so and reinvent the wheel over  
17 and over again.

18 Currently Florida is only receiving about  
19 one-third of what the CDC recommendations are,  
20 so we're not up at the point where we're above  
21 that.

22 The evidence is clear in the CDC  
23 guidelines that are there. Because Florida uses  
24 the funds exactly as the CDC recommends, the  
25 program's extremely successful.



1           Those of you that are elected officials or  
2           have been elected officials know that 60 to 80  
3           percent of your campaign dollars go to media  
4           because it works.

5           So . . . And you plead for more and more  
6           contributions so you can get your message out.  
7           You know what it costs to buy media, and you  
8           know that there are results.

9           Why would you want to cut money from a  
10          campaign and reduce your election? Would you  
11          want to reduce your election campaign dollars?  
12          If not, then why would you want to reduce them  
13          here when they have adequate results?

14          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much.

15          MR. BUFORD: Thank you, sir.

16          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Our next speaker will  
17          be Nancy Forester.

18          Ms. Forester, you're recognized.

19          MS. FORESTER: Thank you for the  
20          opportunity to speak about Proposal Number 88.

21          My name is Nancy Forester from Navarre.

22          Exactly a year ago today I was picking out  
23          a casket for my father. He was 97, but his  
24          death was premature, due to an incident at an  
25          assisted living facility.

1           An aide started to push my dad in a  
2 wheelchair towards the bathroom to help him get  
3 ready for bed. She did not have the wheelchair  
4 leg folded properly, so when she started to push  
5 him, the wheelchair leg hit a table, propelling  
6 him out of the chair, hitting the right side of  
7 his forehead on the table and then onto the  
8 floor. This caused his C2 vertebra to be  
9 broken. His neck was broken.

10           My dad had had some swallowing issues  
11 previously, but through speech therapy, had  
12 learned to tuck his chin to produce a stronger  
13 swallow.

14           A broken neck meant he had to wear a neck  
15 brace. A neck brace prevented him from tucking  
16 in his chin.

17           Liquids and foods went straight to his  
18 lungs. They put him on a feeding tube. He was  
19 in extreme pain. He didn't want to live that  
20 way. He was miserable, and he died.

21           My dad was a World War II veteran with a  
22 purple heart. He made it back from the war.  
23 The enemy didn't kill him.

24           He and my mother were inseparable and were  
25 married 77 years, but six months after moving

1 into an assisted living facility for health and  
2 safety, he was dead, due to negligence.

3 Nursing homes and assisted living  
4 facilities are understaffed and underpaid and  
5 often poorly trained aides, the people that are  
6 with the residents most.

7 Residents and families must have recourse,  
8 must have a way to stand up and fight for their  
9 loved ones.

10 Please vote yes on Proposal 88 to protect  
11 the rights of the residents and their families.  
12 This is our most vulnerable population. Don't  
13 let them be forgotten. Protect them.

14 Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

16 Barbara Buss. And following Ms. Buss,  
17 Barbara Mayall.

18 Ms. Buss, you're recognized.

19 MS. BUSS: Thank you.

20 I'm speaking in support of Proposal 91.

21 My husband and I grew up in Wisconsin, a  
22 land of ice and snow.

23 After graduating from the University of  
24 Wisconsin in 1970, we accepted teaching jobs in  
25 Biloxi, Mississippi.

1           We were enthralled with the expansive  
2 beaches and the offshore islands and the warmth.

3           A coteacher said, "If you think this is  
4 nice, you should check out Pensacola."

5           Once we saw the emerald waters and the  
6 miles of the snow-white beaches, we were hooked  
7 and immediately secured teaching jobs in  
8 Pensacola for the following year. For five  
9 years, we enjoyed the environmental treasures of  
10 Pensacola Beach.

11           Family duties called us back north, but  
12 before we left, we purchased some land. For 42  
13 years, we saved money to build our forever home.

14           We had visions of our children and  
15 grandchildren visiting us each year and enjoying  
16 the water and beaches we discovered almost 50  
17 years earlier.

18           Our house was in the process of being  
19 built in 2010 when the unimaginable happened.  
20 The Deep Water Horizon spill.

21           We watched transfixed to the TV as the oil  
22 gushed more months.

23           The first years after the spill, we were  
24 fearful for our grandchildren swimming in the  
25 Gulf, fearful of them eating the seafood.

1           We spent hours rubbing oil from their  
2           little feet after a trip to the beach and  
3           wanting them to stay away from the glistening  
4           oil balls while they were picking shells.

5           Fortunately, our waters appear to have  
6           turned back to that emerald green color, and  
7           after years of volunteers' and paid workers'  
8           help, the sand is clean.

9           You can imagine how we felt when we heard  
10          about the federal government opening up coastal  
11          waters.

12          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

13          MS. BUSS: Please stand up for the State  
14          of Wisconsin -- or for the State of Florida.

15          (Laughter.)

16          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you.

17          Can't take the girl out of Wisconsin.

18          In order to save time and make sure that  
19          everybody gets a chance to share their views  
20          with the Commission, if you're next, don't be  
21          shy. Come forward and queue up. And that way  
22          we can hear everybody.

23          Ms. Mayall is next, followed by Mike  
24          Folzman.

25          Ms. Mayall.

1 MS. MAYALL: My name is Barbara Mayall.  
2 And I'm a registered voter in Escambia County.  
3 And I'm passionate about God, family, community,  
4 and my country.

5 Thank you for your service on this  
6 Commission. There is no question it is a  
7 sacrifice for you and your family, and one for  
8 which we as citizens are very, very grateful.

9 I would like to speak in favor of Proposal  
10 22.

11 The Florida Supreme Court has betrayed the  
12 parents and children of this state. And I would  
13 like to ask this Commission to fix the privacy  
14 statement.

15 It was never intended to confer a right to  
16 abortion. It was clearly intended for  
17 informational privacy.

18 This commission has the ability to bring  
19 this proposal back. And I would like to ask  
20 them to do that.

21 Proposal 22 would not remove a woman's  
22 right to choose an abortion. That right is  
23 already protected under federal law with Roe vs.  
24 Wade and would be protected even if Article 1,  
25 Section 23 on privacy under federal law, with

1 Roe vs. -- excuse me -- never existed in the  
2 Florida Constitution.

3 Proposal 22 would merely restore the  
4 original purpose of Florida's privacy clause to  
5 informational privacy.

6 It would also restore to the states the  
7 right to pass reasonable regulations on the  
8 abortion procedure, such as parental consent  
9 laws, to protect the health, the safety, and the  
10 welfare of the mother and of her unborn child.

11 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

12 Mr. Folzman.

13 MR. FOLZMAN: Thank you. I appreciate the  
14 opportunity.

15 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: And after Mr.  
16 Folzman, if Mary Collins would queue up and  
17 Melissa Evans.

18 MR. FOLZMAN: Thank you, sir.

19 My name is Mike Folzman, and I have lived  
20 in Santa Rosa County for over 30 years.

21 I was a helicopter mechanic at Hurlburt  
22 Field when I got out of the Air Force in 1991  
23 after 10 years' service.

24 It is my understanding that Florida is the  
25 only state in the southeast without e-verify.

1 Common sense would tell you Florida is,  
2 therefore, a magnet for illegal aliens.

3 Knowing that it is easier to be hired here  
4 in Florida will, of course, draw illegal aliens  
5 to our state.

6 While here, some -- some -- commit violent  
7 crimes, even up to murder. They put a strain on  
8 public and private social services.

9 Hospitals must give basic care to illegal  
10 aliens and their families if they show up at the  
11 ER. Schools are required to educate their  
12 children.

13 I would just ask that the -- you vote yes  
14 on Proposition 29 and let the citizens decide.

15 Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
17 sir.

18 Mary Collins is next, followed by Melissa  
19 Evans, and then Malcom -- Superintendent Malcom  
20 Thomas, then Scott Trotter, and Jim Blanchard.

21 And if you folks would move to the front  
22 so that we can hear from you in order, that  
23 would be helpful.

24 Ms. Collins.

25 MS. COLLINS: I am a resident of



1           Pensacola, Florida.

2                   And I have read that the Constitutional  
3 Revision Committee rejected Proposal 22 this  
4 year, and that it was laid on the table.

5                   Please don't let this new -- resurrect  
6 itself, this proposal. This proposal isn't  
7 about protection of personal information.  
8 That's already protected in the constitution.

9                   The real purpose is to allow the State of  
10 Florida once again to stand between a woman and  
11 her doctor. This is about making it harder for  
12 women to make decisions about reproduction.

13                   In June 2016, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled  
14 again in favor of women's reproductive rights in  
15 Holman vs. Ellerstate.

16                   Therefore, any attempt by the State of  
17 Florida to overrule the U.S. Supreme Court will  
18 result in extended, costly litigation, which the  
19 state will lose.

20                   So why -- why, when Florida children go  
21 hungry, when they attend poorly funded schools,  
22 when they're tried as adults in our courts  
23 because we say we can't afford to pay for  
24 support services, do people want to waste  
25 enormous amounts of taxpayers' money on futile

1 litigation?

2 We believe that having children is a  
3 public good. Then shouldn't we reward it by  
4 providing paid family leave, quality child care  
5 and pre-K education?

6 Women are not second-class people. We are  
7 not public utilities.

8 Women are angry. They're fed up with  
9 being excluded, harassed, underpaid and  
10 generally subjugated. Any politician who  
11 doesn't understand this will soon be rejected at  
12 the polls, just like Roy Moore was in Alabama,  
13 where the black women led the way.

14 Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

16 Mary Collins.

17 That was you.

18 MS. COLLINS: That was me.

19 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: You don't have to go  
20 it again. We got it.

21 Melissa Evans. Melissa Evans, followed by  
22 Superintendent Thomas.

23 Ms. Evans.

24 MS. EVANS: Good afternoon. My name is  
25 Melissa, and I'm here to ask you to vote no on

1 P-67.

2 I would like to ask one thing of the  
3 committee. Before you make a decision, I would  
4 like for you to come for a kennel visit and see  
5 for yourselves how our greyhounds are taken care  
6 of. They are happy, healthy, well-fed, and most  
7 of all loved.

8 We have many Senators and Reps visit us  
9 over the years, and that's why we had their  
10 support.

11 I believe that P-67 does not have any  
12 place in our constitution. It would put  
13 thousands of hardworking, dedicated people out  
14 of a job and thousands of greyhounds with no  
15 place to go. And that is a reality.

16 And personally, I know where W.W. Flicka  
17 is. She's at home on a farm with her previous  
18 owner in perfect health.

19 Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

21 Superintendent Thomas.

22 MR. THOMAS: Yes, sir. Welcome to the  
23 Panhandle, and in particular, Escambia County.

24 I'm Malcolm Thomas, Superintendent of  
25 Schools for the Escambia County School District.

1 I'm speaking in opposition of Proposal 33.  
2 This is a proposal that would mandate all  
3 superintendents to be appointed.

4 I make it clear I'm not opposed to  
5 appointing superintendents. Over the last  
6 decade of my life, I've worked along with many  
7 great appointed and elected superintendents.

8 Over 40 school districts now have elected  
9 superintendents. That means their communities  
10 have chosen that method to select their  
11 superintendent.

12 You should reject this because the  
13 constitution already includes a mechanism  
14 anymore for each individual community to select  
15 their superintendent either as appointed or as  
16 elected.

17 I'm in a unique position. I'm in my third  
18 term. I've already declared I will not run  
19 again. We will have a new superintendent in  
20 2020.

21 I made it clear to my supporters that I  
22 would like to bring a ballot to the Escambia  
23 County citizens so we can decide this issue.

24 But I'm paralyzed at the moment because of  
25 your proposal. I will not bring the same

1 question and allow you to bring the same  
2 question at the same time and confuse our  
3 voters.

4 If you reject Proposal 33, you can rest  
5 assured I'm going to bring the question for  
6 Escambia County. I believe that's where the  
7 question should be decided, with local voters  
8 exercising their right to decide whether their  
9 superintendent would be appointed or would be  
10 elected.

11 I heard many people speak today regarding  
12 Proposition 13. You heard a lot of reasons why  
13 elected officials are wanted by citizens. I  
14 think a lot of that applies to elected  
15 superintendents as well.

16 And lastly, I'll speak a little bit to  
17 Proposition 43. That deals with applying term  
18 limits to school board members.

19 I would ask you a couple of questions  
20 there. Why are we applying retroactivity to  
21 this measure, when we've never used that  
22 approach in the past for term limits?

23 And if term limits are so great, why do we  
24 just cherry-pick school board members? Why  
25 don't we get all elected officials?

1                   COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, Mr.  
2 Superintendent.

3                   Next we'll hear from Scott Trotter, Jim  
4 Blanchard, Herb Woll, and Patricia Stokes and  
5 Mary Gutierrez.

6                   So if you would each come forward, we'll  
7 hear from you, beginning with Mr. Trotter.

8                   MR. TROTTER: Thank you.

9                   Hello. My name is Scott Trotter. I'm a  
10 retired Air Force veteran of 21 years and a  
11 graduate student here at UWF in the history  
12 department.

13                  I'm concerned about the growing tendency  
14 of the religious majority to use the power of  
15 the state to pay for some religious beliefs over  
16 others.

17                  Proposition 4. Religious freedom is not  
18 intended to protect religious freedom, but  
19 rather to force all taxpayers to aid the  
20 religious majority.

21                  Proposal 4, when coupled with Proposal 45,  
22 will allow the state to set up two parallel  
23 school systems, one for public schools and one  
24 for parochial schools.

25                  This situation will create an uneven

1 playing field, which is designed to favor  
2 religious schools over public schools.

3 Private schools can hand pick the best  
4 students, while students with learning  
5 disabilities or behavioral problems are often  
6 denied this option.

7 This will result in two separate but  
8 unequal educational systems, with the deck  
9 stacked against public schools.

10 Also, because religious schools are not  
11 held to the same academic standards as public  
12 schools, we're likely to see high school  
13 graduates that have been taught that the world  
14 is only 6,000 years old and evolution is a  
15 nonproven theory. This is clearly a Republican  
16 attempt to hijack the Florida Constitution.

17 A similar amendment was overwhelmingly  
18 defeated just six years ago. And in the  
19 unlikely event that they are adopted, this will  
20 open Florida up for a series of First Amendment  
21 lawsuits.

22 Pursuing these two amendments any further  
23 represents a waste of public resources.

24 I request that Proposals 4 and 45 be  
25 removed from any further consideration.

1 Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

3 Next is Jim Blanchard.

4 And following Mr. Blanchard, Herb Woll.

5 Mr. Blanchard, you're recognized.

6 MR. BLANCHARD: My name is Jim Blanchard.

7 I've had the privilege of taking care of  
8 greyhounds for over 50 years. I am also  
9 President of the Florida Greyhound Association,  
10 so I have to defend my interest against CP-67.

11 Last week I listened to an out-of-state  
12 activist continually talk about our care of our  
13 greyhounds and our lobbyist Jack Corey.

14 There is no bigger advocate of animals in  
15 Tallahassee. Just ask around, or better yet,  
16 follow Jack Arnold as he runs rescue for other  
17 breeds.

18 This out-of-state activist made a  
19 statement at the Tallahassee CRC meeting that  
20 when Massachusetts passed their betting ban on  
21 live greyhound racing, they did not have to  
22 compensate anyone.

23 True. But the Massachusetts legislature,  
24 seeing the injustice of singling out an  
25 industry, passed the Racing Stabilization Fund



1 to compensate the owners. They also had another  
2 pool of money to help reeducate the employees  
3 who lost their jobs; and another pool for the  
4 humane care and maintenance and adoption of all  
5 greyhounds. And it is administered by the  
6 Undersecretary of Consumer Affairs.

7 I heard about the legislators not doing  
8 anything. Over the years, I have  
9 Representatives, Senators, TV stations, and  
10 reporters.

11 And with them calling all of the shots,  
12 almost to the man, to the lady, they have come  
13 away supporting my industry or at least  
14 remaining neutral. The only rule that I have is  
15 having an open mind when you come to visit.

16 This belongs in the hands of the  
17 legislators who our citizens voted in, not in  
18 the constitution, being pushed by out-of-state  
19 activists.

20 And the burden here is that will take care  
21 of any compensation, if it so passes in Florida.

22 Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

24 Herb Woll.

25 And then following Herb, Patricia Stokes.

1 MR. WOLL: Good afternoon. My name is  
2 Herb Woll.

3 I serve as a member of the Board of  
4 Trustees, Pensacola State College. And I want  
5 to thank the CRC for being here today and your  
6 service.

7 I'm here today to ask for your support of  
8 Proposal 83, which is on your agenda, and to  
9 thank Nicole Washington for her foresight in  
10 proposing this educational amendment.

11 Since I'm the only one speaking about it  
12 today, I'll try to fill you in. By working  
13 closely with our college presidents, our local  
14 board and trustees are able to be the eyes and  
15 ears of our communities, helping to address the  
16 educational and workforce needs of the  
17 geographic areas we serve.

18 Throughout the state, we take our role  
19 seriously, working not to operate, readminister  
20 or hamper the work of our educational leaders,  
21 but to enhance relationships and to promote the  
22 programmatic nimbleness and responsiveness that  
23 is the hallmark of our Florida's community and  
24 state colleges.

25 Establishing the Florida college system in

1 the state constitution is important, as the 28  
2 public, community and state colleges which  
3 enroll approximately 800,000 students annually  
4 is not currently in the constitution.

5 The Florida college system institutions  
6 awarded nearly 116,000 certificates and degrees  
7 in 2015 and 2016.

8 Over 60 percent of graduating seniors from  
9 Florida public high schools that go on to  
10 postsecondary education enroll first in the  
11 Florida college system, and nearly 54 percent of  
12 juniors and seniors in the state university  
13 system come from the Florida college system.

14 And of more than 1100 community state  
15 colleges in the nation, 14 Florida college  
16 institutions are ranked nationally in the top  
17 100 associate degrees.

18 It has been my honor to be here today and  
19 to serve as trustee of Pensacola State College.  
20 And I respectfully ask for your support of  
21 Proposal 83 in support for the Florida college  
22 system.

23 Again, thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

25 Patricia Stokes, followed by Mary -- I

1 believe it's Mary Gutierrez.

2 MS. STOKES: Good afternoon. My name is  
3 Patricia Stokes. I've been a Florida resident  
4 for 10 years, and I'm a proud United States  
5 citizen for 2.

6 I oppose Prop 65 and support 94.

7 I'm a local bake-shop owner, I'm a  
8 Registered Nurse, and I'm a Vapor.

9 In 2009, my first, I took my first puff  
10 from an electronic cigarette. A patient at the  
11 hospital I was working at let me try hers.

12 I've been smoking cigarettes since the age  
13 of 13, and then tried the patches, the gum, and  
14 the pills, without any long-term success, and my  
15 health is starting to suffer.

16 After the first puff, I immediately knew  
17 that this technology could help me quit once and  
18 for all.

19 That night, I purchased my first EC and  
20 have not had a cigarette since. Within a matter  
21 of days, I could feel the benefits of switching  
22 to vapor. Within weeks, my lungs had cleared,  
23 my hacking cough had gone, and my energy levels  
24 have increased. Today I enjoy activities  
25 without being short of breath.

1 I can honestly and unequivocally say that  
2 switching to vapor has increased my health --  
3 improved health -- sorry -- overall health and  
4 has saved me from experiencing a smoking-related  
5 illness.

6 I am pleased to report that my personal  
7 experiences are backed by research. In 2016,  
8 the World College of Physicians found that vapor  
9 is at least 95 percent less harmful than  
10 smoking.

11 This year, the National Academy of  
12 Sciences, Engineering and Medicine produced  
13 similar findings.

14 The National Institute of Occupational  
15 Health and Safety and the California Department  
16 of Public Health have been conducting air  
17 samplings and personal exposure monitoring in  
18 vape shops.

19 These studies, while conducted under very  
20 high exposure conditions in small, nonventilated  
21 vape shops, with a substantial number of  
22 employees and customers producing visible clouds  
23 of vapor, did not document any dangerous  
24 hazardous -- hazard -- sorry -- dangerous levels  
25 of exposure to any hazardous chemicals.

1 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much.

2 MS. STOKES: Thank you.

3 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: And if you have any  
4 additional testimony, please free to give it to  
5 the young lady in the front row.

6 Ms. Gutierrez. Did I butcher your name,  
7 Ms. Gutierrez?

8 MS. GUTIERREZ: No. That's correct.  
9 Thank you. I appreciate that.

10 And thank you for the opportunity to  
11 speak, and thank you.

12 I'm here to speak on Proposal 91. And I'd  
13 like to thank the Commissioner for bringing --  
14 having insight to bring that forward.  
15 Appreciate that.

16 We have seen firsthand the harmful impacts  
17 associated with offshore drilling. And I have  
18 unfortunately learned offshore drilling poses  
19 not only environmental impacts; it also imposes  
20 economic ones as well.

21 After the BP oil spill, the Gulf coastal  
22 tourism industry lost about \$22.7 billion, and  
23 the area's commercial fishing industry lost \$247  
24 million.

25 We are in a position -- In this moment, we

1 have a -- we have an unprecedented opportunity  
2 to transition our country and our state towards  
3 clean energy, where we are currently seeing the  
4 highest levels of economic growth, fiscal health  
5 and success, and away from the use of fossil  
6 fuels which are finite, limited, and a failing  
7 industry.

8 I'd like to ask you for you to take this  
9 in consideration and continue on with your  
10 support of Proposal 91 and help us, help the  
11 State of Florida move forward in turning the  
12 Sunshine State into a solar state.

13 Thank you very much.

14 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much.

15 Our next speakers will be Diane Gilbert,  
16 Tom Thompson, Kathy Spangler, Heather Youmans  
17 and Bruce Yates.

18 And if you would come forward, as many of  
19 you as we can, we can make it much easier for  
20 everybody to have a chance to speak.

21 Ms. Gilbert. Good to see you.

22 MS. GILBERT: Good to see you.

23 I am here to oppose Proposal 11 concerning  
24 primary, general, special elections, electors  
25 voting in parts of primaries in elections.

1 I support closed primaries, all closed  
2 primaries. If a political party A has two or  
3 more candidates and party B, C, D and E, et  
4 cetera, do not choose to have a candidate, I do  
5 not believe that they should be allowed to vote  
6 for party A's candidates in the primary. It is  
7 their responsibility to have their own  
8 candidates.

9 The fact that they choose not to have  
10 their own candidates should not be permission to  
11 vote in someone else's primary to elect someone  
12 else's candidate who has a different ideology.

13 So I'm just here to say that I hope that  
14 you will oppose Proposal 11.

15 And I haven't seen Proposal 62 on this,  
16 but if it comes back, I'm hoping you will oppose  
17 that one also.

18 Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, Ms.  
20 Gilbert.

21 Tom Thompson.

22 MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, sir.

23 I would like to say a special word of  
24 appreciation for those of you putting up with  
25 listening to all of this for all this time, and



1 realize you had to travel around the state and  
2 do the same thing.

3 But my name is Tom Thompson. I'm here  
4 today for a couple of things. I do want to make  
5 mention, though, before I get to those, I do  
6 support Proposal 4.

7 I am opposed -- Excuse me. I am in favor  
8 of elected officials, and also I'm much in favor  
9 of closed primaries.

10 Some of you may know I've been very  
11 involved over the last 20 years in the election  
12 process. I've worked with a number of  
13 candidates, good, bad and indifferent. I'm sure  
14 they'll tell you the same thing.

15 And it's important that only Republicans  
16 vote for Republicans and Democrats vote for  
17 Democrats.

18 In November, we can vote for everybody,  
19 but the reality is, we don't always have  
20 everybody there to vote.

21 But that is the system. And I think it's  
22 the best system. I do want to make known,  
23 though, I'm here today primarily to ask you to  
24 bring back Proposal Number 22.

25 Now, I want you to know you've heard from

1 a lot of people speak today, some of which are  
2 volunteers, some of which are paid.

3 I want you to know today not only am I not  
4 paid to be here; I had to take a day off of  
5 work, so I'm missing a day of pay in order to  
6 come here to speak to you in regards to that.

7 But I do ask that you would restore the  
8 original intent of the privacy amendment, namely  
9 to protect informational privacy, which the  
10 court has denied.

11 And I'm not going to get finished, but  
12 I've enjoyed talking to you. And please take  
13 that into account.

14 Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, Tom. And  
16 if you have anything else that you'd like us to  
17 look at --

18 MR. THOMPSON: I ran out of time.

19 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: No, but you can give  
20 it to that young lady there.

21 MR. THOMPSON: Yes, sir.

22 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: She'll pass it  
23 around.

24 MR. THOMPSON: Thank you.

25 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Kathy Spangler. And

1 following Ms. Spangler, Heather -- I believe  
2 it's Youmans.

3 MS. SPANGLER: Hi. I'm Kathy Spangler,  
4 and I'm from Milton, Florida.

5 I'm a disabled vet, and I'm trying to get  
6 the Proposal 700000 back on the vote for  
7 Florida. We voted before for the implementation  
8 for marijuana -- marijuana.

9 And I, for one, am -- I agree with that.  
10 I was on Oxycontin. I don't know if you know,  
11 but it's 150 milligrams a day, which means I  
12 couldn't function.

13 With the VA, they will not allow me to  
14 take that. They would continue giving me the  
15 Oxycontin but would not let me have marijuana.  
16 I left the VA because of that.

17 I needed something that I can work with  
18 that keeps me alive and well. And it's doing a  
19 great job. If you had seen me a year ago, I  
20 couldn't even walk because I was so high.

21 But we're also -- I am 63 years old.  
22 21-year-olds know what they need or what is best  
23 for them. I don't think Florida should be  
24 taking away our rights to medical marijuana or  
25 regular marijuana.

1           They say it's because if they don't have  
2 more studies for -- that go for the states.  
3 Look, I've lost all my teeth. It's rotted my  
4 mouth out. Marijuana would not do that.

5           We need to get it legal for people who  
6 don't have necessarily the qualifying  
7 legislation that's out there now.

8           And we need to be more specific on exactly  
9 what that law will be. They need to revise and  
10 replace it with the fact that they said it  
11 wasn't legal in there.

12           That's besides the point. It was approved  
13 of by 72 percent of the people in the State of  
14 Florida. And I shouldn't still be fighting for  
15 that. I fought for my country. I got disabled  
16 because of my country. My country should stand  
17 by me.

18           Thank you very much.

19           COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you for your  
20 service.

21           Heather -- And I apologize, ma'am, if I  
22 mispronounced it. How is your last name  
23 pronounced?

24           MS. YOUNG: Ms. Young.

25           COMMISSIONER GAETZ: I got one. Thank

1           you.

2                   MS. YOUMANS: Thank you, sir.

3                   Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4                   Commissioner, my name is Heather Youmans,  
5                   and I'm here on behalf of the American Cancer  
6                   Society and for Action Network in support of  
7                   Proposal 65 and in opposition to 94.

8                   At the public hearing last week in  
9                   Jacksonville, there was a member of the public  
10                  who spoke about a recent policy change with the  
11                  American Cancer Society.

12                  And that position was mischaracterized, so  
13                  I wanted to take a moment today to give some  
14                  more clarification to the Commission on the  
15                  American Cancer Society's position.

16                  ACS believes that no one should smoke  
17                  cigarettes, and including teenagers. We should  
18                  get smokers off of all forms of tobacco. We  
19                  need to prevent everyone, especially youth, from  
20                  starting any tobacco products.

21                  Additionally, ACS strongly advises smokers  
22                  to use FDA-approved cessation methods, such as  
23                  prescription medications and counseling to quit.

24                  While there is evidence to indicate that  
25                  the current generation of e-cigarettes may be

1 less harmful than cigarettes, there's no way to  
2 know the long-term impact of these devices, and  
3 they have not been approved as a cessation  
4 device.

5 This new ACS position does not change our  
6 support for Proposal 65 or our opposition to  
7 Proposal 94. Tobacco control efforts in Florida  
8 must be vigilant for the new and emerging  
9 tobacco products.

10 Proposition 65 isn't an issue of whether  
11 e-cigarettes are better or worse for you. It is  
12 about every Floridian's right to bring you clean  
13 air.

14 According to the CDC, e-cigarettes have  
15 popularity, especially among middle and high  
16 school students, so it is essential that Tobacco  
17 Free Florida has the resources necessary to  
18 combat these new threats to public health.

19 Our defense against the tobacco industry  
20 and its marketing machine and the lives it's  
21 cost -- Article 10, Section 27 of the Florida  
22 Constitution, which is why we are asking you to  
23 reject Proposal 64 -- 94.

24 It's time to include new and emerging  
25 e-cigarettes and aerosol products in the

1 Constitution, so we ask that you support  
2 Proposal 65.

3 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
5 ma'am.

6 Bruce Yates. Mr. Yates.

7 (No response.)

8 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Bruce Yates.

9 Commissioner Grover Robinson, followed by  
10 Joseph Taylor, Commissioner Graham Fountain, Jim  
11 Mayall. I don't know if that's the same  
12 individual who signed up before. And Mike  
13 Griffith.

14 MR. ROBINSON: Commissioner.

15 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you for  
16 allowing us to be in your community. And you're  
17 recognized.

18 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: President Gaetz,  
19 thank you so much. Glad to have you.

20 My name is Grover Robinson, and I am an  
21 Escambia County Commissioner. I'm also past  
22 president of the Florida Association of  
23 Counties.

24 And I'm certainly here to speak to you on  
25 home rule today.

1           We welcome you to the west gate of the  
2           Sunshine State. In fact, this is the birthplace  
3           of Florida, both in terms of colonial settlement  
4           and entering into the United States.

5           In 2021, we will celebrate 200 years of  
6           Escambia County. We are proud Floridians. But  
7           we share more border miles in a number of  
8           neighboring counties in Alabama than Florida.

9           This is simply to say that in Florida, 67  
10          counties are different. And the '68  
11          Constitution recognizes Florida's maximized when  
12          counties are allowed to pursue what is best for  
13          their community.

14          I don't want to be Broward or Bradford,  
15          and I'm sure they don't want to be Escambia  
16          County either. One size simply does not fit all  
17          when it comes to Florida.

18          For these reasons, I'm adamantly opposed  
19          to any resurrection of Proposal 95 coming  
20          forward, and the issues that would threaten the  
21          '68 Constitution's home rule provisions.

22          I'm also against Proposal 13 and 26.  
23          Those are certainly issues with home rule.

24          I will say, while I have a little bit of  
25          time, I'll tell a separate note. I'm in favor



1 of 91, due to all of my experience with the oil  
2 spill. Certainly appreciate the help from  
3 President Gaetz at the time and all that he did  
4 for us.

5 I would also say my association --  
6 long-time association with Pensacola State  
7 College, I support what Herb Woll said with 83,  
8 so I appreciate that as well.

9 I'll give you 30 seconds back. Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you,  
11 Commissioner.

12 Joseph Taylor.

13 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you very much.

14 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Mr. Taylor.

15 MR. TAYLOR: How are you today?

16 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Superintendent  
17 Taylor.

18 MR. TAYLOR: That's correct. I am  
19 Superintendent of Schools for Washington County  
20 School District, and I am here in opposition to  
21 your Proposal Number 33, which is to make  
22 superintendents appointed, as opposed to  
23 elected.

24 I've heard Commissioner Malcom Thomas, who  
25 spoke. He mentioned that Escambia already has

1 an award-set program. Why would something need  
2 to go in the Constitution that can already be  
3 handled statutorily?

4 Some people spoke about home rule  
5 requirements and how important it was to be able  
6 to be close to the districts.

7 So when you decide that this will do,  
8 please understand, I'm also the Chairman of the  
9 Panhandle Area Education Consortium for 13  
10 districts that are actually east of you,  
11 smaller, rural districts.

12 Of the 13 of us, it's 9 were  
13 nontraditional. Now, thinking the  
14 one-size-fits-all approach to education will do  
15 that. That's part of what this is all about.  
16 And so that's also why I'm opposed to it. I am  
17 one of those 4 who are not traditional.

18 I did not come to the classroom. I cannot  
19 do that. Matter of fact, I'm a graduate here of  
20 the University of West Florida. My background  
21 is in accounting. I have -- That is what my  
22 degree is in. Small business owner.  
23 Construction, those type things.

24 And so when I see this -- And -- and here  
25 is where you start talking about home rule, and

1           you talk about things, there's also a value  
2           question here.

3                   Superintendent Thomas had mentioned  
4           there's 41 who are appointed. That's correct.  
5           Those 41 have about 18 percent, 19 percent of  
6           the voters of the State of Florida, which means  
7           that the rest of the voters in the State of  
8           Florida who already have appointed  
9           superintendents, which they're satisfied with,  
10          can say the value system of the Panhandle of  
11          Florida needs to be fixed.

12                   That is not what I think when we talk  
13          about your Proposal Number 10 for civics class.  
14          It would be interesting. I would like to see  
15          somebody spin that, explaining to a civics class  
16          about involvement and why it doesn't always  
17          work. Why can't it? What's a republic? What's  
18          a democracy?

19                   I would ask you to vote this down.

20                   I very much appreciate your time. Thank  
21          you.

22                   COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you,  
23          Superintendent.

24                   Graham Fountain, County Commissioner,  
25          Okaloosa County.

1 COMMISSIONER FOUNTAIN: Thank you,  
2 Commissioner.

3 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: You're recognized.

4 COMMISSIONER FOUNTAIN: Thank you, Mr.  
5 President.

6 And Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, thank  
7 y'all for having us today.

8 I want to for just a minute share. Bob  
9 Johnson had to slip out. I think he had an  
10 emergency, but he was here to speak on  
11 Proposition 13, which is near and dear to a lot  
12 of our hearts that have come from the sheriffing  
13 world, to make sure that in the future that  
14 sheriffs are always elected, including places  
15 that decide they don't want to do that. We feel  
16 like the sheriffs ought to be elected.

17 Second of all, as a retired undersheriff  
18 and state law enforcement director, I'm here to  
19 speak on Proposition 49.

20 My good friend and Commissioner Emory  
21 Gaines (phonetic) had a great, great proposition  
22 to codify in advance some further protections  
23 for our fallen brothers and sisters in law  
24 enforcement and first responders in public  
25 safety, to make sure that their families are

1 taken care of.

2 As we speak today, in a state nearby  
3 they're burying another police officer that was  
4 murdered. It's every day somewhere we're doing  
5 that, so let's take care of them.

6 But I want to -- I want to offer -- I'm  
7 not going to be a real, real advocate for this,  
8 but I listened to the superintendents here. And  
9 it made me think. The last year we experienced  
10 some very interesting things in our county. And  
11 I'm not so sure that we shouldn't put the  
12 superintendent's election, as appointed, on the  
13 ballot.

14 I was always for an elected  
15 superintendent, but when Florida Statute 1001  
16 and 1002 is not followed by the superintendent,  
17 and they withhold material information from a  
18 school board to do their own doings, I think  
19 maybe we should look at it, to let the people  
20 decide if they want to elect a CEO that will  
21 take the direction of the school board and carry  
22 that out like that job is supposed to be instead  
23 of making it their own policy.

24 Thank y'all very much for your time, and  
25 thank you for serving on this very long process.

1                   COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you,  
2 Commissioner.

3                   Jim Mayall, and followed by Mike Griffith,  
4 and then followed by Linda Nobles.

5                   Mr. Mayall.

6                   MR. MAYALL: Thank you for having me.

7                   I want to support bringing Proposal 22 to  
8 the full body of the CRC. Fix Florida's privacy  
9 clause and allow legislation to enact laws that  
10 would require parental consent before a minor  
11 girl undergoes an abortion surgery. Please vote  
12 yes on Proposal 22.

13                  To repeal the anti-Catholic-motivated  
14 Blaine amendment, no age is mentioned in  
15 Florida's Constitution.

16                  Repealing this division would prevent  
17 religious discrimination to allow educational  
18 vouchers to be issued so that parents could use  
19 their own tax dollars to direct the education of  
20 their children to the school of their choice for  
21 the public, private, charter or home school.  
22 Please vote yes on Proposal 4.

23                  Proposal 45 specifies that no provision in  
24 the state of constitution -- in the state  
25 constitution may be construed to limit the

1 legislature from making provision for other  
2 educational services that are beneficial to  
3 Florida's children and families. Vote yes on  
4 that.

5 Proposal 71 allows the legislature to  
6 establish charter schools without the court  
7 striking down the laws for various reasons.  
8 Proposal 71. Vote yes on that.

9 Proposal 43 establishes term limits for  
10 school board members so that they cannot serve  
11 for more than two four-year terms totaling eight  
12 years of service. Please vote yes on that.

13 And my last one is Proposal 13. I think  
14 we should be electing our sheriff.

15 Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

17 Mike Griffith.

18 MR. GRIFFITH: Mike Griffith, with the Bay  
19 Beacon of Niceville. I may have some questions  
20 for some of you later, but for now I relinquish  
21 my remaining time.

22 Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Okay. Thank you very  
24 much, Mr. Griffith.

25 And I'm sure Commissioners will be around

1 later if you wish to chat with them.

2 Our next testifiers will be Linda Nobles,  
3 Carole -- I think it's Tebay or Tebay, Melissa  
4 Forberg and Andrew Fernandez and Penny Rice.

5 So if Ms. Nobles is here.

6 CHIEF JUDGE NOBLES: I am. I am Linda  
7 Nobles, and I am the Chief Judge of the First  
8 Judicial Circuit. That's comprised of Escambia,  
9 Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton Counties.

10 But I'm here today not only to speak on  
11 behalf of the First Judicial Circuit, but of  
12 every judge throughout the State of Florida.

13 We first want to thank you for your  
14 service on this Commission and also want to  
15 thank you for giving me and all of the rest of  
16 the people here today an opportunity to speak.

17 I want to speak on Proposal 26 relating to  
18 the Office of Domestic Security and  
19 Counterterrorism within the FDLE.

20 Proposal 26 was amended in committee to  
21 provide for the sheriff's autonomous authority  
22 for courthouse security through the entire State  
23 of Florida.

24 We truly believe this issue, courthouse  
25 security, should not be addressed through the



1 Constitution. But even so, it really is  
2 unnecessary.

3 For years, the Chief Justice, the  
4 sheriffs, and the County Commissioners have been  
5 effectively collaborating on courthouse  
6 security, and this service -- I mean, this  
7 process has served us very well.

8 The Chief Justice has absolutely no desire  
9 to be the operational decision-making entity.  
10 We would not begin to suggest to qualify  
11 sheriffs throughout the state how to train their  
12 deputies, but due process, which is to protect  
13 those that use the courthouse, that falls  
14 directly at my feet.

15 Luckily, the Chief Justice and the  
16 sheriffs have the same goal. We want to protect  
17 our communities, and we want to make sure that  
18 courthouse are safe for those who use it and who  
19 work in it.

20 For that reason, the members of the  
21 judiciary and the Sheriffs' Association have  
22 drafted litigation -- I mean legislation which  
23 effectively addresses courthouse security, is  
24 currently pending in the legislature. And we  
25 respectfully reject -- ask that you reject the

1 amended language. Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, Your  
3 Honor.

4 Next . . . Is it Carole . . .

5 MS. TEBAY: Carole Tebay.

6 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Tebay. Okay. Thank  
7 you, ma'am.

8 MS. TEBAY: I'm here on Number 91. I'm  
9 speaking in favor of it.

10 I've just heard the other day that the  
11 United States exports more oil than any other  
12 country in the world.

13 This is at a time when the BOEM is  
14 considering decreasing the regulations on oil  
15 drilling and when there's a cap of \$25 million  
16 on any company that has a great big oil spill.  
17 Florida can't afford that. Our economy can't  
18 afford it, nor our environment.

19 I'd also like to speak for Number 37,  
20 which would stop you from naming buildings after  
21 standing legislators.

22 I get hot under the collar every time I go  
23 to the Milton campus of PSC and see the building  
24 named for Bo Johnson, who -- a legislator that  
25 went to prison.

1 Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

3 Melissa Forberg.

4 And following Ms. Forberg, Andria

5 Fernandez, and then Bennie Rice.

6 Ms. Forberg.

7 MS. FORBERG: Hi. I'm Melissa Forberg  
8 from Defuniak Springs, and I'm here to speak on  
9 behalf of Ell's Tato Skins.

10 Tato was born on September 18, 2011. She  
11 was one of six puppies, with three brothers and  
12 two sisters.

13 When she was a few months old, she got the  
14 first of two ear tattoos to distinguish her from  
15 her siblings.

16 At around one year of age, Tato began  
17 training to run. She was also trained to spend  
18 most of her time in a cage to prepare her for  
19 life on the track.

20 When she was 19 months old, Tato ran her  
21 first of 132 career races in Bluffs Run in Iowa.  
22 She was later shipped to Orange Park Kennel Club  
23 in Jacksonville.

24 On the morning of June 26, 2015, Tato was  
25 taken out of her cage in the Jim Blanchard

1 Kennel for a practice run.

2 She did not finish. Her trainer,  
3 Christopher Maynard, put her in the greyhound  
4 hauling truck and turned his attention to the  
5 other dogs.

6 When Maynard returned later, he found Tato  
7 laying dead in the truck. She was just three  
8 years old.

9 On behalf of Tato, please vote yes for the  
10 dogs, Proposal 67.

11 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

12 Andria Fernandez.

13 Ms. Fernandez.

14 (No response.)

15 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Ms. Andria Fernandez.

16 (No response.)

17 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Penny Rice.

18 And Terri Suggs will follow Ms. Rice, so  
19 if you'll please be on deck, Terri Suggs.

20 Ms. Rice, you are recognized.

21 MS. RICE: Okay. Good afternoon.

22 My name is Penny Rice, and I'm here  
23 speaking in opposition to Proposition 4.

24 I am a retired social studies teacher and  
25 university supervisor of practicum and student

1 teachers.

2 I have worked in public schools in four  
3 different states. In these capacities, I have  
4 seen vastly different schools with vastly  
5 different school populations, but they had one  
6 thing in common, a dire need for more funding.

7 And for public schools, that money comes  
8 from the taxpayers. The attempt by lawmakers to  
9 use public money to support religious and  
10 for-profit schools is wrong. Taxpayers expect  
11 that their tax dollars will fund public  
12 education, not private entities.

13 Private and religious schools are not  
14 subject to the same requirements as public  
15 schools. Private and religious school students  
16 do not have to take certain parts of state tests  
17 that public students do.

18 Private and religious school teachers do  
19 not have to be certified. Public school  
20 teachers do. Private and religious schools can  
21 change graduation requirements. Public schools  
22 can't.

23 Public school taxpayers know what they are  
24 paying for. With private and religious schools,  
25 they do not.

1           Public money should not be siphoned off  
2           to pay for religious for-profit schools. Our  
3           constitution is very clear about the separation  
4           of church and state.

5           I also want to support bringing back  
6           Proposition 62 to the full CSC. As a former  
7           school teacher, I cannot imagine myself being  
8           expected to carry a gun into the classroom.

9           I cannot imagine myself being able to  
10          defend my young students against an assault  
11          rifle. Assault rifles are weapons of war. We  
12          need to ban them. We are the adults.

13          Thank you.

14          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

15          Terri Suggs.

16          And then following Ms. Suggs, Alex -- I  
17          believe it's Kozman. Sandy P-o-r-e-a, I  
18          believe. And then Steven Smith, and then  
19          Georgana Christley.

20          So if you would all please come to the  
21          front so that we can hear from you as I've laid  
22          out the speaking order.

23          Terri Suggs.

24          MS. SUGGS: Yes. Hello. My name is Terri  
25          Suggs, and I'm a greyhound trainer.

1 I respectfully ask you to vote no on  
2 Proposal 67.

3 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Ma'am, would you get  
4 a little closer to the microphone, please.

5 Thank you.

6 MS. SUGGS: Sorry.

7 I'd like to tell you a little bit about my  
8 job. I get to spend every day, seven days a  
9 week, in the kennels with greyhounds.

10 I get to take care of them. I get to love  
11 them. I get to play with them. I get to watch  
12 my greyhound, my four-year-old greyhound, play  
13 with him all day long.

14 When I think about them taking the  
15 greyhounds away, I worried because my little  
16 granddaughter loves to watch him run.  
17 Absolutely loves it.

18 My boys are trainers. My oldest one, Wade  
19 Suggs, is a greyhound trainer, and when the  
20 constitution threatens my livelihood, I thought  
21 the constitution was supposed to protect me.

22 When you're voting, I've asked you to vote  
23 no. But before you vote, stop and think about  
24 all the families like mine that has dedicated  
25 their lives, every day of their lives to taking

1 care of these dogs.

2 Think about who it affects and what the  
3 animals -- the animals it affects because where  
4 we going to go? Where are they going to run?

5 Because we're the only state that provides  
6 this. We're a tourist state. And this is a  
7 family-oriented thing for our tourists.

8 Y'all please, before you vote, stop and  
9 think about me and my family and vote no,  
10 please.

11 Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

13 Alex -- I think it's Kozman. Is that  
14 correct, sir?

15 I'm sorry if I mispronounced it.

16 MR. KOZMAN: Yes, sir. No; that's  
17 correct.

18 And I thank you for allowing me to appear  
19 before you today. I had a few points to  
20 address.

21 Proposal 4, I'd ask that the Commission  
22 not support that. The state should not be  
23 supporting private organizations or  
24 organizations with a private agenda.

25 With this proposal, not only is there a



1 risk of favoring one religion over another, but  
2 favoring the religious over the nonreligious.

3 Proposal 6. I'd ask you to support that.

4 I believe a judge is to be impartial; and in  
5 doing so, should be evaluating the merits of  
6 legal arguments for himself, rather than relying  
7 on interpretations of the party in the legal  
8 action. In this proposal, I believe the  
9 impartial judiciary is the citizen's protection.

10 Proposal 20, I'd like you -- Disregard  
11 that.

12 Proposal 33, I'd like you to not support  
13 that. I believe public officials should be  
14 accountable to the citizenry. An appointed  
15 superintendent takes that accountability away  
16 from the citizens and makes the superintendent  
17 accountable to the school board instead.

18 Proposal 39. I'd like you to support.  
19 Public officers, I believe, are public servants  
20 and should not be profiting from their office  
21 beyond the salary allocated.

22 A baseline code of conduct -- code of  
23 ethics would be important to have as our social  
24 decorum continues to deteriorate.

25 Proposal 43, I'd like you to support that.

1 Public officials are public servants. And as  
2 such, should be working for the citizenry and  
3 not for profits.

4 Term limits would help us place the focus  
5 on public officials for the -- of the good of  
6 the community rather than that of personal gain.

7 On Proposal 65, I'd like you to support  
8 that. It's unfortunate that the state must  
9 regulate offensive behavior in the citizens, but  
10 due to the deterioration of social requirements  
11 it's important for the state to protect all  
12 citizens, even at times protect us from  
13 ourselves.

14 Quickly, on 91, we must be stewards of the  
15 environment. I'd like you to support that.

16 And I thank you for your time.

17 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
18 sir.

19 Sandi -- Is it P-o-r-e-d-a? I'm sorry if  
20 I messed that up.

21 Sandi?

22 (No response.)

23 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: On Proposal 96?

24 (No response.)

25 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Okay.

1 Steven Smith, followed by Georgana  
2 Christley, and followed by Haley Schipper.

3 So please come forward so that we can make  
4 sure we get you in.

5 Mr. Smith.

6 MR. SMITH: All right. First of all, I  
7 want to say thank you for passing the felons  
8 right to vote, at least giving people a chance  
9 to vote in November.

10 My name is Steven Smith. And I'm a felon.  
11 In 2009 I was convicted of a drug felony. I  
12 served my time and paid my debt to society.

13 And since that time, I have volunteered  
14 thousands of hours to feed the homeless and  
15 participate in several community outreach  
16 programs.

17 I recently graduated from Pensacola State  
18 College with my associate's in legal studies,  
19 and was named student scholar of the year 2017  
20 in the legal department.

21 I'm now currently attending UWF prelaw.  
22 And I know the felon voting rights proposal has  
23 recently passed here, as well as Florida  
24 dependency process being declared  
25 unconstitutional this month by U.S. District

1 Court Judge Mark Walker.

2 I just want to ask: Should I be punished  
3 for the rest of my life?

4 I just want to ask all the voters here to  
5 please vote yes this November for Amendment 4  
6 for restoration of voting rights for felons.

7 Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

9 Georgana Christley.

10 (No response.)

11 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Georgana Christley.

12 Ms. Christley.

13 (No response.)

14 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Haley Schipper,  
15 followed by Theresa Dennis, followed by Michael  
16 Cole.

17 Please go ahead, ma'am. You're  
18 recognized.

19 MS. SCHIPPER: Thank you. My name is  
20 Haley Schipper. I am the student government  
21 president at Pensacola State College. And I'm  
22 here to support Proposal 83.

23 I grew up in Okinawa, Japan as a military  
24 brat. I moved there when I was two years old,  
25 and I left at the age of 17 after graduating

1 high school.

2 I will be moving to Pensacola, and my  
3 parents are at home here. But I had to choose  
4 between Pensacola State or UWF.

5 I chose PSC because I knew that that was  
6 the culture shock in having to move and stay by  
7 myself, that I would need an easy transition.

8 Pensacola State was the best choice  
9 because of the small classes and interactions  
10 with my professors and the community that PSC  
11 has.

12 I just graduated my AA in business and  
13 have begun my bachelor's degree in project  
14 management at PSC as well.

15 I enjoy the bachelor program because of  
16 the flexibility of my extracurricular activities  
17 and my full-time job.

18 I am proud to be a student of our  
19 nationally ranked Florida college system.

20 I am standing here today to say thank you  
21 for proposing Proposal 83 by Commissioner Nicole  
22 Washington.

23 I believe that the Florida college system  
24 should be codified in the constitution, as  
25 university and K through 12 systems are.

1           As education is a path for many like me,  
2           I'd like throughout the systems of our state to  
3           vote on this. I ask that the Florida CRC  
4           support this proposal.

5           Thank you.

6           COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
7           ma'am.

8           Theresa Dennis.

9           MS. DENNIS: Good afternoon.

10          Thank you very much for your time and  
11          sacrifice traveling with this great weather.

12          I am here to speak on the behalf of two  
13          different proposals.

14          I am asking for you to please vote yes for  
15          the dogs on Proposal 67. We've been working for  
16          years to get this passed.

17          And while I am tremendously grateful to  
18          hear people talk about how much they love the  
19          dogs and how much they love their dogs with the  
20          dogs, that doesn't nullify the pain and anguish  
21          suffered by so many other dogs.

22          So this guy is Highly K-lights. In three  
23          years, he went from being born and racing 113  
24          times to being destroyed because he had a broken  
25          leg.

1 I have three rescue dogs at home. I spent  
2 \$5,000 rebuilding an ACL on a mutt because he  
3 took on a fight with a great dane. She couldn't  
4 win. They wouldn't spend \$500 to set his leg  
5 and give him a chance to get adopted and find a  
6 forever home. It just killed him.

7 I know they want to make money. I know  
8 how they make money, so I'm asking to please,  
9 please vote yes. Let the people decide.

10 I'm also here to ask you to oppose 29. I  
11 saw your voting. I appreciate your opinions.  
12 And I'm here hoping I can change your mind.

13 This is an unfair burden to especially  
14 small business owners. We do have e-verify in  
15 Florida, but it's expensive and it takes time.

16 I have friends that run small businesses  
17 and owns small businesses. And if they want to  
18 hire legal immigrants with documentation right  
19 now, they can immediately verify through the  
20 already approved-of channels and put them to  
21 work.

22 They are hardworking people. They come  
23 here from all over the world. They bring color  
24 and music and food and fabulous volunteer time  
25 and churches to our great area.

1           And I'm asking you to please protect the  
2           business owners and keep our state from becoming  
3           a hate state and oppose Proposal 29.

4           Thank you very much for your time.

5           COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

6           Michael Cole. Then Ray Aguado, Makenzie  
7           Johnson, and Jessica Leleux, I believe.

8           Michael Cole.

9           MR. COLE: Thank you, sir.

10          I'm here today with PSC in favor of  
11          Proposal 83.

12          I'm a graduate and a current student at  
13          PSC. And I'm here in favor of Proposal 83  
14          because I believe that such a great school as  
15          PSC should be supported and supervised by this  
16          proposal.

17          Has affordable education, which I  
18          personally go to. I'm a graduate. I have many  
19          choices for schools to go to, but I chose PSC  
20          because of the great programs, wonderful faculty  
21          and members and support for the students. And I  
22          believe they should be supported as well by the  
23          constitution.

24          Also, with my remaining time, I'd like to  
25          address, as a current student in the Florida



1 State, the ban of AR-15s and assault weapons in  
2 our schools.

3 I believe there are -- In our states I  
4 believe there is no place for them in our state  
5 or in our country, and to please consider this.

6 I encourage you to consider legislation  
7 banning the sale of AR-15s in the State of  
8 Florida for our students and our citizens.

9 Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much.  
11 Ray Aguado.

12 Did I get that right, Ray?

13 MR. AGUADO: It's Aguado.

14 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Aguado. I'm sorry.

15 MR. AGUADO: That's okay. I apologize.

16 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: No, no. Please don't  
17 apologize.

18 MR. AGUADO: My name is Ray Aguado. I  
19 live in Pensacola, and I would like to encourage  
20 the Commission to oppose Proposition 29, also  
21 known as e-verify.

22 Now, the goal of e-verify may be  
23 meritorious. And I am all about securing our  
24 borders, protecting our jobs, but I am not in  
25 favor of increasing the size of government.

1 I am not in favor of e-verify because  
2 determining if a person is legally able to work  
3 in this country is already -- identified for a  
4 Social Security number.

5 We shouldn't burden businesses with  
6 responsibilities of conducting background  
7 checks, when that should be and is the  
8 responsibility of government agencies such as  
9 Homeland Security and the Social Security  
10 Administration.

11 Also, e-verify is costly to taxpayers, and  
12 it is flawed. A government analysis states that  
13 e-verify would cost businesses approximately \$20  
14 per employee, and that same analysis reports  
15 that an error rate with e-verify of  
16 approximately 15 percent. So, please, I ask the  
17 Commission to oppose Prop 29. There has to be a  
18 better way.

19 I'm also here to ask the Commission to  
20 reconsider and restore Proposition 22, for this  
21 privacy amendment to its original purpose. The  
22 amendment was to protect the informal privacy of  
23 its citizens, protect ourselves from the  
24 government's increasing ability to gather our  
25 personal information.

1           Unfortunately, the privacy amendment has  
2           been misinterpreted by the courts. And as a  
3           result, Florida has created a fundamental right  
4           for a minor to have an abortion without the  
5           consent of her parents.

6           So I'm asking the Commission to restore  
7           the privacy amendment to what it was intended,  
8           to ensure informational privacy, and not to  
9           grant any greater rights for an abortion to  
10          minors without the consent of parents. This is  
11          not an abortion issue. There is a parental  
12          right issue.

13          Thank you.

14          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
15          sir.

16          Makenzie Johnson. And following Ms.  
17          Johnson's comments, we are going to take a  
18          15-minute break.

19          And when we come back, our first speakers  
20          will be Jessica -- I think it's L-e-l-e-u-x,  
21          Wren Godwin, Susan Dombrowski and Barry Beroset,  
22          Ms. Johnson, you're recognized.

23          MS. JOHNSON: Thank you for the  
24          opportunity to speak today.

25          My name is Makenzie Johnson. I'm the

1 coordinator of -- (Audience members speaking out  
2 loud to each other sitting next to the court  
3 reporter; speaker's words not reportable.) --  
4 leadership at Pensacola State College.

5 I'm speaking in favor of Proposal 83, and  
6 I'm here on behalf of some of our students  
7 unable to attend. They're in class or working.

8 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: I'm sorry, ma'am.  
9 Would you stop? Stop the clock. I apologize,  
10 sir.

11 THE COURT REPORTER: It's not you, sir.  
12 These people here are talking, and I can't hear.

13 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: All right. If we  
14 have conversations in the room, particularly  
15 around the court reporter, let's try to take  
16 those conversations outside.

17 Ma'am, please start.

18 MS. JOHNSON: Proposal 83 refers to  
19 students, many of whom are economically  
20 disadvantaged, working adults or  
21 first-generation students.

22 Proposal 83 reflects a strong mission of  
23 Florida's college system, which is a  
24 preservation of open access and affordability to  
25 college.

1           This -- The Florida Constitution is to  
2           reflect the democratic values of our cause and  
3           its language.

4           Its education is a path -- is the path --  
5           I'm sorry. If education is the path for many of  
6           our students working, et cetera, then the  
7           citizens should be allowed to vote, and I  
8           believe it should be reflected within the  
9           constitution.

10          Thank you.

11          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much.  
12          The Commission stands in recess for 15 minutes.

13          (Brief recess.)

14          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Our next group of  
15          speakers will be Jessica -- And I know Jessica  
16          is going help me with her last name.

17          Jessica . . . I think it's Leleux, or  
18          something like that, Jessica Leleux, Wren  
19          Godwin, Susan Dombrowski, Barry Beroset.

20          So let's begin with Jessica.

21          What is your last name?

22          MS. LELEUX: My name is Leleux.

23          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Say it again, please.

24          MS. LELEUX: Is Leleux. It's French or  
25          technically Cajun.

1                   COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Oh. It's a beautiful  
2 name.

3                   MS. LELEUX: Thank you.

4                   COMMISSIONER GAETZ: You're recognized,  
5 ma'am.

6                   MS. LELEUX: So my name is Jessica Leleux.  
7 I'm speaking on behalf of Proposal 83. I am a  
8 student from Pensacola State College. And I'd  
9 like to say that I believe this proposal would  
10 keep the campus and the others -- you know,  
11 state colleges more affordable and open,  
12 accessible.

13                  COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you. Thank  
14 you, ma'am, for your testimony.

15                  And next, Wren Godwin, please.

16                  MS. GODWIN: Thank you. Good afternoon.

17                  My name is Wren Godwin, and I am here to  
18 represent Pensacola State College in support of  
19 Proposal 83, which reflects a strong mission of  
20 the college system to present open access and  
21 affordability of good education.

22                  I am a high school senior preparing to  
23 graduate and have dual enrollment at PSC for  
24 nearly two years.

25                  Being a student at PSC has helped me to

1 not only prepare but to become -- but to become  
2 comfortable with the college life -- college  
3 life and developing peers, which is so important  
4 for people my age, young kids like me, for just  
5 getting their start in the world.

6 For many, graduating PSC, community  
7 college, provides vestigial first steps which  
8 allows further access to higher education.

9 I now want to say that earning a degree  
10 from a community college such as PSC will help  
11 me get a good start in building the career I am  
12 working hard to achieve.

13 Community college will help me to receive  
14 a strong education and give me opportunities for  
15 an even brighter future.

16 The board of -- the board of constitution  
17 should reflect these same values that are very  
18 important.

19 Respectfully, I request for you to support  
20 Proposal 83, by Commissioner Nicole Washington,  
21 on behalf of students like me who are working  
22 toward a bright future.

23 Thank you for your time, and thank you for  
24 listening.

25 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

1 Susan Dombrowski.

2 (No response.)

3 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Ms. Dombrowski.

4 (No response.)

5 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: All right.

6 Barry Berozet.

7 Good evening, Counselor. Good to see you.

8 MR. BEROSET: Thank you.

9 How are you doing?

10 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Good.

11 MR. BEROSET: I'm here to speak in  
12 opposition of Proposal 96.

13 I'm a criminal defense lawyer. I've been  
14 a criminal lawyer for, I think, 45 years. I  
15 started out as a prosecutor working with Curtis  
16 Golden.

17 And I'm not opposed to victim rights. In  
18 fact, the Constitution, Article 1, Subsection b  
19 already provides for rights for victims.

20 They are to be advised of all critical  
21 stages of the procedures and to have the right  
22 of allocution at sentencing.

23 So many of the things that they delineated  
24 specifically in this proposal are already  
25 included in the Constitution.



1           The problem that I have with the specific  
2 parts of the constitution I'll mention, but like  
3 I say, I've tried probably over 300 jury trials.  
4 Thousands of victims. And all of these victims  
5 or almost, in every case, every felony, have  
6 been interviewed at depositions.

7           One of the proposals in this is that the  
8 victims should not be required to give a  
9 deposition.

10          I know there's not a constitutional right  
11 to depositions, but in Florida we have that  
12 opportunity.

13          And when we sit down and take a  
14 deposition, the prosecutor's there. The  
15 defendant's not there. And we have an  
16 opportunity to learn about the case.

17          The prosecutor, surprisingly, learns about  
18 the case. He probably has or she 250 cases, and  
19 so many times those cases are settled as a  
20 result of that deposition. It's very important.

21          Another factor that's important here, it  
22 says they do not have to provide any discovery  
23 request. This is in clear violation of Brady  
24 vs. Maryland, which requires them to disclose  
25 exculpatory matters.

1           And then, of course, you're bringing in a  
2           third party that may control when the trial  
3           goes.

4           And I think this is going to be a great  
5           detriment to the prosecutors, the Florida Bar,  
6           the Criminal Law Committee, composed of  
7           prosecutors, defense attorneys and judges have  
8           unanimous -- or not unanimously, but  
9           overwhelmingly opposed.

10          So I want to thank you very much. And  
11          good to see you all.

12          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, Counselor.

13          Next is Colby Wise. And following Colby  
14          Wise, Julia Pearsall, Martin Simmons and Marilyn  
15          Oberhausen.

16          Colby.

17          MR. WISE: Hello, Commissioners. Thank  
18          you very much. My name is Colby Wise. I'm from  
19          Bradenton, Florida.

20          I wanted to speak today in support of you  
21          reviving Public Proposal 700000 and placing it  
22          on the 2018 ballot.

23          I speak on behalf of millions of  
24          Floridians who have yet to realize how  
25          beneficial cannabis can be, as well the

1 half-a-million Floridians that have been  
2 arrested since the last Constitutional Revision  
3 Commission met, as well as the 60,000 that will  
4 be arrested between now and 2020, when we hope  
5 to have the similar ballot initiative on the  
6 ballot for voters to decide.

7 I urge you all, please, realize that this  
8 issue has benefits for all Floridians and really  
9 needs to be considered before it just gets  
10 thrown out with the -- thrown out with the bath  
11 water.

12 Thank you very much.

13 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: You bet. Thank you  
14 so much, sir.

15 Julia Pearsall.

16 (No response.)

17 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Julia Pearsall.

18 (No response.)

19 Marty Simmons.

20 MR. SIMMONS: Thank you so much. I'm  
21 Martin Simmons.

22 And let me tell you folks, you have a  
23 great leader in President Don Gaetz there.  
24 We're proud of him here in the Panhandle. In  
25 case you didn't know, he is from the Panhandle.

1 We're glad to have him.

2 When I walked in this morning, I said, "I  
3 can breathe easy."

4 Proposal 97. This would actually count  
5 under-votes as no votes. What other race on any  
6 ballot counts under-votes as no?

7 If someone chooses not to participate on  
8 the question or raise on their ballot, they're  
9 choosing not to vote.

10 It's very common for responsible voters  
11 who are not familiar with a race, a judge or an  
12 amendment, to simply not vote on that question  
13 so as to not vote incorrectly. They're not  
14 voting no. Please let the 60 percent threshold  
15 be a percentage of the votes on that amendment.

16 As a wise king once said, "Let your yes be  
17 yes and your no be no."

18 As for closed primaries, these aren't  
19 actually elections where -- of a selection  
20 process for the nomination of a party candidate  
21 to the November general election where every  
22 registered voter can vote.

23 No voter's ever prevented from registering  
24 with whatever party affiliation they choose.  
25 This allows them to vote in the selection

1 primary of their party.

2 When they register, they know how this  
3 process works. If you want to vote in  
4 primaries, simply choose a party that is closest  
5 to your beliefs, and you'll get to vote.

6 Because I was one of the 99 delegates from  
7 Florida to the convention in Cleveland. And it  
8 was a closed system. I was one of the 99 from  
9 Florida. We voted for our nominee to the  
10 November general election, and then every  
11 registered voter could vote.

12 It's a selection process, not an election  
13 where everybody gets to vote. That's what we  
14 have in November. And that's the way it should  
15 stay.

16 Thank you very much.

17 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
18 Marty.

19 Marilyn Oberhausen.

20 (No response.)

21 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Ms. Oberhausen.

22 (No response.)

23 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: All right. Randell  
24 Graham. Then Nichele Newell. And then Tammy  
25 Sharp.

1                   Randall Graham.

2                   MR. GRAHAM: Yes, sir.

3                   COMMISSIONER GAETZ: You are recognized,  
4 sir.

5                   MR. GRAHAM: Thank you very much.

6                   I spoke to you last week about living my  
7 American dream, racing greyhounds. And I'm  
8 driving a total of 12 hours today to speak with  
9 you again.

10                  We've heard many unpleasant words to  
11 describe greyhound racing and the care of the  
12 animals perceived. Simply, they are beings.  
13 They all have different characteristics,  
14 personalities and tendencies.

15                  And I can guarantee you I know every one  
16 of them, all 68 of my greyhounds.

17                  At Orange Park in a racing program you  
18 might see Jackson. That's Too-Too. But I will  
19 see Anna. I will see Swiss Miss is Reba.  
20 Kentucky Bronco is Tuffs and LK's Lionheart is  
21 Leo. I could do that 64 more times without  
22 these notes.

23                  So I extend a -- Several members of  
24 greyhound racing have encouraged and invited all  
25 of you, but I know you're busy. That's not a

1 realistic invitation, and you can't be expected  
2 to accept it.

3 So I extend an invitation to any person  
4 you employ. They will have unrestricted access.  
5 All I ask is that you show up with a genuine  
6 interest in learning about greyhounds.

7 Come visit Abby and Cody, Rosie and  
8 Richie, Joshua and Somal. And I bet when you  
9 leave my kennel, you'll have a new best friend.  
10 His name is Pressley.

11 While we urge you to come pay us a visit  
12 and know all 67, we would like to remind you  
13 again this week that voting no does not mean you  
14 support racing.

15 Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

17 Nichele Newell. Did I get that right,  
18 ma'am?

19 MS. NEWELL: Yes, you did. Thank you.

20 And I want to thank everyone for being  
21 here. I think it's important that everyone here  
22 is exercising their right and participating in  
23 our democracy.

24 And to our Commissioners, I hope that you  
25 try to make it as easy as possible for all to

1 participate in our democracy. I think it's far  
2 too restrictive right now.

3 I support restoring felons' right to vote  
4 automatically. I support open primaries. And I  
5 support public financing of elections. It was  
6 established to try to help stave off private  
7 interests in -- in our government. And it  
8 doesn't do enough, so please don't get rid of  
9 that. I think we should hold the politicians  
10 accountable to voters, not to donors.

11 And lastly, I just want to say that we  
12 really need to put a ban up for a vote in 2018,  
13 and we can't afford any more lies. We need to  
14 get it done right away.

15 Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, Ms.  
17 Newell.

18 Tammy Sharp. And following Ms. Sharp,  
19 Lily Anderson, and then Sharron Hobbs.

20 Ms. Sharp.

21 MS. SHARP: Hi. My name is Tammy Sharp.  
22 I am from Milton, Florida.

23 I'm here for Proposal 88. I've heard  
24 several people get up here and say it's  
25 unnecessary.



1 But imagine if I -- if it was taken out,  
2 elderly, starving them; not bathing them; not  
3 giving them water; allowing sores to fester and  
4 grow until the smell was so strong, it made you  
5 throw up; physically and mentally abusing them  
6 for days, weeks and months until they died.

7 There would be an outrage. This kind of  
8 torture to our senior citizens happens daily.  
9 This is an outrage.

10 Patterns of neglect by underpaid,  
11 understaffed, undertrained employees are a  
12 constant issue, but you say it's unnecessary to  
13 give rights to the citizens.

14 According to Nursing Home Abuse Center,  
15 out of 2,000 nursing homes, there's a 44 percent  
16 rate of abuse, and a neglect rate of 95 percent.  
17 And they say it's unnecessary.

18 In Florida, out of 200 women, 67 percent  
19 claimed abuse by staff and caregivers. Out of  
20 342 senior citizen men, 55 percent claimed  
21 slapping, hitting and shoving by staff and  
22 caregivers.

23 I'm speaking today for you, for your  
24 families, for your wives, for your children, for  
25 your grandparents, and your mothers and your

1 fathers.

2 I'm speaking for you because, see, I  
3 already lost my cause in this fight. So now I'm  
4 speaking for you to make sure this is taken care  
5 of by the time that we got you.

6 Praise God you never do, but you find  
7 yourself in one.

8 Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

10 Lilly Anderson, followed by Sharron Hobbs  
11 and Caitlin Shackelford.

12 MS. ANDERSON: Good afternoon. My name is  
13 Lilly Anderson.

14 I'm a junior at Chuly High School,  
15 Washington County. I am also a member of  
16 Students Working Against Tobacco or SWAT.

17 Today I'm going to speak to you about an  
18 issue that is super close to my heart.

19 You know, first I want to tell you a  
20 little bit about SWAT. SWAT is a network of  
21 youth across the State of Florida working to  
22 create a diverse tobacco-free generation.

23 As a member, I've been able to help  
24 improve our community for not just me but for my  
25 peers and for future generations.

1           In Washington County, we have worked with  
2           our local school systems to enhance our  
3           tobacco-free policies, issuance of cessation of  
4           services, which are those not just the adults  
5           but the youth as well.

6           Recently we will -- Recently we have  
7           worked with the City of Chipley to create  
8           ordinances to prohibit free sampling and  
9           distribution of smokeless tobacco at community  
10          events.

11          While working here locally, we have also  
12          worked hard partnering with the Truth Initiative  
13          to create clean-air zones in front of  
14          businesses.

15          As we've worked hard, our expenses in  
16          Washington County are not unsolicited. Across  
17          Florida, over 7,000 of my peers share my passion  
18          to transform communities.

19          Youth work alongside adult partners from  
20          their schools, law enforcement -- excuse me --  
21          businesses and faith-based groups to make  
22          tobacco -- tobacco less acceptable and less  
23          accessible.

24          With that being said, I urge you to oppose  
25          Proposal 94.

1 I'd also like to voice my opinion that I  
2 am in favor of Proposal 65.

3 Thank you so much.

4 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much  
5 for your testimony.

6 Sharron Hobbs.

7 And following Ms. Hobbs, Caitlin  
8 Shackelford and then Zac Johnson.

9 MS. HOBBS: Hi. I'm Sharron Hobbs. I'm  
10 from Washington County, Florida.

11 I'm here to voice opposition -- opposition  
12 to Proposal 94.

13 As a career veteran in public health, I'm  
14 here on my own time today. I'll be retiring  
15 after a long, long tenure with Department of  
16 Health December 31st of this year.

17 I've seen a lot of programs come and go in  
18 my time, some good, some bad, some it didn't  
19 really matter. It didn't make much of a  
20 difference.

21 I was -- worked in disease. I worked in  
22 the field. I was in and out of crack houses and  
23 all kinds of places. And I remember from the  
24 field hearing about these kids, these SWAT kids.

25 I thought, "How cool is that?" And I

1 watched them from the sidelines.

2 I was a street person. I did disease  
3 intervention. I worried about people with HIV  
4 and syphilis, not kids whether they smoked or  
5 not.

6 Then I watched them, and I watched the  
7 change they made. I watched their decreasing  
8 smoking rates, and adults and youths.

9 And then I watched the money go away. And  
10 then I decided, when it came back, I'm going to  
11 get on that line. I'm going to support them.  
12 That's how I'm going to end my career is, I'm  
13 going to be out there with them.

14 Now, I've watched since we have rekindled.  
15 I've watched -- They have reenergized my public  
16 health career. They've made me stick it out  
17 when I got frustrated and realized, this is a  
18 good thing. This is a good thing that they're  
19 doing.

20 I want you to realize that, you know, with  
21 time, they have -- Well, with the smoking rates,  
22 again, they went up when the money went away.  
23 Now they're going back down. They're making a  
24 difference.

25 They're working with local businesses.

1 It's not just about kids having fun. They're  
2 making change in our community. They're  
3 creating policies.

4 They're working on workplace wellness.  
5 They're working with employers. They're worried  
6 about those people having strokes. They're  
7 getting them health information.

8 They're doing things that make a  
9 difference. They're becoming strong,  
10 responsible leaders. Taking this funding and  
11 diverting it could create big problems.

12 I also want to voice my support for  
13 including baking and Proposition 65 as well.

14 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
15 ma'am.

16 Caitlin Shackelford. And following Ms.  
17 Shackelford, Zac Johnson.

18 MS. SHACKELFORD: Hello. My name is  
19 Caitlin Shackelford, and I am a junior at  
20 Chipley High School. I'm here today in  
21 opposition of Proposal 94.

22 I'm involved in meaningful clubs that are  
23 working against tobacco, and I am also the  
24 founder of a faith-based club called T7.

25 As a member of the statewide movement, our

1 efforts are most effective in a sustainable  
2 campaign against big tobacco.

3 In 1994, one tobacco executive stated,  
4 "Young adult smokers are the only replacement of  
5 smokers who pass on."

6 I'm here to tell you that I am not a  
7 replacement. I am an activist, but I haven't  
8 always had the skills and confidence to be the  
9 change maker that I am today.

10 There are many reasons to choose to be  
11 involved in this movement. Some see this as a  
12 ministry. Others want the benefit of skills  
13 learned from staff and adult mentors. For me,  
14 it was very personal.

15 When I think back, the first thing that  
16 comes to mind is small towns. And Chipley is  
17 just that.

18 It has become so accepted in our society  
19 that we tend to sort of brush off the dangers of  
20 smoking.

21 My grandmother smoked from the time she  
22 was a preteen up until age 35, and it caught up  
23 to her. She is now a survivor of cancer due to  
24 smoking. However, all too often you don't get  
25 to hear such good news.

1           There are many people who have had many  
2           loved ones pass away due to tobacco-related  
3           illnesses, including Lloyd's grandmother who  
4           died at age 59 from lung cancer.

5           Our organization is on the front lines of  
6           change, but we recognize success will not occur  
7           without a comprehensive effort.

8           The achievements in Washington County and  
9           across the state are possible because we have  
10          adult staff and mentors to support our goals,  
11          communities to embrace tobacco-free policy and  
12          nationally recognized cessation services to help  
13          those who quit. Every component definitely  
14          matters.

15          Thank you.

16          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much.

17          Zac Johnson.

18          (No response.)

19          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Zac Johnson. Mr.  
20          Johnson.

21          (No response.)

22          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Crystal Spencer,  
23          followed by Michael Gerard, I believe. And then  
24          Matt Becker and Matthew Cunningham.

25          Crystal Spencer, you're recognized.



1 MS. SPENCER: Thank you.

2 Good afternoon, Commissioner -- or  
3 Chairman Gaetz and Commissioners. Thank you for  
4 allowing me the opportunity to speak.

5 I am an attorney and I am also a volunteer  
6 for the American Heart Association. And I've  
7 been a past volunteer for the American Cancer  
8 Society.

9 I stand here as someone having been  
10 impacted deeply by both heart disease and  
11 cancer. Both of these diseases, which are  
12 preventable -- they are preventable through  
13 funding programs, such as cessation of smoking.

14 It is very important and extremely basic.  
15 In order to diminish the suffering caused by  
16 these diseases, we must eliminate the disease.  
17 We eliminate the disease by preventing the  
18 disease.

19 Tobacco-free -- Tobacco-free Florida is a  
20 program that is designed to do just that,  
21 prevent the disease.

22 When you prevent the disease, you  
23 prevent -- prevent smoking, you prevent heart  
24 disease, you prevent cancer, you prevent many  
25 other type conditions that impact our society

1           due to smoking.

2           The tobacco industry continues to pour  
3           \$559 million into this state in advertising,  
4           targeting teens, targeting high-risk  
5           communities.

6           Why do they target a teen? Because if you  
7           catch them when they're young, you have a  
8           lifelong smoker or you're likely to have a  
9           lifelong smoker.

10          I had the privilege to be the American  
11          Heart Association representative on the Tobacco  
12          Education and Use Preventative Advisory Council,  
13          TEUPAC. That's a very long name. We did that  
14          for a reason. And It's amazing that the work  
15          that they're doing.

16          If this funding is diverted, if you remove  
17          that funding, then the -- and you remove the  
18          advertising, then the strides we have made are  
19          in jeopardy, our citizens are in jeopardy.

20          There are so many reasons to oppose  
21          Proposal 94, not the least of which is the  
22          financial impact on our state due to the  
23          increased personal health expenses and the  
24          extraordinary expense on Medicaid.

25          I urge you strongly, oppose 94.

1 Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

3 Michael -- Is it Gerard?

4 MR. GERARD: Yes, Michael Gerard.

5 How are you?

6 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Yes, sir. Good.

7 MR. GERARD: Good.

8 I'm here to oppose Proposal 67. I think  
9 we spoke -- I spoke with y'all last week in  
10 Jacksonville. I drove six hours over here to  
11 address you again.

12 There's a lot been spoken at these  
13 meetings about the greyhounds.

14 I'm very open. We're very open. There  
15 are a couple instances that was brought up  
16 today, Flicka for one. That proves drug-testing  
17 works. However, how the dog got that, that's  
18 beyond me. But it works. They're caught.

19 Before, the other dog that died, that's  
20 terrible that that happened, but it wasn't --  
21 Again, it could have been very easy -- She spoke  
22 of it happening in the morning, school. Could  
23 have easily been disposed of at the vet's  
24 office. It was registered, just like we're  
25 supposed to by regulations.

1           If we end greyhound racing, as far as  
2           parimutuel racing, there would still be  
3           greyhound racing. It would just be unregulated.  
4           We all spoke with this also last week.

5           Greyhounds need to be protected. They  
6           need to be supervised by state regulations,  
7           where there's no drugs, nothing's hidden,  
8           everything's out in the open.

9           I think it's unfair that I have to defend  
10          myself here against out-of-state hate groups who  
11          propose and -- and -- and spew a lot of lies.

12          And they have believers and followers.  
13          And I believe these people truly believe and  
14          love the greyhounds as I do, but for the wrong  
15          reasons. They think they're being abused. They  
16          are not.

17          My family's been doing this for over 100  
18          years. I've never -- Not one of them's been --  
19          been involved in any type of incident where  
20          there were animals abused. We love them. I  
21          love them.

22          I have them in my home. I have them in my  
23          work. I raise them on my farm. All of my -- I  
24          have 50 -- I have 50 racing. I have my  
25          granddaughter who works now. My father works.

1 My granddaughter works. My uncles have worked  
2 in this business.

3 This business still makes money. If it  
4 didn't, the tracks wouldn't be there.

5 I know there's stipulations. And that  
6 should be all taken care of in Tallahassee with  
7 the regulations, that there's -- I must say that  
8 that should be there. To industry that's been  
9 around for so long -- it's profitable -- should  
10 not be up to a committee or on some ballot. I  
11 think that's ridiculous.

12 Thank you. I hope y'all will be able to  
13 make the right choices.

14 Thank y'all for your time.

15 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you for your  
16 testimony.

17 Matt Becker. And following Mr. Becker,  
18 Matthew Cunningham, and then Catherine Durkin  
19 Robinson.

20 Mr. Becker.

21 MR. BECKER: Yes. Hi. I'm here from Gulf  
22 Breeze and just want to thank you,  
23 Commissioners, for the work you're doing and for  
24 the opportunity to speak here today.

25 I'd like to start by voicing support for

1 Proposal 11 that would open elections to all  
2 registered voters.

3 We currently have a system where -- where  
4 people are -- are gaming the system with  
5 write-in candidates. And this is a particular  
6 problem in this community -- county, and it has  
7 the effect of disenfranchising a lot of people.

8 And given that the right to vote is the  
9 better off of a functioning democracy, again,  
10 I'd like you to support Proposal 11.

11 I would also like to oppose Proposal 29.  
12 That would require the use of e-verify in hiring  
13 processes. E-verify is riddled with errors that  
14 would cause problems for a lot of people just  
15 trying to earn a decent living.

16 It's a government overreach, quite  
17 honestly, that would make it harder for small  
18 business owners to succeed and would do so at a  
19 cost to the taxpayer. And it would be, in all  
20 likelihood, another policy that would  
21 disproportionately and negatively affect people  
22 of color. So, again, I would ask you to please  
23 oppose Proposal 29.

24 And finally, I would also ask you to  
25 oppose Proposals 4 and 45 and any other proposal

1 that would use public school money to help fund  
2 private and religious education.

3 That's not the purpose. We should be  
4 supporting our public schools that are available  
5 to all.

6 So, again, I'd like to support Proposal 11  
7 and oppose Proposals 29, 4 and 45.

8 Thank you for your time.

9 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you for your  
10 testimony.

11 Matthew Cunningham.

12 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Yes. Hi. My name is  
13 Matthew Cunningham. Welcome to Florida.

14 Thank you for a chance to speak, too,  
15 about the quality of life.

16 I'd like to have you revisit  
17 Constitutional 700000. And we need to revisit.

18 In the spring of 2016, I asked my doctor  
19 about medical cannabis to help me sleep. His  
20 comments were, he would if he could but was  
21 afraid of the drug, which I thought was  
22 ludicrous, in my mind.

23 Where have they hidden all this carnage in  
24 the last 50 years that I've partaken?

25 So he prescribes me this sleeping pill

1           Ambien. June 9th I wake up in the ER, pretty  
2           much paralyzed from the neck down from a  
3           sleepwalking accident.

4                   I'm usually left-handed. Now I can barely  
5           use my right hand. You know, it -- I think if  
6           it wasn't for my 21 days of Medicare, I'd be  
7           dead.

8                   I developed a Stage IV bedsore, you know,  
9           in this local Crestview rehab place. And for  
10          the next seven months, I was on a wound bag, you  
11          know, and this thing was next to my bed  
12          sleeping. Very uncomfortable.

13                  You could smell the wound -- you know, the  
14          gangrene from the decayed flesh from the  
15          bedsore. You know, for months, every week I'd  
16          have to go and have it painfully scraped just  
17          to -- you know, to help the healing go on.

18                  Today, give me, you know -- Then they gave  
19          me all kinds of morphine, Oxycontin, everything  
20          else, you know, because they thought I was going  
21          to die, you know.

22                  But now, you know, it's gotten ridiculous.  
23          You know, it's like you got to really beg in  
24          order to get any medicine.

25                  You know, I need to be able to grow



1 cannabis myself. I need to be able to treat  
2 myself. You know, our whole legal system, you  
3 know, is based on our common law.

4 If you read the Magna Carta or our  
5 Constitution, it's all about freedoms and  
6 liberties.

7 You know, we have these rights. And these  
8 are common-law rights that we have. They're  
9 endowed by our Creator and our government, that  
10 we should be able to, you know, grow our own.

11 So I ask you, please, let us revisit 700.  
12 Put it on the ballot and let us vote on it.  
13 It's not right. It's been -- We have wronged  
14 too many people by bad laws.

15 And these are -- laws are ridiculous. You  
16 know, just think of it. And it's all about  
17 money.

18 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, sir.  
19 Thank you.

20 Next, Catherine Durkin Robinson. And  
21 following Ms. Robinson, Helaine Gottschalk, and  
22 then Lois -- I believe it's Silberstein --  
23 Silberstein.

24 Ms. Robinson.

25 MS. ROBINSON: Hi. My name is Catherine

1 Durkin Robinson. I am the Executive Director of  
2 the Florida Parent Network.

3 And I'm here representing over 107,000  
4 children who are on the waiting list for charter  
5 schools throughout the state.

6 Unfortunately, they have no options in  
7 their neighborhoods. They have no options in  
8 their area, and they are desperately in need for  
9 more.

10 To an independent authorizer, like the one  
11 in Proposal 71, would allow these children to  
12 have the kinds of options that they need now.  
13 They can't wait, so please keep this in mind  
14 when you consider Proposal 71.

15 Thank you so much.

16 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

17 Helaine -- Is it Gottschalk?

18 MS. GOTTSCHALK: Very good. Thank you  
19 very much.

20 I'm very much in support of Proposition --  
21 I shouldn't say "proposition," but Proposal 67.

22 As a Floridian, I am really embarrassed to  
23 be standing up here, the reason being 40  
24 states -- 40 states -- have banned greyhound  
25 racing. Five other states, even though it isn't

1 banned in those states, they aren't racing any  
2 greyhounds there.

3 Now, Florida can take great pride --  
4 kiddingly -- that we are one of the five states  
5 that still allows it.

6 Florida, Arkansas, Alabama, West Virginia  
7 and Texas. And that's why I'm standing up here  
8 embarrassed that I have to be a Floridian that  
9 has to have greyhound racing in my back yard.  
10 I'd like you to think about that.

11 If all of these states have banned racing,  
12 why hasn't Florida come up to the 21st Century  
13 in acknowledging that we don't need to do it  
14 here anymore?

15 Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

17 Lois Silberstein. Did I get your name  
18 right or wrong?

19 MS. SILBERSTEIN: (No response.)

20 Good afternoon. I'm here to support  
21 Proposal 67. And first of all, I want to thank  
22 the sponsor.

23 And I always pronounce your name wrong.  
24 It's Gaetz, Gaetz.

25 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: After all I've done

1 today, you can pronounce it any way you want and  
2 I'll be all right.

3 MS. SILBERSTEIN: We know who you are.

4 The sponsor and cosponsors of this  
5 proposal. I've spoken in front of commissions  
6 and panels before. And it's not pleasant. I  
7 took off from work to be here today because it's  
8 that important to me.

9 And I would venture to say the majority of  
10 people in the State of Florida that support the  
11 continued existence of greyhound racing are the  
12 ones that have a vested interest and make their  
13 living doing it.

14 I also believe that the majority of people  
15 in Florida, the voters, have not heard their  
16 voices heard in the past several years, year  
17 after year after year, when legislation has been  
18 introduced to ban greyhound racing.

19 And I believe that if they are given the  
20 opportunity to vote in November, they will  
21 support this. And if they don't, I will be very  
22 surprised, but I think the least that we can do  
23 is give the voters the opportunity to express,  
24 discuss and hope that greyhound racing will die,  
25 as it should have been years ago.

1           And for anyone, not just an animal lover  
2           or a dog lover or a greyhound -- a greyhound  
3           lover would say, "I think it's just a matter of  
4           common decency, and it's the moral thing to do,  
5           and it's the right thing to do," and just let  
6           the voters speak.

7           Thank you.

8           COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.  
9           Carol Cleaver, followed by Todd Rosenbaum,  
10          followed by John Miller.

11          Ms. Cleaver, you're recognized.

12          MS. CLEAVER: Thank you.

13          Thank you, Commissioners, for taking our  
14          input tonight.

15          As a public school teacher and a parent,  
16          I'm here to voice concern against Proposal 71.

17          This proposal allows other agencies, not  
18          just school boards, to authorize new charter  
19          schools.

20          This is an attack on local control and  
21          subverts the will of voters who choose their  
22          school board members with the idea in mind that  
23          those members will govern the schools in their  
24          communities.

25          Democratically elected school boards

1 should remain in control of the schools in the  
2 area where the voters are living.

3 Proposal 33 takes away the ability of a  
4 community to elect their school superintendent  
5 and declares that all superintendents shall be  
6 appointed. This is another way in which the new  
7 proposals seek to silence parents and voters. I  
8 am urging you to vote no on it.

9 Proposal 95 also offers another attack on  
10 local control. It overrides the way that local  
11 businesses conduct their own affairs.

12 The proposal threatens the progress made  
13 by cities that have written their own  
14 nondiscrimination ordinances.

15 Many cities in Florida are looking to the  
16 future and are seeking to protect their  
17 employees and citizens who identify as LGBTQ.

18 Taking away the rights to write their own  
19 ordinances for conducting business gives too  
20 much power to the state.

21 I would like to also speak against  
22 Proposals 4 and 45. They use tax dollars to  
23 support private schools. It is the business of  
24 this state to use public tax dollars to support  
25 all children with equal access to education.

1           Public schools should be supported and not  
2           have their funding undercut by using tax dollars  
3           to support private schools.

4           The restriction that is currently in the  
5           Florida Constitution that bars the funding of  
6           private and religious schools with public monies  
7           should remain as written.

8           I'm here to ask you to vote no on these  
9           proposals. Public tax dollars should be spent  
10          solely on public and equal education.

11          COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

12          Todd Rosenbaum, and then John Miller, and  
13          then -- and I think -- Is it Rio Vanderford?

14          Todd Rosenbaum.

15          MR. ROSENBAUM: Good afternoon or good  
16          evening, Commissioners. Chairman, thank you for  
17          your time.

18          My name is Todd Rosenbaum, with the  
19          American Heart Association. I'm here to speak  
20          in opposition to Proposal 94.

21          You've heard from a number of our  
22          advocates in blue shirts and very personal  
23          stories about why Tobacco-Free Florida matters  
24          and what these programs do for community members  
25          in Florida.

1 I want to leave you with two important  
2 facts. The first is that since the initial  
3 funding in 2006, youth smoking rates in Florida  
4 have dropped 71 percent.

5 The second is that even though it's  
6 underfunded, according to the CDCs guidelines,  
7 Tobacco-Free Florida has saved the state \$17.7  
8 billion dollars in smoking-related health care  
9 costs. And we haven't spent a single penny of  
10 taxpayer money to do that.

11 You know, they say that an ounce of  
12 prevention is worth a pound of cure. In this  
13 case, \$70 million a year worth of prevention  
14 yields \$3.2 billion worth of cure.

15 Thank you for your time and your  
16 consideration.

17 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
18 sir.

19 John Miller, followed by Rio Vanderford.

20 Mr. Miller, you're recognized.

21 MR. MILLER: Good -- good day,  
22 Commissioners.

23 I'm here to support legalization of  
24 cannabis. As a child, I was beat by my mother's  
25 boyfriend, which gave me PTSD and other mental



1 disorders, which cannabis helps when I smoke it.

2 I don't have panic attacks and I don't get  
3 angry at certain things. And when I was 18  
4 years old, I started having seizures. And I  
5 knocked out a front tooth. I've bitten through  
6 my lips and everything.

7 And cannabis keeps me from having seizures  
8 for a month at a time, just smoking one time  
9 with cannabis.

10 And also, I believe that it would help  
11 people cut down on tobacco -- tobacco use, and  
12 it would keep people being healthy because it  
13 heals all of these people with fibromyalgia and  
14 different diseases.

15 And it just keeps the world going round.  
16 God put it here for a purpose. And I'm -- I'm  
17 hoping that we can support God and His -- His --  
18 His earth. And that's what I have to say.

19 Y'all have a great evening.

20 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much,  
21 sir.

22 Is it Rio Vanderford? Is that correct,  
23 ma'am?

24 MS. VANDERFORD: Yes.

25 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: All right. You're

1 recognized.

2 MS. VANDERFORD: Hello. My name is Rio  
3 Vanderford, and I'm from Bank Middle School,  
4 Shalimar, Florida.

5 Today I'm speaking in opposition of  
6 Proposal 94. Currently, tobacco prevention --  
7 prevention funds Students Working Against  
8 Tobacco, otherwise known as SWAT.

9 SWAT is very important in many -- in our  
10 communities today. With middle schoolers and  
11 high schoolers today, tobacco is cool.

12 Through SWAT, we as students can make a  
13 change. Cancer research will show us what we  
14 all need to know. However, through SWAT we can  
15 make a real change. Help fight for what's  
16 right.

17 Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you very much  
19 for your testimony.

20 The Honorable Jeff Bergosh.

21 COMMISSIONER BERGOSH: Caught me offguard  
22 there, President Gaetz. Welcome. Welcome,  
23 Commissioners. Thank you so much for coming to  
24 Pensacola.

25 Couple of things I want to speak in

1 support of. I'm a tenured school board member,  
2 so I'm very passionate about education.

3 I'm currently a County Commissioner, so  
4 right off the bat 45, 71, 33, 43 I strongly  
5 support.

6 10, I support.

7 29 I support.

8 11, strongly oppose.

9 I want to focus on Proposal 33. 15,500  
10 school districts around the country, a little  
11 over 100 of them left with the arcane throwback  
12 model of an elected superintendent.

13 No disrespect, sir. I know that you're an  
14 elected superintendent, but I want to -- As a  
15 school board member and going forward in the  
16 State of Florida, I want us to enter the 21st  
17 Century to eliminate the politics from the  
18 position, put the power back in the school  
19 board, let them cast a wide net to find the most  
20 professionally qualified, high-energy,  
21 high-intensity, highly qualified superintendent  
22 of schools from a nationwide search.

23 In Escambia County, we have tremendous  
24 challenges. We have a lot of inner city social  
25 dysfunction, all kinds of generational poverty

1           like you can't believe.

2                   And I have nothing against our current  
3           elected superintendent. He's extremely popular.  
4           He's a very good politician.

5                   But I'm not convinced that we have the  
6           best that's out there. We probably need to pay  
7           more, but I really believe this is something  
8           that must change.

9                   There's only two states in the union that  
10          still practice this, this arcane throwback  
11          method of popularity contest to bring in your  
12          chief education officer through your county.

13                   It's akin to Tuscaloosa County and the  
14          University of Alabama saying, "We're going to  
15          get the best coach we can for our football team,  
16          but we can only choose from 270,000 residents in  
17          the county." They have to go nationwide because  
18          they want the best running the Crimson Tide.

19                   I want the best superintendent running  
20          Escambia County schools going forward, so please  
21          put 33 on the ballot. Please.

22                   Two-thirds of the state students were  
23          already educated in districts that have a  
24          professional, appointed superintendent. Let's  
25          make it statewide. Let's join the 21st Century.

1 Thank you very much.

2 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Thank you,  
3 Commissioner.

4 And this person should have been a  
5 physician, and maybe is a physician. Bad  
6 handwriting.

7 B-e-n-e, M-i-t-e-g. You gotta help me  
8 here. I know I'm real far off.

9 MR. MITCHELL: Good evening. I deserve  
10 that.

11 My name is Gene, G-e-n-e, Mitchell.

12 COMMISSIONER GAETZ: They could have held  
13 a gun on me and I wouldn't have been able to  
14 figure that out.

15 Welcome, and you're recognized.

16 MR. MITCHELL: I'll work on that. Thank  
17 you.

18 Hello. My name is Gene Mitchell. I live  
19 here in Pensacola, and I'm here to speak on  
20 behalf of Backward Turner. Backward Turner was  
21 born on September 1, 2010. He was one of nine  
22 puppies. He has two brothers and six sisters.

23 Can you folks see this?

24 Thank you.

25 When he was 16 months old, Backward Turner

1 was shipped to Derby Lane to begin racing. In  
2 total, he raced 106 times at four different  
3 Florida tracks.

4 Turner suffered a catastrophic spinal  
5 injury on November 20, 2014. In the third race  
6 at Sanford Oakland -- Orlando Kennel Club --  
7 pardon me -- according to a state investigative  
8 report, Backward Turner went down right out of  
9 the box.

10 The track veterinarian found that he  
11 suffered a spinal disk rupture, and two days  
12 later he was destroyed. Turner was four years  
13 old when he died.

14 The greyhound trainer in control of  
15 Backward Turner recently had his license revoked  
16 for an unrelated greyhound drug-positive test.  
17 On behalf of Backward Turner, please vote yes to  
18 the dogs on Proposal 67.

19 Additionally, I am a 25-year  
20 board-certified criminal trial defense attorney.

21 I understand that there's concern about  
22 victim rights in criminal cases. I urge the  
23 committee to consider the role of due process.

24 Our system is based on the idea that the  
25 worst thing that could happen would be for an

innocent person to be wrongfully convicted.

And I certainly appreciate your attention.  
Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER GAETZ: And we have heard  
from 146 individuals who have taken their time  
away from their jobs and their families and  
their pursuits to come and speak to our  
Commission today.

We're very grateful for all their  
information and for the information they  
provided in writing.

This was the last speaker who had signed  
up to speak. And unless there's someone else  
who has filled out a card to present to our  
staff, we thank Dr. Saunders and the University  
of West Florida for being gracious hosts to the  
Commission. We thank all of those who have been  
involved.

And unless any members of the Commission  
have any other business, Senator Carlton, please  
arise.

(Public hearing concluded at 5:49 p.m.)

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF FLORIDA )

)

COUNTY OF ESCAMBIA )

I, DAVID A. DEIK, CP, CPE, Professional Court Reporter, certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the foregoing public hearing proceedings; and that the transcript is a true record of the proceedings contained herein.

I further certify that I am not a relative, employee, attorney, or counsel to any of the parties, nor am I a relative or employee of any of the parties' attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I financially interested in the action.

---

DAVID A. DEIK, CP, CPE

Professional Court Reporter