

STATE OF FLORIDA
CONSTITUTION REVISION COMMISSION

MAY 17, 2017

5:00 - 9:49 p.m.

PLACE:

Hillsborough Community College
Dale Mabry Campus
DSTU Auditorium, Room 111
4001 West Tampa Bay Boulevard
Tampa, Florida

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COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

CHAIRMAN CARLOS BERUFF
 COMMISSIONER PAM BONDI
 COMMISSIONER LISA CARLTON
 COMMISSIONER TIMOTHY CERIO
 COMMISSIONER HANK COXE
 COMMISSIONER JOSE FELIX DIAZ
 COMMISSIONER ERIKA DONALDS
 COMMISSIONER DON GAETZ
 COMMISSIONER EMERY GAINEY
 COMMISSIONER ANNA MARIE HERNANDEZ GAMEZ
 COMMISSIONER BRECHT HEUCHAN
 COMMISSIONER MARVA JOHNSON
 COMMISSIONER DARLENE JORDAN
 COMMISSIONER ARTHENIA JOYNER
 COMMISSIONER FRED KARLINSKY
 COMMISSIONER BELINDA KEISER
 COMMISSIONER FRANK KRUPPENBACHER
 COMMISSIONER TOM LEE
 COMMISSIONER GARY LESTER
 COMMISSIONER PATRICIA LEVESQUE
 COMMISSIONER ROBERTO "BOBBY" MARTINEZ
 COMMISSIONER RICH NEWSOME
 COMMISSIONER JEANETTE NUNEZ
 COMMISSIONER SHERRY PLYMALE
 COMMISSIONER DARRYL ROUSON
 COMMISSIONER BOB SOLARI
 COMMISSIONER CHRIS SPROWLS
 COMMISSIONER JOHN STEMBERGER
 COMMISSIONER PAM STEWART
 COMMISSIONER JACQUI THURLOW-LIPPISCH
 COMMISSIONER CAROLYN TIMMANN
 COMMISSIONER T. NICOLE WASHINGTON

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1 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Good evening. I would like
2 to welcome everyone. We are the Constitution
3 Revision Commission, commonly called the CRC. Thank
4 you for hosting us here today.

5 My name is Carlos Beruff. I was appointed by
6 Governor Rick Scott as the chairman. There are 37
7 people on this committee, and we've been traveling
8 around Florida. This is our ninth stop. About
9 2,000 people have attended our meetings, about 700
10 people have spoken. And that's what we're really
11 here to do this evening, just to listen. So we
12 appreciate you taking time out of your life away
13 from your families to come here and speak to us.

14 I would like to start with the invocation,
15 which will be lead by Commissioner Gary Lester.
16 Please stand.

17 COMMISSIONER LESTER: Let us pray.

18 (Invocation given.)

19 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Commissioner Washington will
20 lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Thank you.

21 (Pledge of Allegiance.)

22 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Commissioner Joyner will be
23 chairing the first hour of the meeting, and she will
24 be calling you up in the the order in which you
25 arrived. So, depending on how long you've been

1 here, you'll be at the top of the list. Thank you
2 so much.

3 Commission Joyner, I turn it over to you.

4 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you, Commission
5 Chair Beruff.

6 Welcome to Hillsborough County in Tampa. I'm
7 so happy to see all of you here. As I call your
8 names, would you please line up in groups of five or
9 wherever -- the closest microphone. Please state
10 your name. And do realize that some of you write
11 like doctors and consequently I can't necessarily
12 decipher some of these names.

13 COMMISSIONER BONDI: We're working on it
14 together.

15 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: But we'll start out with
16 John Alvarez, Glen Gibleuina, Sarah Stroker,
17 Karen Roberts and Sandy Oestreich.

18 Please state your name.

19 MS. OESTREICH: Yeah.

20 MR. ALVEREZ: My name is John Alvarez. Good
21 afternoon. I'm 18 years old, by the way. I'm
22 graduating from high school this Friday, and I'm
23 going to be attending Florida State University later
24 this year.

25 (Audience applause.)

1 MR. ALVEREZ: The goal of the constitution of
2 any state, nation or government is to outline the
3 powers granted to that state and to outline the
4 protections granted to the populus from that state.
5 The ideal constitution is one that's universal,
6 binding, non-partisan and, most importantly, fair to
7 all people.

8 As it stands now 16 million Floridians, the
9 bottom 80 percent of our population, pays five times
10 more of their income in taxes than the top 1 percent
11 of our state. The reason for this is our state
12 collects all if its revenue -- well, most of its
13 revenue through sales tax through out the state. We
14 currently rank second out of the 50 states for
15 aggressiveness and abuse of the bottom income
16 earners.

17 As a state so already far in debt and with so
18 many citizens forcefully driven further into poverty
19 by the system, we cannot allow this to continue.
20 That is why my amendment proposes for the abolition
21 of sales tax and the reinforcement of existing
22 provisions to implement an income tax. This
23 amendment is not the end all be all for income
24 equality, but I do believe this is a grand step
25 forward. This amendment does not set a requirement

1 for what the rate must be for the income tax, only
2 that the state must levy one in order to appease the
3 people of the state of Florida.

4 And, again, I must emphasize, we rank second
5 worst in this situation, and we also rank third
6 worst in treatment of people that are below the
7 poverty line and third worst for people that are
8 homeless. Thank you, again.

9 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you.

10 MR. GIBLEUINA: Hello, my name -- are we on?
11 Hello, my name is Glen Gibiencina. I'm a --

12 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Can you repeat your
13 name?

14 MR. GIBLEUINA: Glen Gibleuina. I'm a
15 parental rights advocate and activist as well. I'm
16 reading the Florida Constitution Commission. The
17 back of it is done by the Florida Bar. I sent you
18 all an e-mail concerning the amendment I sent to you
19 regarding parental rights issues for the
20 constitution. And, the Florida Bar, they're part of
21 the problem, particularly the family provision. We
22 as parents have rights, constitutional rights, that
23 need to be protected. And that wrecking ball
24 continues to swing in our family courts, and it's
25 unacceptable.

1 I sent all of you an e-mail concerning these
2 amendments. And one of the things that this
3 commission should be -- it should stay engaged with
4 the people that contact you. So I sent everybody on
5 this list the amendment, my case number and also the
6 notes. Now, when I normally e-mail or write my
7 local representatives --

8 COMMISSIONER NEWSOME: Sir, could you step up
9 to the microphone. We can't hear you down here a
10 little bit.

11 MR. GIBLEUINA: All right. How's that?

12 COMMISSIONER NEWSOME: Thank you.

13 MR. GIBLEUINA: -- whether it's Jim Boyd or
14 Steube or Galvano, any of my local reps, I get a
15 return e-mail that says, you know, thank you for
16 your interest. I got none of that from you. So, if
17 you want to stay engaged, then write us back.
18 Again, 32 or 37 -- however many were on the
19 list -- I believe I'm warranted an acknowledgement
20 when I write you. I expect an answer, just not
21 here. We have a hero among you -- Erika Donalds.
22 She was the only one that wrote back to me?

23 Are you my hero? You should be a chair.

24 Thank you.

25 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Good afternoon. Go

1 ahead, ma'am.

2 MS. ROBERTS: My name is Karen Roberts, and I
3 am representing the Florida chapter of Moms Demand
4 Action for Gun Sense in America. We're a grassroots
5 organization consisting of committed Floridians, men
6 and women, moms and non-moms, who are absolutely
7 committed to ending gun violence in Florida. We
8 respect Constitutional rights, and we believe that
9 common sense gun laws go hand-and-hand with those
10 rights.

11 I'm here today to speak in opposition to any
12 change to the Florida Constitution that would weaken
13 our gun laws. We must not use this review process
14 to consider proposals that the legislature has
15 repeatedly rejected over the years. And the
16 proposal that we're most concerned about is the
17 public proposal that would amend the Florida
18 Constitution to allow people to openly carry loaded
19 handguns in public places.

20 In 2016 the Florida Legislature considered and
21 rejected House Bill 163 and Senate Bill 300, which
22 would allow people to do open carry. In 2017 the
23 legislature considered and rejected four different
24 bills that would have allowed open carry of loaded
25 handguns in public places. So the fact that this

1 has not gained any legislative support is because it
2 has a majority of Floridians that also oppose open
3 carry in our state.

4 Supporters often cite their justification for
5 open carry as the Second Amendment and the Florida's
6 constitutional right to bear arms, when, in fact,
7 just this March the Supreme Court in *Norman v. State*
8 upheld Florida's prohibition against open carry as
9 it does not violate the Second Amendment and it does
10 not violate the Florida Constitution.

11 So please we ask you to recognize the needs of
12 Floridians and please keep us safe. Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you, Ms. Roberts.

14 (Audience applause.)

15 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Sandy Oestreich.

16 MS. OESTREICH: Sandy Oestreich. And some of
17 you know me, and I see you as friends. Good
18 afternoon, Friends. I am Sandy Oestreich, professor
19 emerita, former elected official, nurse
20 practitioner. I'm unpaid advocate for new Florida
21 Constitutional mandate to hold public hearing on all
22 legislation that has been duly filed and cosponsored
23 every year for a consistent ten years or more in the
24 Florida Houses, but which have been consistently
25 denied for open hearings for facts or votes, up or

1 down.

2 Article 3, Section 7 ignores the process for
3 hearings. Annual decisions by Florida Senate and/or
4 Speakers of the House conserve to persistently deny
5 open discussion and votes in an ordinate misuse of
6 their influence based on what could be their
7 ordinate or partisan leanings. Prejudging bills
8 without real facts or hearings.

9 Example is the reignited proposed equal rights
10 amendment surging nationwide. You wouldn't tell it
11 by Florida. It acts only to make sex
12 discrimination, male and female, a violation of the
13 Constitution. That's all. It waits ratification
14 votes by only two or more states, Florida included,
15 which denies hearings, denies legislative progress
16 for 18 years -- 18 years against equal rights
17 amendment. That holds hostage to 36 states that
18 have already vetted and voted to ratify so it can
19 pass into the United States Constitution. Not dead.
20 Nevada ratified just two months ago. Last year
21 94 percent of the public studied strongly endorsed
22 it, female and male, both parties and so forth. No
23 hearings can be blocked consistently year after
24 year. Voters object. Constitutional lawyers raise
25 concerns that Florida's persistent denied hearings

1 may rise to the level of aggregate of the United
2 States Constitution First amendment right.

3 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you,
4 Ms. Oestreich.

5 MS. OESTREICH: Florida's hearing and vote
6 on --

7 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you. Sorry your
8 time is up.

9 MS. OESTREICH: -- Article 3, Section 7 must
10 be updated. Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you.

12 MS. SROKA: Good afternoon, Commissioners.

13 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Ms. Sandra Sroka.

14 MS. SROKA: I'm over here,
15 Commissioner Joyner.

16 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Okay. Hold up a moment.
17 Let me call the next five after you.
18 Diego Echeverri, Andrew Vila, Dr. Idelia Phillips,
19 Harry Boggs and Terry Kemple. Thank you.

20 MS. SROKA: Thank you. Good afternoon,
21 Commissioners. I'm Sandra Sroka, president of the
22 League of Women Voters of Hillsborough County.
23 Thank you for this opportunity to present our
24 interests and concerns to you, and I would like to
25 acknowledge the work and discussion and direction of

1 the Rules Committee this morning.

2 As many of you know, the League of Women
3 voters is always interested in good governments.
4 We, therefore, urge the Commission to incorporate
5 these important principles essential to establishing
6 public confidence.

7 One, a clear and meaningful process for public
8 engagement and public input throughout the entire
9 Commission process, including public hearings around
10 the state after proposals have been reported by
11 style and drafting and before the final vote is
12 taken. Consideration for written and in-person
13 comment and creating opportunities that would allow
14 citizens from all around the state to provide input
15 electronically to committees on issues important to
16 them.

17 This last point is particularly important. To
18 encourage and afford participation by those in both
19 rural and urban areas, those who may have
20 disabilities limiting their ability to attend or
21 travel to a public meeting and the younger
22 generation of electronic users.

23 Three, I support the efforts of the Rules
24 Committee earlier today is trying to create
25 additional transparency through the process and

1 respecting Florida's Sunshine Laws, including
2 provisions that provide a clear understanding that
3 records be open and accessible, providing public
4 notice of all meetings to discuss official business
5 to eliminate the appearance of taking business out
6 of the public eye and ensuring timely notification
7 for opportunities for input and submission of public
8 proposals.

9 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you.

10 MS. SROKA: Thank you.

11 MR. ECHEVERRI: Good afternoon, Commissioners.

12 My name is Diego Echeverri. I'm a U.S. Army
13 veteran, and I work for Concerned Veterans for
14 America. CVA is a veterans advocacy group that
15 advocates the freedoms our veterans and military
16 families fought for.

17 Florida is currently home to 1.6 million
18 veterans. In fact, it has the third largest
19 military population in the United States. Last week
20 Senator Marco Rubio introduced the VA Accountability
21 and Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017, and it was
22 cosponsored by Senator Bill Nelson.

23 Concerned Veterans for America proudly
24 supports this bill and stands with Senator Nelson
25 and Senator Marco Rubio. Veterans need healthcare

1 choice because the VA is failing us. We need reform
2 of the VA and choice for our healthcare. According
3 to the VA's Secretary of Health, five of Florida's
4 VA facilities have reported missing or stolen drugs.
5 The pills that have the most amount of tablets lost
6 include OxyCodone. Around \$14,000 worth of pills
7 have gone missing.

8 Last year VA staff here at the Bay Pines VA
9 facility left a veteran's body in the shower for
10 nine hours straight, and they tried to cover it up.
11 Also in 2015, the Tampa Bay Times reported that
12 buckets of rats and roaches were found above the
13 ceiling tiles of a dining facility here at a Tampa
14 facility. This is a shame. We need real healthcare
15 for veterans, real transparency and real
16 accountability at the VA.

17 I also would like to add that CVA would
18 appreciate -- and other activists around the country
19 would appreciate if you would refrain from
20 infringing on our freedom of speech. We also ask
21 that you please refrain from wasteful government
22 spending. Defense secretaries from both sides of
23 the aisle agree that the American's \$19 trillion,
24 and counting, debt is one of the greatest threats to
25 our national security because it weakens our

1 economy, and it hurts our military readiness. Thank
2 you very much.

3 (Audience applause.)

4 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you for your
5 service.

6 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Andrew Vila.

7 MR. VILA: Right here.

8 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Okay.

9 MR. VILA: Dear Mr. Chairman and members of
10 the --

11 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Would you repeat your
12 name for the record.

13 MR. VILA: Andrew Vila. I'm with Generation
14 Opportunity. I'm here to first ask that you simply
15 not do anything and hold all us, the citizens of
16 Florida, harmless. If this Commission does not see
17 the need for putting something forward, we hope that
18 it will be done in the most transparent way
19 possible. And thank you all for doing that.

20 We also ask that if you must fix anything,
21 please fix Article 9 of the State Constitution. We
22 believe school choice has been under attack in the
23 court system, and we hope that the CRC, if they do
24 anything, will make sure that they ratify school
25 choice in our state's constitution. Thank you.

1 (Audience applause.)

2 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Dr. Phillips.

3 DR. PHILLIPS: Good afternoon. My name is
4 Idelia Phillips, president-elect and membership
5 chair of the League Women Voters of Hillsborough
6 County.

7 (Audience applause.)

8 DR. PHILLIPS: I appreciate the opportunity to
9 iterate the League's concerns regarding the
10 restoration of voting rights for former felony
11 offenders. Florida is one of only three states that
12 strip all individuals with past felony convictions
13 of their civil rights, including their fundamental
14 right to vote, even after they've paid their debt to
15 society.

16 Floridians believe in second chances and so
17 should the CRC by supporting the modernization of
18 Florida's criminal justice rules to restore voting
19 rights for Floridians, excuse me, that have
20 fulfilled their obligations to society.

21 The lack of voting rights impact many areas of
22 life -- denial of various business and professional
23 licenses and permits, denial of financial assistance
24 for post-secondary education, difficulty finding
25 steady work, inability to hold office and other

1 disenfranchisements. Civic engagement and political
2 participation strengthen our communities and improve
3 our democracy. The right to vote directly links
4 individuals, not only to their local communities,
5 but also to state and national communities creating
6 a vested interest in the success of those
7 communities and guaranteeing them a voice in the
8 democratic process.

9 The League of Women Voters support the
10 automatic restoration of voting rights for former
11 felony offenders, including support for a
12 constitutional amendment to achieve the same. I
13 thank you.

14 (Audience applause.)

15 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Mr. Boggs.

16 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Excuse me. Excuse me. We
17 have a lot of people that we want to listen to
18 today. So if we would not -- use the cards. Do
19 like this with your hands. But we would appreciate
20 no other noise. Thank you so much.

21 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Mr. Boggs.

22 MR. BOGGS: Harry Boggs. Good day. If by
23 some chance the advocates -- my worthy opponents get
24 their amendment out of the gate amongst you 37
25 towards the fall 2018 ballot vote, you'll hear more

1 from opponents like me, and we'll be squawking in
2 detail about the dangers of doctor-assisted suicide.
3 From Nevada -- this week from Nevada to Maine, those
4 forces have been citing their poll numbers. Their
5 poll numbers are very interesting, and they change
6 with the more detail that you give the respondent.
7 The more choices you give the respondent, the lower
8 their poll numbers rate.

9 For instance, only 5 percent of Oregonians who
10 are enrolled in the Oregon euthanasia -- I call it
11 euthanasia program. Only 5 percent of them who
12 were, as I say, victimized of the Oregonian system
13 have even sought out any mental health counseling.

14 Amongst those on the West Coast from
15 Washington to California, only 7 percent of those
16 respondents who are enrolled in programs said that
17 they had absolutely uncontrollable physical pain.
18 The rest, by in large, said that they were lonely,
19 humiliated or depressed. One west coast journalist,
20 in fact -- a writer for In These Times Magazine said
21 that he, in fact, if he could go back in time, would
22 help his own father seek self-deliverance through
23 these state program, except then, with baited
24 breath, he said this might be a problem for larger
25 populations of people in California, in particular

1 neighborhoods or communities that know little about
2 the program. He actually cited fears for
3 populations within the bayous and within the African
4 American communities in Los Angeles.

5 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you.

6 MR. BOGGS: So, in your considerations, be
7 careful what you --

8 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: You can turn in your
9 information if don't get a chance to complete your
10 statement.

11 MR. BOGGS: More is forthcoming. Thank you
12 very much.

13 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: So just remember that
14 you only have two minutes.

15 Now, the next five after Mr. Kemple.
16 Mark Klutho, Pat Frank, Eric Jarman, Elise Myseld
17 and Christopher Hopkins.

18 Mr. Kemple.

19 MR. KEMPLE: Thank you. My name is
20 Terry Kemple. I lead the Community Issues Council,
21 which is a local Christian ministry. On behalf of
22 myself and the 3,200 people who are part of our
23 ministry, I want to thank you for your service. I
24 know this can't be an easy task, going around the
25 state and listening to us. But thank you for doing

1 it.

2 I just have one point. Based on the record of
3 the deliberations of the 1978 Constitution Revision
4 Commission, when they first discussed the privacy
5 clause that's currently a part of the Florida
6 Constitution, and the deliberations of the Florida
7 legislature when they put it on the ballot, the
8 intent was to protect citizens' personal information
9 in a world where technology was making it easier and
10 easier to find out about people.

11 The Center for Governmental Responsibility at
12 University of Florida's Holland Law Center said the
13 purpose of the amendment is to require the state to
14 justify the reasonableness of its intrusions upon
15 informational privacy. A report prepared by the
16 center said the impact of the privacy amendment
17 would be to constrain the collection of information
18 about individuals and not limit public access to
19 information properly collected.

20 Unfortunately, as has happened in a number of
21 jurisdictions around the country, an activist court
22 in Florida used the lack of specificity in the
23 actual language of the privacy clause to enable
24 themselves to impose their personal ideology on the
25 people of our state. In this case it was the denial

1 of parental rights in the decision of whether a
2 minor girl should have an abortion. Not only did
3 they create this so-called right out of thin air,
4 but, in so doing, they overturned legislation passed
5 by the people's duly elected representatives that
6 insured that right.

7 I'm not asking you to rewrite the
8 constitution. I'm simply asking you to define that
9 clause the way it was meant.

10 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Pat Frank.

11 MS. FRANK: I am Pat Frank. I --

12 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Sorry about that
13 Madam Clerk. I was -- I'm in error. It's
14 Mark Klutho. Mark.

15 MR. KLUTHO: Mark Klutho. Well, I just heard
16 reasonable, but the problem is three
17 amendments -- Amendment One, medical marijuana, and
18 the solar amendment. These all overwhelmingly voted
19 by the citizens. What happens with them? The
20 legislature, with the solar, they want to throw a
21 wrench into the application. Solar is something
22 desperately needed.

23 Now, with the medical marijuana, where is it?
24 I mean, we have guidelines with states throughout
25 the union, and we're not getting it. And

1 Amendment One --

2 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Stand closer to the
3 microphone, please. Can you get close to the
4 microphone so everybody can hear you? Because what
5 you're saying is important, but you're too far from
6 the microphone. If you could get closer, that would
7 be great.

8 MR. KLUTHO: 75 percent, Amendment One. And
9 there will be zero dollars going to that when it
10 should be 7 to \$900 million coming from the doc
11 stamps. Now, what do these amendments mean if the
12 legislature won't do a damn thing when the taxpayer
13 says this is what our vote is? Now, the way I see
14 it, this is just a big farce.

15 (Audience applause.)

16 MS. FRANK: I am Pat Frank. I appear today
17 representing my office as the Clerk of the Court and
18 Comptroller of Hillsborough County. I would like to
19 introduce the other clerks who are here today:
20 Ken Burke from Pinellas County, Paula O'Neil from
21 Pasco County and our own clerk, Carolyn Timmann,
22 your colleague on the Commission.

23 Good afternoon, members and guests. Thank you
24 for your dedication to the daunting job of framing
25 Florida for the next 20 years. We have a serious

1 problem. For this year, as well as the past nine
2 years, I and other clerks have faced cuts to our
3 budgets by the legislature. Article 5 of the
4 Florida Constitution was amended by the voters in
5 2004 to transfer the responsibility of funding clerk
6 offices from the counties to the state.

7 Section 14(B) of Article 5 specified that the
8 clerks, along with our judicial partners, would be
9 funded from the locally collected fines, fees and
10 costs which clerks collect. That is not being
11 followed. Last year we collected, statewide, nearly
12 \$777 million. \$409 million was kept by the clerks.
13 \$119 million went to the courts, state attorneys and
14 public defenders. And, listen carefully,
15 \$248 million of our local dollars went to other
16 purposes unrelated to courts.

17 The titles of clerk and comptroller do not
18 excite the public, but we are the watchdog for the
19 public. We are independently elected officials
20 responsible for maintaining all court documents and
21 preserving the county's funds. We must receive
22 funds to operate appropriately.

23 I ask you to amend Section 14(B) of Article 5
24 so that clerks and their judicial partners are
25 placed in a first priority -- first priority -- to

1 receive the local fines, fees and costs, which we
2 collect, based on our documented needs. Let us
3 spend our local dollars. Thank you.

4 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you, Madam Clerk.
5 (Audience applause.)

6 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Eric Jarman.

7 MR. JARMAN: Hi. Good evening, Commissioners.
8 Thank you for letting us comment. I'm here to make
9 a comment about amendments to the constitution that
10 would affect a person's ability -- the law-abiding
11 citizen's ability to carry a weapon. I don't
12 believe the constitution is the place to do that. I
13 don't think we need any new amendments to the
14 constitution, and I believe the ones that were in
15 there should be removed.

16 On the second count, I'm going to make a
17 comment. I just recently had a friend die in severe
18 pain from cancer, and he had to wait, oh, a good
19 four months to try to get medical marijuana. And
20 that whole thing doesn't work. He should been able
21 to get it within days from an M.D. Thank you very
22 much.

23 MS. MYSELS: Hi. I'm Elise Mysels. I'm a
24 Land O'Lakes resident, and a Florida resident for
25 47 years. I'm retired, and I'm a registered

1 Democratic voter. Thank you for holding this public
2 hearing. I stand before you today to expand on just
3 one of my proposals -- open primaries on the basis
4 of fair and just elections in our state.

5 To begin with, primary elections are publicly
6 funded with our tax dollars and are not private
7 elections. They are administered by government
8 employees in public holding places using public
9 owned voting machines. So I ask: Why are taxpaying
10 citizens being locked out of the primaries? Is this
11 fair?

12 According to the Florida Division of
13 Elections' website, over 3.1 million -- 3.1
14 million -- Florida voters are registered with no
15 party affiliation, and over half of our young voters
16 identify themselves as independents. So I ask: Why
17 is it a requirement to join a party in order to vote
18 in the primaries? Is this just?

19 Every taxpayer's dollar has the same value.
20 But that's not what this rule supports, and
21 political parties claim to be private associations.
22 Instead, our government has become about what's best
23 for the political parties, not the people. And
24 locking so many people out of a public election is
25 neither fair nor just.

1 I propose that we bring Florida into the
2 21st century. Only nine other states in the U.S.
3 have closed primaries like Florida. We need open
4 primaries so that our politicians have to answer to
5 all our voters. We need open primaries so that our
6 next generation of leaders begins participating in
7 our political process. We need open primaries
8 because the present constitutional language allowing
9 independents to vote in primaries is being
10 circumvented by inserting bogus write-in candidates.

11 I propose that this Commission put an open
12 primary on the ballot. And I will leave you with
13 just one final question. Is it fair and just to let
14 the politicians or political parties who are doing
15 the bidding decide if we want open primaries or the
16 taxpayer voters of Florida? Thank you.

17 (Audience applause.)

18 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Folks. Folks. Really we
19 want to listen to everyone and the interruptions
20 will cut this short. So please use the cards and
21 let people speak. Thank you very much.

22 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23 Ted Apelt, Gene LaCross, Nicholas Milone,
24 Kevin Youngberg and Carolyn Logan will follow
25 Mr. Hopkins.

1 MR. HOPKINS: Thank you. My name is
2 Christopher Hopkins. And earlier today I was here
3 at your meeting with the working committee, and you
4 couldn't even agree what you wanted to do in your
5 own committee. The CRC should be an assembly of the
6 people, not any appointed people like government
7 employees or no Bar attorneys, no county
8 commissioners or anything like that. This should be
9 we the people doing this. Only electors of the
10 people can amend the constitution. The constitution
11 cannot be revised. We have a constitution that is
12 by consent of the government. If we were teaching
13 in our schools the constitution, the lights would be
14 out in here tonight because we wouldn't need a
15 Constitutional Revision Commission, because we would
16 be doing it with we the people.

17 The CRC is clearly a political stand for
18 appointees from the ruling class, the elite
19 1 percent, the politicians for our money.
20 Respectfully submitted, Christopher Hopkins. Thank
21 you.

22 MR. APELT: Hi. My name is Ted Apelt. I'm
23 from Land O'Lakes, and, as many you might be aware,
24 the number of voters who identify as independent is
25 greater than those that identify as Republications

1 and those that identify as Democrats. Yet, we have
2 a voting system in which only, we're told, that
3 Republicans or Democrats can win. The other people,
4 "Oh, they can't win, don't vote for them." And this
5 is because we have what's polarity voting where you
6 win by getting more votes than anybody else, even if
7 you're getting less than half the vote. That's
8 right. People can win with less than 50 percent of
9 the vote.

10 So what do we do? Well, in November,
11 Maine -- the state of Maine -- passed an amendment,
12 which I would like us to do in 2018, that allows
13 what's called ranked choice voting. How does this
14 work? You rank your first choice, your second
15 choice and your third choice. If your first choice
16 is not a top two, your vote goes to your second
17 choice. If they're not in the top two, it goes to
18 your third choice and so on.

19 And not only would this bring more
20 independents in and allow people to vote for the
21 candidate they really want to vote for, it would
22 provide very useful information. The dream party
23 voters, who's their second choice? The libertarian
24 voters, who's their second choice?

25 Right now we only know this from exit polling.

1 If you don't do the exit polling, you won't know.
2 With this, you would. So it would give people -- it
3 would give third parties a voice, even if they don't
4 win, because the Republicans and Democrats will be
5 trying to get their votes instead of just
6 marginalizing them and pushing them off into
7 basically nonexistence. Thank you.

8 MR. YOUNGBERG: My name is Kevin Youngberg,
9 and I'm from Clearwater, Florida. I'm a
10 professional biologist, a retired Naval officer and
11 now a Ph.D. student at USF. I wanted to discuss
12 today Senate Bill 1304, which is the Black Bear
13 Habitat Restoration Act. It was not fully approved,
14 but some of the provisions of it were supported,
15 and, thankfully, the black bear hunt was postponed
16 until 2018.

17 But I just wanted to bring it your attention
18 that I think it's important that the provisions of
19 that act be included in the Florida Constitution so
20 that we can maybe have some permanent protections
21 for the Florida black bear. And that's it.

22 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you.

23 MS. LOGAN: Hello. My name is Carolyn Logan.
24 I'm a Florida native, and Tampa also. I'm
25 requesting constitutional laws to be introduced that

1 would protect our Florida black bear. We were not
2 able to protect the bears in our 2015 hunt that they
3 had, but we did stop it from being repeated in 2016,
4 '17 and '18.

5 Over six and a half million citizens from
6 across Florida were represented by resolutions
7 signed by the counties and cities statewide asking
8 the State not to allow bear hunting in their
9 vicinities. There's major opposition to the bear
10 killing by the majority senate bill -- by the
11 majority. The Senate Bill 1304 was introduced, the
12 Black Bear Restorations Act -- Habitat Restorations
13 Act. Excuse me. We need these provisions in place
14 permanently added to our constitution to protect our
15 bears with the following -- excuse me, I've never
16 spoken in front of anyone before -- 15-year ban on
17 bear hunts; no forest burning during denning months,
18 which burns to death the infant bears because their
19 too little to run away from the flames. Also, it
20 protects the bears' food supply.

21 But the bill set aside a constitutional
22 amendment to go even further and protect our bears
23 permanently, banning bear hunts forever. The bears
24 belong to the majority of the citizens under the
25 Public Trust Doctrine. Fact, nature has designed

1 bears to self-regulate their population. They will
2 not carry a pregnancy if food is scarce. No man is
3 needed to regulate this population of our bears.

4 No unprovoked bear attack has ever taken place
5 in Florida. Black bears are timid creatures and
6 will run if given an escape. We have enough
7 citizens in place that will further rally this bill,
8 and we get it passed. Please give our Florida bears
9 this chance. Help the citizens decide on the
10 constitutional amendment --

11 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Ms. Logan.

12 MS. LOGAN: -- banning bear hunting. Thank
13 you.

14 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Mr. LaCross. Are you
15 Mr. LaCross?

16 (Audience applause.)

17 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Please, folks.

18 MR. MILONE: Nicholas Milone.

19 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: No, it's Gene LaCross
20 that's next.

21 MR. LACROSS: Hi, Commissioners. Gene LaCross
22 of Ocala, Florida. When I saw you all talking back
23 and forth, it reminded me that the constitution is
24 not really complicated. All states are supposed to
25 mimic the federal Constitution. The people here

1 have the chance to do an assembly, vote for their
2 electors and also their ones in the committee, and
3 that's how it's done, by the people. And what's
4 going on here I think is unconstitutional, because
5 you're making things on your own and it's all being
6 filled by these different special interests. So
7 that's my take on what's going on. And I thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Mr. Malone. Before
9 you -- the next five: Jack Keates, Tyler DeMonde,
10 Paul Ford, Travis Smith and Sheilah Smith. Thank
11 you.

12 MR. MILONE: Hello. My name is
13 Nicholas Milone. I'm a local resident, and I'm an
14 ex-military vet. I'm here today to talk about the
15 state constitution and gun control. I do not
16 believe that any changes to the state constitution
17 should happen for gun control, the gun control
18 measures that are already in place should be removed
19 and that the choice for open carry to be considered.
20 I wanted to point out that by the Second Amendment
21 of the Constitution guarantees the personal freedoms
22 and rights, the fundamental right to bear arms.
23 Also, any changes are an infringement to liberties
24 of the citizens.

25 I wanted to also talk about some of the

1 pro-gun data statistics that are out there and
2 possibly that they are flawed. Also, gun control is
3 wrong. Even if the outcome is positive, the
4 individuals have a prima facia right to own a gun.
5 Also, for self defense and recreational purposes,
6 that right is infringed. I wanted to point out that
7 an armed population favors a decrease in crime.

8 (Audience response.)

9 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Please, let him speak.

10 MR. MILONE: Historically, the Supreme Court
11 in the District of Columbia vs. Heller, the Second
12 Amendment was upheld for the individual's right to
13 possess and carry firearms. I wanted to point out
14 that the Nazis used gun control methods in the
15 legislation in 1938.

16 Finally, I ask that this Commission consider
17 not making any changes to the state constitution
18 with gun control. Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Tyler DeMonde.

20 MR. DeMONDE: My name is Tyler DeMonde. I'm
21 here to talk about the Fair Districts Amendments.
22 From the very beginning legislatures have fought the
23 Fair Districts Amendments, and when 63 percent of
24 voters approved them in 2010, legislative leaders
25 developed a secret plan to draw unconstitutional

1 districts out of the public eye. The hard work of
2 the Fair Districts Coalition, in court, uncovered
3 this scheme that was designed to draw maps that
4 favored the Republican party.

5 Now there's an effort to clear the way for
6 more unconstitutional map drawing in 2022. This is
7 unacceptable. Whether the maps are drawn in favor
8 or Republicans or Democrats, it undermines our
9 democracy. My question for this Commission is:
10 Will you promise the citizens of Florida that you
11 will not weaken the fair districts amendments or aid
12 and abet the people that want to cheat Floridians by
13 secretly drawing districts for their own political
14 purposes? Thank you.

15 (Audience applause.)

16 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Paul Ford.

17 MR. FORD: My name is Paul Ford. Now is the
18 time to stand up for the people of Florida. For too
19 long the balance of power in Tallahassee has shifted
20 to large private interests that are acting solely on
21 their own behalf and contrary to the welfare of
22 Floridians. Utility companies are stifling the
23 expansion of solar power which could be so abundant
24 in Florida. This is the Sunshine State. We should
25 be expanding solar power, not limiting it.

1 Insurance companies have segregated Florida so
2 that we now pay the highest property insurance in
3 the country. This is pushing homeownership out of
4 reach for many middle-class Americans.

5 Private education companies are systematically
6 dismantling our public education system in favor of
7 for-profit institutions. Education is not for
8 profit. It's an investment in the future of our
9 state and its people.

10 The country's largest retailers and service
11 companies continue to prevent the adoption of a
12 livable wage that would raise people out of poverty.

13 This is but a few examples that occur on
14 almost a daily basis across our state. A democracy
15 is government by the people with one vote per
16 person. Government is here to serve the people, not
17 large corporate interest groups. Now is the time to
18 return power to the people. Thank you.

19 (Audience applause.)

20 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Travis Smith.

21 Can we ask you all --

22 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Folks, please. This is the
23 third time about the clapping. It has to stop or
24 this meeting will go on forever. And that's fine
25 with me, but I'm here to listen to everyone who has

1 signed up to speak. Thank you.

2 MR. SMITH: Hello. My name is Travis Smith.
3 I'm the Senior Pastor at Hillsdale Baptist Church up
4 in the Citrus Park area. I'm here to request of
5 this Florida Constitution Revision Commission a
6 right and obvious wrong to restore the original
7 intent of the citizens of Florida by amending
8 Article 1, Section 23 to apply strictly to the
9 rights of citizens to have their personal and
10 financial information protected from the intrusion
11 of government and businesses.

12 I've read the simple original intent of
13 Article 1, Section 23 and understand that Florida
14 voters and the legislature at that time were
15 addressing informational privacy concerns of
16 business and finance.

17 I'm at a loss to understand how liberal
18 activists, judges of the Supreme Court, in 1989 can
19 take the original intent of Article 1, Section 23
20 and by some convoluted, twisted exercise in mental
21 derangement, mandate the right of minor children,
22 many of whom are victims of rape and incense, to
23 seek an abortion without parental consent.

24 The current interpretation of Article 1,
25 Section 23 by the Supreme Court giving the minors

1 the right of abortion without parental consent not
2 only prays upon the most vulnerable but is also a
3 frontal attack on the family and parental rights to
4 nurture, guide and protect their children's
5 spiritual, mental and physical well-being.

6 Realizing the Florida Supreme Court has
7 demonstrated a pattern of legislating from the bench
8 and violating the fundamental principle that all
9 political power is inherent in the people, I'm
10 requesting that this Constitutional Revision
11 Commission state in exact terms that the intent of
12 Article 1, Section 23 is to protect informational
13 privacy of Florida citizens and does not confer a
14 right to abortion.

15 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Before Ms. Sheilah
16 Smith, we'll have Joe McDonnell, Nina Tatlock,
17 Joseph McDonnell, Rebecca Myers and Melissa Holmes.
18 Will you all please line up behind Ms. Smith. Thank
19 you.

20 MS. SMITH: Hi. My name is Sheilah Smith.
21 And I want to thank you for all being here taking
22 your time. I really do appreciate it. And it's a
23 privilege to stand here before you today and to know
24 that you can hear the hearts and minds of Florida
25 citizens. That's a great privilege that we have,

1 not only in Florida, but in these United States. So
2 thank you so much for taking your time.

3 I am his wife. So I want to ditto everything
4 that he just said. And I want to say that I'm a
5 mother -- a wife, obviously, a mother, a
6 grandmother. I think whenever we write provisions
7 for our constitution we ought to make sure that they
8 say exactly what they're intended to say, and that
9 they are not able to be taken and misconstrued or
10 twisted or turned, or however you want to term it,
11 to incorporate something that the author did not
12 intend for it to be.

13 And so, on the basis of just being a mom and a
14 grandma, I'm asking you to rewrite that Article 1,
15 Section 23 so that it will not allow abortion for
16 minors without parental consent. I'm not for
17 abortion anyway. I know that's going to get red
18 cards everywhere. Don't care. That's my view and
19 I'm here to say and I have the privilege of saying
20 it. So thank you for listening.

21 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Joe McDonnell.

22 MR. KEATES: My name is Jack Keates from
23 Tampa.

24 MR. McDONNELL: I'm Joe. Sorry.

25 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Joe is up right now.

1 Joseph. Are you Joseph?

2 MR. McDONNELL: Are you Joe too?

3 MR. KEATES: I'm 21.

4 MR. McDONNELL: He may have been skipped, I
5 think is what he's saying.

6 COMMISSIONER BONDI: We have Joe McDonnell.

7 MR. McDONNELL: I'm Joe McDonnell.

8 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Joe McDonnell first.

9 MR. KEATES: Do you want me to go or --

10 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: I think the younger Joe
11 is yielding to you, so go ahead.

12 MR. McDONNELL: Please, sir. Please.

13 MR. KEATES: Sorry. I'm here to talk about a
14 very, very popular subject here, and that's guns --
15 actually, gun rights, because our rights are all
16 very similar, especially when they start getting
17 restricted.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We can't hear you.

19 MR. KEATES: I need a taller microphone.

20 Our rights, when they are restricted, we start
21 noticing it. The State of Florida has been good to
22 people who happen to like, own and possess guns.
23 That's not a crime in this state yet. We want to
24 keep it that way. I should say I should. I'm not
25 representing anyone here by myself.

1 The people in the state of Florida have it
2 easy compared to other states. I don't want to see
3 what's going on in Illinois or New York to come
4 here. I want to read something. It may seem out of
5 color for just a moment. This is out of the Florida
6 Constitution, and it says, The Militia. The Militia
7 shall be composed of all able-bodied -- all
8 able-bodied -- inhabitants of the state who are or
9 who have declared your intention to become citizens
10 of the U.S.

11 That means, surprise, you're all members of
12 the militia, like it or not. You can hate guns, but
13 you're a member of the militia by law. It's in the
14 constitution. The reason why I bring this up is
15 because the fact of when you restrict gun rights,
16 you restrict the ability of us to do something which
17 we never think about, just like you never thought
18 about what I just read, and that is the right to
19 defend ourselves, defend our families, our homes and
20 our state. Thank you.

21 (Audience applause.)

22 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Okay. Nina Tatlock.
23 I'm going by my order. I have two Joes. But you're
24 the two, father and son here.

25 MR. McDONNELL: I'm 25. This lady over here

1 is No. 26. He's No. 27.

2 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: No. I'm going by
3 my -- the way that I call them.

4 MR. McDONNELL: Okay.

5 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: But it's okay. You're
6 25. Go ahead.

7 MR. McDONNELL: I'm fine. Go ahead, ma'am,
8 please.

9 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: He's 25, folks. Go
10 ahead.

11 MR. McDONNELL: I wish I was 25. My name is
12 Joe McDonnell. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for
13 allowing me to speak. Also, thank you for being
14 here. I'm here as a citizen, a father and a
15 veteran. I've watched as our inalienable rights to
16 arms and self defense as cited under Article 1,
17 Section 8 of the Florida Constitution have been
18 taken away bit by bit. I'm here to speak for myself
19 and those who could not make it to this event to say
20 we would like our rights back.

21 In regards to this, I ask the Commission to
22 reject any efforts to implement so-called universal
23 background checks. The freedom to own must
24 necessarily include the free right to purchase.
25 There is no fundamental right that any court would

1 be allowed to be impaired in this manner. Would we
2 allow the impairment of freedom of the press or
3 freedom of religion only after review?

4 I also ask for an amendment that ensures that
5 our judicial system will review all laws regarding
6 firearms under the standard of strict scrutiny.
7 This is the same standards review for other
8 fundamental rights. So I question why is this
9 particular right allowed to be ruled at a lesser
10 standard?

11 I ask this Commission to submit as an
12 amendment to remove the burden of waiting periods
13 for the purchase a firearm. This is unnecessary and
14 duplicative in light of the fact that the federal
15 government already imposes a background check before
16 being able to make a purchase.

17 In addition, I would request an amendment to
18 be included which requires the state to recognize
19 the right of citizens to open carry, as 45 other
20 states already do, 30 of which without any
21 permitting or licensing and with few, if any,
22 problems.

23 And, finally, I would like to remind this
24 Commission let us not forget the racist roots of gun
25 control efforts in this state when the very first

1 infringements were enacted as a reaction to the
2 successful efforts of armed African Americans in
3 Jacksonville who were able to prevent a lynching.
4 To this day these efforts that are eroding our
5 rights are not about safety but are designed towards
6 keeping people from protecting themselves and their
7 loved ones.

8 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Ms. Tatlock.

9 MS. TATLOCK: Hello. My name is Nina Tatlock,
10 and I'm here to advocate for democracy in the state
11 of Florida. I think our nation was founded on the
12 premise of being a Democratic Republic. We need
13 amendments that will open the vote to allow everyone
14 18 and up to participate. We need automatic
15 registration, open primaries, automatic restoration
16 of felon's voting rights after they have served out
17 their sentence and punishment. We need publicly
18 funded campaigns.

19 I also think ranked choice voting is a good
20 idea. We need to remove all barriers to the ballot
21 box. There are a lot of people who are not
22 corporations who are showing up here, and we need to
23 let them all participate in our elections.

24 Thank you for allowing me to speak.

25 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you.

1 Joseph McDonnell, II.

2 MR. McDONNELL, II: My name is Joseph
3 McDonnell. I'm a 17-year-old competitive olympic
4 bunker trap shooter, and currently a Life Scout with
5 the Boy Scouts of America. I'm here to speak
6 against the possibility of future actions to
7 implement universal background checks. I believe
8 any effort to impose these laws would impede on the
9 rights of Floridians.

10 I am a member of the Scholastic Clays Shooting
11 Program out of the Silver Dollar Club, and I have
12 competed in Junior Olympics last year and qualified
13 to go again this year. However, if universal
14 background checks were implemented, this would not
15 be possible. You see, when I first started out, my
16 parents were not able to afford a gun for me. If
17 universal background checks are implemented -- I
18 asked to borrow a gun from my club. With universal
19 background checks, this would be illegal. New
20 shooters, such as myself and many others, would be
21 barred from shooting simply because their parents
22 were not wealthy enough.

23 Not only that, people's family members and
24 close friends would be unable to borrow a gun from
25 the owner in order to try it out. Universal

1 background checks discourage newcomers from shooting
2 sports, and no one should be discouraged from
3 exercising a right.

4 I would also like to talk about campus carry.
5 Teachers and visitors should be allowed to carry,
6 especially in the modern world with the rise of
7 school-shooting occurrences. I don't want to
8 increase my chances of dying simply because someone
9 trusted a sign to keep out evildoers -- people with
10 evil intentions.

11 Thirdly, I would like to ask you to guarantee
12 the right of Floridians to open carry, just as 45
13 other states do. Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Rebecca Myers.

15 MS. MYERS: Hi. I'm Rebecca Myers. I'm part
16 of Indivisible Action Together Tampa Bay, 6,000
17 members strong. I'm also a Tampa native, a Navy
18 veteran and I'm an aerospace engineer. I would like
19 to implore the CRC to move our state toward an
20 affordable energy system that relies on clean-energy
21 sources like solar. We must avoid risky and
22 expensive investments in outdated fossil fuels.

23 A focus on clean renewable energy helps
24 consumers decrease our dependence on fossil fuels,
25 increases Florida's economy and creates new jobs and

1 decreases our impact on the environment and climate
2 change. Climate change is real. It is devastating,
3 and it will affect our entire state. Please include
4 proposals that promote a clean energy future for
5 Florida and help slow the crippling effects of
6 climate change.

7 I also have to add I'm a very -- I'm also very
8 much for universal background checks. I'm against
9 teachers carrying guns in school. My husband is a
10 teacher. I used to be a high school teacher. And I
11 am part of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense. Thank
12 you.

13 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Before Ms. Holmes, we'll
14 have David Chestnut to follow her, Mickey Castor,
15 Meghan Pietrowski, Salome Grasland and Sabrina
16 Schultz.

17 Ms. Holmes.

18 MS. HOLMES: Thank you. I just want to say
19 God bless you. My head is already about to explode.
20 I'm just a mom who works and lives in this state. I
21 would like to point out that part of the reason we
22 need open carry is that if I'm out with kids and I
23 happen to have my concealed weapon with me, if I
24 move the wrong way and someone sees it, I could be
25 in violation of the law.

1 Also, I would like to say open primaries, no.
2 My family, we have one registered as Democrat and
3 one registered as Republican so we have a voice in
4 both parties. It doesn't mean we vote that way all
5 the time. It's pretty easy to figure out. Thank
6 you for you time and God bless you.

7 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Mr. Chestnut.

8 MR. CHESTNUT: Ladies and gentlemen and
9 esteemed members of the CRC, it is an honor --

10 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Would you put your name
11 in the record, please.

12 MR. CHESTNUT: Pardon?

13 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Your name, please.

14 MR. CHESTNUT: Oh, David Chestnut. It is an
15 honor and a privilege to speak to you today and a
16 great concern of mine and many of my friends. I'm a
17 member -- I'm a veteran and a member of multiple
18 veteran Ameritage organizations. I come from one of
19 the founding families of this country. All around
20 our state and around this nation, veteran memorials
21 have been under attack and are being used by vandals
22 as billboards for social protest.

23 On April 11th, 2016, Veterans killed since 911
24 were dishonored as the statue of Operation Enduring
25 Freedom at the Veterans' Memorial Park in

1 Gainesville was desecrated and destroyed. On
2 July 4th, the statue of the namesake of
3 Jacksonville, Andrew Jackson, was the target of
4 vandalism. On July 4th, large orange letters were
5 painted on the base of the statue. On October 15th,
6 2015, two times in one week, the Ocala Marion County
7 Veterans' Memorial Park was vandalized. Flagpoles
8 were bent to the ground and two eagle statues at the
9 entrance to the park were destroyed. These are
10 crimes against the memory and respect of our
11 veterans and all of Florida citizens. These parks
12 and monuments are sacred places of honor.

13 My question to you is what are you doing to
14 preserve the honor and dignity of all veterans of
15 the past, present and future. It is time to be
16 serious about making Florida a pro-veteran state.
17 Adopt the Soldiers and --

18 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you.

19 MR. CHESTNUT: -- Heros Protection Act.

20 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you.

21 Mickey Castor.

22 MS. CASTOR: My name is Mickey Castor, and I
23 am a past president of the Hillsborough County
24 League of Women Voters. As many of you know, the
25 league is always concerned about issues of good

1 government. We urge you to incorporate these basic
2 principles into your deliberations.

3 One, transparency, meaning open meetings, like
4 this one, and records as our Sunshine Laws require.
5 Two, meaningful public input with terms of
6 engagement disclosed in a timely fashion so public
7 comment is feasible when you get to the point of
8 actual proposals, and a clear open recorded process
9 for approval of proposals with in-person
10 participation by the full Commission.

11 The League is also interested in the specific
12 issues you will address. I am personally concerned
13 about any possibility of undermining the fair
14 districts amendment. Some of you I saw on the panel
15 in 2010. I worked very hard to educate voters
16 throughout Hillsborough County on the then abuses of
17 politicians who entered into secret backroom deals
18 to rig political districts and elections in order to
19 hold onto political power. I found voters eager to
20 support greater fairness and to encourage more
21 competitive races when they would have real choices.

22 In fact, as you've already heard, 63 percent
23 of voters, statewide, supported fair districts.
24 However, the League fears that there may be efforts
25 to pressure the CRC to propose constitutional

1 amendments that would severely undermine the fair
2 districts amendments. We urge the CRC to reject any
3 attempt to change the way the fair districts rules
4 work. Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Salome Grasland.

6 MS. GRASLAND: Hello. Thank you for hearing
7 me today. I'm asking you to defend Florida's
8 privacy amendment. This amendment was added to the
9 constitution by Florida citizens in the 1980s to
10 keep the government from unrightful intruding on our
11 personal lives.

12 This amendment is especially critical in
13 protecting a woman's right to medical privacy with
14 special regards to abortion access. Every natural
15 person has the right to be let alone and free from
16 governmental intrusion into the person's private
17 life, and this includes women.

18 When I step into Planned Parenthood, I should
19 not fear that my personal documents and intimate
20 procedures become scrutiny of the government. I
21 should not have to fear that my standard of medical
22 care for my sisters, my mother and my friends
23 received being impaired in any way by irrelevant,
24 ideological arguments.

25 I urge you to preserve the Florida

1 Constitution's strong protection against political
2 interference with a woman's right to control her own
3 body. I urge you to ensure that protection
4 guaranteed under Florida's privacy clause of the
5 constitution continues to protect a woman's most
6 personal and private decisions regarding her own
7 body. I urge you that this body not make any
8 attempt to circumvent Florida Supreme Court decision
9 in order to pander to interests of a few vocal
10 individuals that are trying to further their
11 ideological agenda at the expense of a woman's
12 ability to make these most personal and difficult
13 decisions for herself.

14 Please preserve it, as is the privacy clause
15 in our constitution. Because of Florida's
16 constitution explicit right of privacy, the right of
17 privacy is a fundamental right within Florida,
18 including the fundamental right to an abortion. We
19 urge to preserve these fundamental rights of privacy
20 for women in Florida. Do not tamper with or
21 eliminate the Florida Constitution's explicit right
22 to privacy, which protects a woman's personal and
23 private decision making regarding her pregnancy. Do
24 not reinterpret the right of privacy to exclude a
25 woman's decision making regarding her body. Thank

1 you.

2 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: After Ms. Sabrina
3 Schultz we'll have Sara Johnson, Karen Mullins,
4 Dr. Rick Garrity, Diane Lestdriff -- and you can
5 correct me when you come up -- and
6 Francisco Pierre-Louis.

7 MS. SCHULTZ: Thank you, Commission Members.
8 My name is Sabrina Burton Schultz. I represent the
9 Diocese of St. Petersburg on a wide range of life,
10 peace and justice issues. I'm also speaking to the
11 privacy clause today, and I'll be submitting to you
12 written testimony from Catherine Ingham. She's one
13 of my youngest and strongest volunteers for a
14 program we call 40 Days for Life. This is a prayer
15 campaign but also a campaign where we reach out to
16 women and men going into abortion centers to offer
17 them real support and referrals to crisis pregnancy
18 centers.

19 Catherine was 16 years old when she discovered
20 that she was pregnant. The afternoon that she
21 discovered she was pregnant, she called an abortion
22 center, and she was booked for a procedure the next
23 morning. There was no counseling at abortion
24 clinic, and, in fact, she was scolded by the nurse
25 and the abortionist to stop crying while she was on

1 the table. Had she had a 24-hour reflection period,
2 Catherine believes that her decision may have been
3 very different. Furthermore, Catherine was not
4 required to provide an ID at the clinic, and she was
5 able to fill out the consent forms, in fear, with
6 false information.

7 Catherine suffered in silence for years
8 following her abortion, as do many of our clients
9 through Project Rachael Post-Abortion Healing
10 Program. And when she finally told her parents what
11 had happened, they acknowledged that they would have
12 supported her throughout her pregnancy. But, in her
13 fear as a young teen, she could not see that.

14 Had parental consent been in effect, Catherine
15 could have been spared her years of guilt and shame
16 and her child would be alive with us today.

17 Parental consent prior to abortion is a good law.
18 It has been struck down by our state courts but
19 upheld at a federal level. I ask you to consider to
20 amend the Florida Constitution to clarify that our
21 state's privacy clause is not intended to grant
22 greater rights to abortion than the
23 U.S. Constitution. Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Sara Johnson.

25 MS. JOHNSON: Hello. I'm Sara Johnson the

1 Central Florida Field Director for No Casinos. Our
2 organization was founded back in 1978 by then
3 Governor, Reubin Askew, at a time when casinos were
4 limited to Las Vegas. The influential casino
5 industry was attempting to expand to other regions
6 of the United States and had their eyes set on
7 Florida. But it was well understood that Florida's
8 1968 constitution prohibited in the expansion of
9 gambling. That didn't receive voters' approval, as
10 evidenced by casino's persistent attempts in 1978,
11 1986 and 1994 to pass constitutional amendments,
12 which Florida voters overwhelmingly rejected each
13 time.

14 Only recently has case law obstinated where
15 the power expand gambling. Now, when casinos want
16 to come to Florida, instead of asking Florida's
17 voters for approval, they go straight to Tallahassee
18 to lobby legislators.

19 We believe this shift violated Article 10,
20 Section 7 of Florida's current constitution, which
21 treats lotteries, other than the types of parimutuel
22 pools authorized by law, as the effective date of
23 this constitution, are hereby prohibited in this
24 state. Of course the term lotteries in this section
25 means casino-style games, not the Florida Lottery,

1 which was approved -- which is a form of gambling
2 added to the constitution after approval from the
3 Florida voters in 1986.

4 Not only is it important to clarify and
5 reaffirm Florida's Constitution regarding who has
6 the right to expand gambling in Florida, we also
7 believe it's important to restore citizens their
8 right to decide whether casinos should move into the
9 community next to their families and places of
10 business. It's for these reasons that we support
11 the Florida Voter Control of Gambling Amendment.
12 Deciding whether Florida becomes the Las Vegas or
13 Atlantic City shouldn't be up to the legislators.
14 It should be up to the voters of Florida.

15 And it's the position of No Casinos that this
16 right already exists in Florida's constitution but
17 requires clarification. We hope that you will
18 consider this in your proposals. Thank you so much
19 for your time and your work on behalf of our great
20 state.

21 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Karen Mullins.

22 MS. MULLINS: Good afternoon. Thank you for
23 taking the time to listen to us this afternoon. My
24 name is Karen Mullins. I'm the current president of
25 North Pinellas County Democratic Club. I'm not here

1 representing the club, but I do have a few issues.
2 Hello, Chris.

3 First of all, we are the Sunshine State, and
4 we're not utilizing solar. There are provisions
5 within our constitution. We have -- Pinellas
6 County's visitor bureau uses the song "Solar Power
7 Every Hour," and we're not utilizing it.

8 The next is medical marijuana. This
9 legislation this term did not allocate funds, did
10 not walk the walk. This passed by super majority,
11 and I'm wondering why this government is not
12 listening to the people.

13 The next issue is women's rights. Women's
14 bodies. They're not only -- women's health affects
15 everything we do. We are undoubtedly the support of
16 each and every community, and you take away our
17 rights piece-by-piece by putting together
18 legislation that mandates a death certificate for a
19 fetus. I'm not understanding this, and I'm not
20 liking it. We need the support of the state -- the
21 support of the government to help women, to help
22 people all over this state to utilize and get
23 healthcare, not take it away.

24 One more -- I lost it completely -- one more
25 thing --

1 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you. Your time is
2 up. Thank you so much.

3 Dr. Rick Garrity.

4 DR. GARRITY: Rick Garrity. Thank you members
5 of the CRC for the opportunity to present concerns
6 and suggestions to enhance Florida's future. My
7 name is Dr. Rick Garrity, and I'm speaking from a
8 background of over 40 years of working to protect
9 Florida's natural resources.

10 First let me address land preservation and
11 water protection. Preserving ecologically sensitive
12 and valuable lands over the lands in Florida is
13 essential to conserving water, which is why I urge
14 the Commission to consider proposals that acquire
15 and restore lands necessary to protect drinking
16 water sources and to protect water qualities in our
17 rivers, lakes and streams.

18 The best way to look at the hydrologic cycle
19 and the flow of rainfall off the land and onto
20 rivers and estuaries is to think in terms of slower
21 is better. The more wetlands that you have to allow
22 floodwaters to flow through, the better and cleaner
23 the water will be that eventually reaches the
24 rivers, bays and streams. This also has a side
25 benefit of decreasing flooding because the flood

1 flows have already been captured by the wetland
2 systems.

3 Access to clean water sustains our growing
4 population of 20 million residents and our rivers,
5 streams and lakes and springs. It's the reason so
6 many people chose to live in Florida, this wonderful
7 state. And so I hope the Commission will bolster
8 protections for our rivers, lakes and streams and
9 recognize that all our livelihoods depend on access
10 to clean water.

11 I would like to discuss also a future
12 sustainable Florida. Florida has the potential to
13 be among the top solar producing states in the
14 country, but we currently generate only 1 percent of
15 our energy from solar power and trail behind even
16 states like New Jersey. Awareness and support of
17 forward-thinking solar policies in Florida is
18 growing, but we need to purposely move our state
19 towards an affordable, resilient energy system that
20 relies on clean energy sources like solar and avoid
21 risky and expensive investments in outdated fossil
22 fuel. Thank you very much.

23 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you.

24 Diane Lesedeff.

25 MS. LESEDEFF: Diane Lesedeff from Clearwater.

1 May it please the Commission. I rise to raise with
2 you several, several fundamental points, and I've
3 heard many citizens worry about what the Commission
4 is going to be doing. So I would like to just set
5 forward a couple of principles. First, I ask that
6 you reject, repeal or watering down voter-approved
7 constitutional amendments which have already passed.
8 There are people who worry that you're going to do
9 that with fair districts, with solar, with medical
10 marijuana and with other issues. You shouldn't be
11 doing that. It would be very poor public policy.
12 I ask also that you take no action to diminish
13 existing rights.

14 Now, I've heard some of the debates here in
15 the prestaton of the history about the women's
16 right to privacy and bodies and the constitution. I
17 have heard other recitations of that history in
18 100 percent diametrically opposed versions. Please
19 don't fall for a story that has no basis and fact.

20 Third, I would like to ask you to take action
21 to help achieve a fair and just society in Florida,
22 something that you all can do, and, by advancing
23 those causes, you'll add to the legitimacy of your
24 efforts. And, finally, I would like to ask you to
25 stay away from the various special-purpose tweaks

1 favoring special interests. Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Francisco Pierre-Louis.
3 The next five -- Darrel Salchert, will you come on
4 up, please? Followed by Dani Dahlberg, Pete Franco,
5 Stephanie Owens and Jamie Delgado.

6 You have it.

7 MR. PIERRE-LOUIS: Yes. So my name is
8 Francisco Pierre-Louis, and I'm a student here at
9 Hillsborough Community College. I didn't just come
10 here as a student, but I come here as a concerned
11 citizen considering the fact that we don't have, you
12 know, open primaries to open the -- you know,
13 basically to have everybody involved to make sure
14 that we have an actual democracy in the state.

15 Now, another thing is that there is a lot
16 corruption, and one of the things that I have here
17 is an anticorruption act. Basically what that
18 includes is not just open primaries but a ranked
19 choice voting so that people could rank in order
20 based on who they want to vote for and remove the
21 spoiler effect. And it really alleviates all the
22 tension that divides us, not as a state, but as a
23 nation.

24 And another thing is that we also -- this bill
25 also removes super PACS because it's -- you know,

1 one of the biggest issues that we have is that
2 people's voices aren't being represented. And, with
3 these PACS and these special interests and these
4 lobbyists, you know, people feel like you have to
5 scream to have their voices heard, and I don't think
6 that's fair. So, anyway, that's pretty much what I
7 have to say. Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you.
9 Darrel Salchert. Dani Dahlberg. Pete Franco.

10 MS. DAHLBERG: Hi. I'm Dani Dahlberg.

11 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Oh, okay.

12 MS. DAHLBERG: Thank you for your service.
13 I'm requesting three changes to increase citizen
14 representation. First, I ask that you close the
15 write-in loophole in elections. Candidates get
16 someone to run against them as a write-in,
17 effectively limiting those voters that can
18 participate in their party. By the time it gets to
19 a general election open to all registered voters,
20 there's really not any choice at all. If you won't
21 close the write-in loophole, open the primaries. At
22 the end of last year almost 27 percent of registered
23 voters in Florida were a third-party or independent.

24 Second, I ask for ethics reform. That
25 legislators be barred from working with or colluding

1 with, in any way, political action committees.
2 They're raising practically unlimited funds from
3 special interests and then doling out favors to each
4 other using this money. They are no longer
5 representing the voters. I'm tired of FPL,
6 Big Sugar and AT&T and others getting everything
7 they want while the legislature doesn't touch things
8 they were told to do by the voters, like
9 implementing rules for medical marijuana and funding
10 environmental programs as required in Amendment 1.

11 Third, local government home rule protection
12 in the constitution should be strengthened against
13 Tallahassee interference. Legislators put tax cuts
14 on the ballot and campaign on those cuts, but they
15 don't cut their revenue. They cut local governments
16 and expect local governments to figure out how to
17 deal with a budget shortfall. Tallahassee cries
18 foul when Washington D.C. mandates anything to them,
19 but they have no problems mandating on down the line
20 to local governments. They do not -- they're not
21 father knows best, and they have to stop having
22 unlimited authority.

23 (Audience applause.)

24 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Pete Franco.

25 MR. FRANCO: Thank you all for being here

1 today and doing this. My name is Pete Franco. I'm
2 from Pinellas County, retired Army officer.
3 Basically -- so I was going speak on just a few, and
4 I have one specific, and then I'll write in a few,
5 namely one. Just to rattle off a few, with respect
6 to the Second Amendment, absolutely if there's going
7 to be anything done or not done, do not infringe on
8 the Second Amendment. So whatever is going to
9 happen, don't infringe on it.

10 Term limits. I definitely support -- and I
11 think it's just come out recently Speaker Corcoran
12 has suggested term limits for the Supreme Court and
13 the state appellates. Absolutely support that.
14 They judiciary has gotten, in my opinion, at the
15 state level and at the federal level, out of
16 control, and it's time to reign that in. I would
17 like to see voter roll scrubs. I would like to see
18 voter ID. I mean voter ID for even food stamps.

19 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Please speak into the
20 microphone.

21 MR. FRANCO: Okay. And absolutely no to open
22 primaries. One specific for here with respect to a
23 statute, and they're with respect to electioneering
24 under elections, 106.011, 106 --

25 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: The microphone, please.

1 MR. FRANCO: -- 106.011, 106.03 and 106.113
2 with respect to what an elected official is allowed
3 to do or not do for, for instance with respect to
4 pushing a tax referendum. The distinctions between
5 information and lobbying and the distinctions
6 between what a government official can do, for
7 instance go around to a community mayor and kind of
8 push for it. And a lot of this has to do with one
9 of the bills that's in our community right now. The
10 barter regional tax bill that's going on. So thanks
11 for giving me a chance to speak and thanks for being
12 here today.

13 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Stephanie Owens.

14 MS. OWENS: Good evening, Commissioners. I'm
15 Stephanie Owens, second vice president of the League
16 of Women Voters in St. Petersburg. I am here
17 representing a collation of 16 statewide
18 organizations. And on behalf of all Floridians we
19 implore you to set a set of clear and transparent
20 guidelines and ground rules for your actions.

21 Earlier today you provided a list of 17
22 recommendations to your Rules Working Group, and we
23 would be happy to provide the rest of you with this
24 information as well. The proposed draft rules
25 deviate from the previous rules in four very

1 significant ways.

2 First, a lack of transparency and respect for
3 the Sunshine Rule. Second, a lack of articulated
4 provisions for meaningful public engagement. Third,
5 the potential for leverage and influence over
6 Commission members, and, fourth, an unclear track
7 record for approval of proposals.

8 Rule 2.61 -- 216 removes the requirement that
9 proposals reported from committees be placed on the
10 calendar for consideration by the full Commission.
11 This gives the Rules and Administration Committee
12 the power to eliminate proposals from consideration.
13 That change should be rejected.

14 As civically engaged Floridians, we deserve an
15 assurance that we will have a chance to comment on
16 any proposals before they are recommended or placed
17 onto the ballot. I spent the day with the Rules
18 Working Group. An amazing group. Worked very
19 diligently to have robust and great conversation,
20 but your Rule 9 says that their work is just a
21 recommendation to the Rules Committee and that the
22 Rules Committee could, in fact, reject those
23 recommendations.

24 So for all of you who are not on the Rules
25 Committee, you may want to be, or your voice won't

1 be heard either. Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Thank you.

3 Jamie Delgado.

4 MR. DELGADO: My name is Jamie Delgado. I
5 would like to touch on two topics, and first is
6 to --

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The microphone.

8 MR. DELGADO: Is that better?

9 My name is Jamie Delgado. I would like to
10 talk about two topics. The first is in favor of
11 fair districting. In America we believe the virtue
12 of competition. Competition drives us to perform
13 better and to innovate. We can only have
14 competition in our poll processes when our districts
15 are drawn to foster competition. I hope that the
16 CRC refrains from placing any initiatives on the
17 ballot that serve to undermine fair districting.

18 In the short term it may be attempting to hand
19 one's party a gerrymander advantage, but, in the
20 long term, allowing for partisan districting will
21 deteriorate the quality of officials that the public
22 sends into government.

23 The second issue I want to touch on is the
24 right to privacy. Our laws have not kept pace with
25 technological advancement. In the private sector,

1 corporations and Internet service providers can mine
2 and sell our personal data. While the government
3 sector, the public has to contend with mass
4 surveillance. Instead of placing an initiative on
5 the ballot to curtail privacy rights, I believe the
6 CRC would better serve the people of Florida by
7 providing its citizens with the opportunity to
8 expand our privacy rights. That's it. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Commissioner Joyner is going
10 to call two people that were called previously that
11 haven't come up, and then we're going to break for
12 five minutes so that our stenographer can take a
13 break with her hands, and we'll reconvene.

14 COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Darrel Salchert and
15 Meghan Pietrowski.

16 They are not responding. So we will now have
17 our break. Thank you.

18 (Whereupon a recess was taken.)

19 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Good evening, again. We are
20 going to reconvene the meeting. Commissioner Lee
21 will have the gavel, and he will be calling people
22 to speak in two-minute increments. Please remember
23 to be civil to each other. Thank you very much.

24 Commissioner Lee.

25 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Two

1 things. First of all, I apologize in advance. Some
2 of these names look pretty easy, but I'm going to
3 butcher some. I promise you it's not personal.
4 I'll do my best. Along with Commissioner Gaetz,
5 we'll try to get through this.

6 Second thing is you're getting close to two
7 minutes, and we've got to cut you off. We've
8 probably have gotten your concept, probably
9 understand what it is you're talking about. We're
10 making notes and summary. And so you can always
11 submit your information as a follow-up.

12 With that we're going to start with -- we're
13 going to have Matt Jordan, Kadi Eubanks and
14 Jill Casciello for our first three. We have 100
15 speakers left here so -- Mr. Jordan, you're
16 recognized, sir. Go ahead.

17 MR. JORDAN: Yes, sir. I'm Matt Jordan. I'm
18 here on behalf of the American Cancer Society Cancer
19 Action Network. I appreciate the opportunity to be
20 here today to speak in support of two tobacco
21 legislative control amendments that were added to
22 the state constitution through the citizens'
23 initiative process.

24 Article 10, Section 20 of the Florida
25 constitution was passed in 2002 by more than

1 70 percent of Florida voters. The amendment
2 prohibits smoking in most indoor workplaces,
3 including restaurants. We know that there is no
4 risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke and
5 breathing even small amounts can be dangerous.

6 Article 10, Section 27 was passed in 2006 by
7 more than 60 percent of Florida voters. The
8 amendment mandates that the state allocate a portion
9 of tobacco sale money for tobacco prevention. The
10 resulting program is administered by the Florida
11 Department of Health. You probably know it as
12 Tobacco Free Florida.

13 According to the Florida Department of Health,
14 the program has saved the state \$3.2 billion in
15 state healthcare costs. Annual smoking-related
16 healthcare costs in Florida has decreased 15 percent
17 from 2006 to 2015 as a result of fewer adults
18 smoking.

19 While the program has made remarkable
20 progress, smoking remains the leading cause of
21 preventable death and disease. 7,400 Floridans
22 continue to become smokers each year. There's still
23 work to be done. ACS stands ready to provide any
24 additional information this body may need in order
25 to protect those important public health provisions

1 of the Florida State Constitution. Again, thank you
2 for the opportunity to speak and for your service
3 for our great state.

4 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, sir.

5 Kadi Eubanks.

6 MS. EUBANKS: Hi. My name is Kadi Eubanks,
7 and I am here to speak on Article 1, Section 23. I
8 was going to reiterate what that article was, but I
9 think you're all very well aware of what that is by
10 now.

11 This section of the Florida Constitution has
12 been relatively unchallenged with the exception of
13 how it relates to women's private healthcare needs
14 and decisions. As soon as the vagina is mixed into
15 the equation, we have legislators scrambling to
16 limit the freedom of choice, regardless on how it
17 affects women and their families.

18 On January 21st, I marched with over 20,000
19 people in downtown St. Petersburg in support of
20 women's economic and reproductive rights. You say
21 you're here to listen to the voices of the people of
22 Florida. Well, we've spoken out.

23 Floridians overwhelmingly rejected an attempt
24 to limit the privacy clause in 2012 when they voted
25 down Amendment 6 on the ballot. Eighteen sister

1 marches were held in various counties in the state
2 of Florida on January 21st. There have been
3 protests and campaigns to voice concerns about the
4 horrendous legislation proposed in the 2017 Florida
5 legislative session. We're here. We're speaking.
6 And I implore you to listen. Do not threaten the
7 fundamental rights of privacy for women.

8 Additionally, I would like to support a public
9 proposal, 700.135, creating further protections of
10 basic rights, which amends Article 1, the
11 Declaration of Rights, Section 2, Basic Rights, by
12 adding sex, color, ethnicity, age, familiar status,
13 marital status, military status, sexual orientation,
14 genetic information, gender identity, employment
15 status and pregnancy as protected classes. As the
16 country expands its definition of diversification
17 and inclusion, it's our duty to do the same on a
18 constitutional level. Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you. Next, we'll
20 have Jill Casciello, and then we're going to have
21 Carl Waldron and I believe it's Penny, or Perry,
22 Hunter.

23 MS. CASCIELLO: Hi. Thank you, Commission
24 members. I'm Jill Casciello. I'm the Assistant
25 Executive Director at Guiding Star Tampa, a

1 comprehensive women's healthcare center, many of
2 whom are confronting unplanned pregnancies. When
3 our clients find out that they're pregnant, they
4 come to us scared and unsure of their options.
5 After a few days of counseling and consulting with
6 our staff, women tell us that they have had time to
7 process the life-changing nature of pregnancy,
8 allowing them to make a more measured decision.

9 A reflection period law would greatly benefit
10 the women of Florida. I submitted to you in writing
11 a testimony of one of our many clients who continues
12 to grieve her unborn child 19 years, one month and
13 two weeks later and who regrets not reflecting on
14 her pregnancy for a 24-hour period.

15 We also meet women who have take the first
16 dose of of a chemical abortion and then come to us
17 desperate to reverse their decision through the
18 abortion pill reversal protocol. We serve women who
19 regret their abortions, who experience post-abortion
20 trauma, and wish that could have had more time to
21 consider their tragic decision.

22 Although a good law to this effect was passed
23 in Florida, and this kind of law has been upheld by
24 the federal courts, the Florida courts recently
25 enjoined this requirement. So I ask you to please

1 consider an amendment to Florida's constitution
2 clarifying that our state's privacy clause does not
3 intend to grant any greater rights to abortion than
4 the United States Constitution. Thank you for your
5 time.

6 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you.

7 Mr. Waldron.

8 MR. WALDRON: Yes. I'm Carl Waldron, and I
9 have three items that I would like to speak to. One
10 is the term limits for appellate judges and supreme
11 court justices. I oppose the idea of placing term
12 limits on them. And, as a taxpayer, I oppose the
13 desire to expand school choice, either through
14 charter schools or tax-credit programs. And I also
15 would like to say that the constitution, as its
16 written now, with the clauses for privacy, those
17 need to stand. We don't need to be taking away our
18 privacy rights, which the courts have indicated
19 block restrictions on abortions. Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, sir. Next -- is
21 it Hurber or Hunter?

22 MS. HUNTER: Penny Hunter.

23 COMMISSIONER LEE: Okay. I knew it was Penny.

24 MS. HUNTER: Okay.

25 COMMISSIONER LEE: And after you we're going

1 to have Bill Person and Gerald Goen. Go ahead.

2 MS. HUNTER: My name is Penny Hunter, and I'm
3 talking today in support of adding open primary for
4 Florida. I've been a Republican for over 45 years,
5 and I can't imagine why we've closed our primaries
6 and not allow about half of our population to vote.
7 Not everybody is a Republican. My husband is
8 Democrat. I think he has a right to vote too. And
9 since many of our elections are decided in the
10 primary and we've had so many people that have
11 signed up to be a write-in candidate who never show
12 up in the district to even show their face, and the
13 only reason they've showed up at all was just to
14 close the primary so Democrats or independents
15 wouldn't have the opportunity to vote. And I think
16 that's wrong, and I think you should change it.

17 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you. Mr. Person.

18 MR. PERSON: Thank you, Senator.

19 My name is Bill Person. I'm from Hillsborough
20 County. I'm the candidate for Hillsborough County
21 Schools. I was last year, and I'm currently running
22 district-wide. I retired from the local school
23 district in 2011 as the General Director of
24 Administration for Hillsborough County Schools. I'm
25 the former chair of the Florida Department of

1 Education School Choice Parent Advising Committee
2 for the entire state of Florida. I authored the
3 school choice plan in Hillsborough County. I served
4 35 years. I've been retired six years. And 20
5 years seems to be the theme tonight. What happens
6 with our public schools over the next 20 years?

7 Traditional public schools are a great value
8 to our community and to our state. Charters,
9 vouchers and privatization is a symptom of failing
10 public schools, not a solution. A well-run,
11 fully-funded public school system has little to no
12 need for charters, vouchers and privatization.

13 I kind of like the constitution as it is. Why
14 don't we follow it for public education? Less
15 funding, less support from our leadership in
16 Tallahassee means a greater need for alteratives,
17 such as charters, vouchers and privatization.
18 Charter schools are the first step to full vouchers.

19 Full vouchers are the first step to full
20 privatization, and Tallahassee washes their hands of
21 public education.

22 Many of us in here were treated very well in
23 public education. And many of us are successful
24 because of a fully-funded public education. Let's
25 not return to a dual school system which required a

1 federal desegregation court order. Tallahassee's
2 efforts are going to return us to a dual school
3 system, which is inherently unfair, illegal and
4 unacceptable. Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, Mr. Person.
6 (Audience applause.)

7 COMMISSIONER LEE: Gerald Goen. And then
8 we're going to have Michelle Prieto, Wayne Johnson
9 and Patricia Hall.

10 Yes, sir, you're recognized.

11 MR. GOEN: Good evening. My name is
12 Gerald Goen. For 23 years my wife and I have lived
13 at 1104 Clippers Way in Tarpon Springs. I'm active
14 in community government with the Budget Advisory
15 Committee. I'm president of my homeowner's
16 association. I'm on the statewide board of the
17 Unitaria Universalist Justice Florida. In all three
18 groups I'm an advocate for solar.

19 Three years ago in Tarpon Springs we invested
20 \$50,000 to build a pilot project on top of the
21 wastewater building. It was partly to silence me,
22 but you know the darn thing is producing positive
23 results. So much so that the 2017 budget has
24 \$150,000 for more solar at the new R/O plant. My
25 appeal to you is to structure the constitution, the

1 regulation of law, so that businesses, especially
2 homeowners, can have solar at the lowest possible
3 cost. I know the fossil fuel industry will work
4 against the idea but time is a wasting.

5 Last week I saw a documentary interview of a
6 congressman from South Florida describing the
7 effects of sea level rise, salt water intrusion into
8 drinking wells and threats to their power plant,
9 roads and airports. He says climate change is real,
10 and it's time to act. Some say past time.

11 It's not just South Florida. On bright sunny
12 days with no storm happening, we have experienced
13 similar flooding in Tarpon Springs. I implore you
14 to act and to act now to make solar a reality making
15 Florida the sunshine -- making Florida the shining
16 example should not be hard given all the sunshine
17 that we have. I thank for listening. I thank you
18 for your public service. I've submitted these
19 remarks at the table. Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, sir.
21 Ms. Prieto.

22 MS. PRIETO: Hey, my name is Michelle Prieto.
23 I am with the organization (inaudible). As an
24 advocate for immigrants and Latinos, I have two
25 requests. One, continue language access and

1 simultaneous interpretation in different languages,
2 as well as subtitles for all CRC meetings, media
3 advisories, written material and videos to give all
4 Floridans full accessibility and opportunity for
5 participation.

6 Two, regarding Article 5 of the Florida
7 Constitution, diversifying our courts as part of a
8 ballot measure. Florida used to be a model for the
9 nation how judges were selected, but not anymore.
10 The Governor has an outside influence on who
11 nominees for judges will be, and, therefore, the
12 Governor essentially has the heaviest hand in the
13 make up of judicial nominating commissions. This
14 politicizes what should be a non-partisan process
15 and destroys any chance at diversity of our courts.

16 You can change that. Allow the voters to
17 decide if they want to continue with the process
18 that does not allow for diverse judges to be
19 nominated to reflect the diversity of the state;
20 allow voters to decide if any current or future
21 governor can manipulate our judicial system so as to
22 be in control of a second branch of government;
23 allow voters to decide if they want judges to
24 determine their fate being heavily political due to
25 the process that put them there. You have that

1 responsibility. Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you. Mr. Johnson.

3 MR. JOHNSON: Good afternoon. I'm
4 Wayne Johnson from Hillsborough County. In 2015 the
5 FDLE reported over 93,000 violent crimes in Florida,
6 including over 1,000 murders and over 10,000 forced
7 sexual offenses. It's a dangerous world out there.
8 Never let anyone interfere with natural instinct for
9 self-preservation and rights of defense.

10 30, 40 or 50 years ago I was able to handle
11 myself in a physical conflict, and on many occasions
12 while in the Army in Korea, Africa and Southeast
13 Asia, I did defend myself and others. Now I'm
14 walking with a leg brace and supporting myself with
15 a back brace, and I find I'm too old or disabled to
16 fight while unarmed.

17 As I, and many others see it, the Democrats
18 are the party pushing gun control, and the
19 Republicans support the people's right to armed
20 self-defense. We the people of Florida gave the
21 Republican party candidate for president 120,770
22 more votes than the Democrat candidate.

23 During the last two gubernatorial elections we
24 gave the Republican candidate more than 60,000 votes
25 more than the Democratic candidate at each election.

1 We have had only two Democrat governors in Florida
2 elected since Jimmy Carter took office. Our State
3 Senate is 59 percent Republicans, State House
4 63 percent Republicans, our U.S. House delegation is
5 59 percent Republican.

6 The message to all concerned is we the people
7 of Florida stand behind the party that stands for
8 people's right to armed self-defense and support the
9 party that supports gun control. We ask this CRC to
10 support the great majority of citizens in this state
11 that prefer the right to be armed citizens, rather
12 than disarmed subjects.

13 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you for your service,
14 Mr. Johnson.

15 Patricia Hall. And then we're going to have
16 Margie Freeman, Cesar Grajales and Carlos Lamoutte.

17 MS. HALL: I'm Patricia Hall. I have a story
18 about an amazing Florida real estate scam
19 perpetrated on taxpayers, parents and children, as
20 the byproduct. It's called for-profit managed
21 Charter School USA owned by John Hage with a
22 dizzying 345-plus separate companies, LLCs, he and
23 his pals purchased land or old buildings, build a
24 bare-bones school building for 1,100 to 1,200
25 children, pay off the mortgage of \$9 to \$16 million

1 in 16 months and then they charge exorbitant lease
2 and rental fees of \$2.6 million per year for one
3 school, Winthrop, in Brandon. That's 25 percent of
4 all the education dollars allocated for the
5 children.

6 He owns more than 70 schools and all the
7 related companies that do food service, hire
8 teachers, clean buildings, et cetera. His lobbying
9 corp had paid many millions to legislators,
10 Governor Scott and now school board members. At
11 least three of seven school board members in
12 Hillsborough County have taken large contributions
13 from for-profit charter companies. Susan Valdez
14 took more than half her campaign funds from this
15 crowd.

16 Hillsborough County is opening 12 new charters
17 in August to make over 50 charter schools here while
18 we have existing schools half empty. Pinellas
19 County has 17 charter schools and is holding the
20 line with a less-friendly approach, no new charters.

21 The highly regarded CREDO study from Stanford
22 University in California matches students based on
23 achievement levels. In five of seven of the largest
24 cities in Florida, they proved public school
25 students had higher scores than charter students,

1 and, overall, Florida has the worst record in the
2 United States with our charter-friendly laws in this
3 three-year study.

4 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, Ms. Hall. We
5 appreciate your testimony.

6 Margie Friedman.

7 MS. FRIEDMAN: Hello. Thank you for coming.
8 Thank you for staying. My name is Margie Friedman.
9 I'm just a person. I just live here in Florida. I
10 vote, and I care. And I believe in the right to
11 bear arms. Sorry, but I do. I also believe in the
12 right to drive cars. And when you drive a car,
13 there are rules. You can't drive drunk. You need a
14 license. You need to be a certain age. You have to
15 follow the rules of the road, et cetera, et cetera,
16 et cetera. Cars kill people. Guns kill people.

17 It seems simple to me. The American Journal
18 of Medicine reported in February that the U.S. rate
19 of gun deaths is 25 times higher than the combined
20 amount of the other top 22 developed countries.
21 Really? Can we ignore that kind of stuff? I don't
22 think so. We have the most firearms per capita in
23 the world and suffer the greatest because of
24 firearms. What are we doing wrong?

25 We are six times more likely -- you and I are

1 six times more likely to be accidentally killed by a
2 firearm. We have half the population of those other
3 combined 22 countries -- half the population. It's
4 not because we're so highly populated and we have
5 more guns because we have more people and we're
6 crowded into cities. It's none of that.

7 82 percent of all the guns deaths, we account
8 for that, versus those other 22 countries. We also
9 account for 90 percent of all women killed with
10 guns. That's you and me, Commissioner Bondi.

11 COMMISSIONER LEE: I'm going to have to cut
12 you off. I apologize.

13 MS. FRIEDMAN: That's okay. I could keep
14 going, but I think you get the point.

15 COMMISSIONER LEE: Yes, ma'am. Thank you so
16 much.

17 Mr. Grajales. Did I get that right?

18 MR. GRAJALES: Yes.

19 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, sir.

20 MR. GRAJALES: Thank you. Good afternoon,
21 Mr. Chairman and members of the CRC. My name is
22 Cesar Grajales. I'm the Florida Collations Director
23 for The Libre Initiative. The Libre Initiative is a
24 non-profit, non-partisan organization that is
25 working for the Hispanic community, just not in the

1 state of Florida but across the nation.

2 Today on behalf of The Libre Initiative I ask
3 you to please revise and fix Article 9 of the state
4 constitution. We hope you will reword to ensure and
5 qualify school choice options in Florida. School
6 choice has enabled Florida to have great
7 achievements, gains, for lower income families,
8 minorities and children with disabilities over the
9 last decade.

10 At The Libre Initiative we firmly believe
11 school choice should be part of the state
12 constitution. Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, sir.

14 Dr. Lamoutte.

15 DR. LAMOUTTE: Yes. Thank you, Commissioners,
16 for giving me the opportunity. My name is
17 Dr. Lamoutte. I'm a practicing OB/GYN in Florida
18 for the last 19 years. And I'm the medical director
19 for two pregnancy care centers in Hillsborough
20 County, and I'm part of an abortion pill reversal
21 registry in the nation to prove to the FDA that we
22 can safely reverse the effects of the RU-486.

23 I do about 225 deliveries a year, and about 10
24 percent of those, 20 or so deliveries, come from
25 those clinics, moms that change their mind and

1 decide to carry their babies and not proceed with
2 termination or abortion.

3 The two issues that I would like for you to
4 consider is consider reinstating the 24-hour
5 reflection period before an abortion and consider
6 reinstating the parental consent.

7 The 24-hour reflection period truly allows for
8 proper informed consent. I cannot think of any
9 surgeries -- and I do surgeries two days a week. I
10 cannot think of any surgeries that we do on the same
11 day, except for a life-saving procedure, such an
12 epitopic pregnancy or a torse ovary or something
13 like that, somebody bleeding. Elective abortions
14 are exactly that, elective. Okay? If you don't
15 allow for the 24-hour reflection period, you're not
16 going to have truly informed consent.

17 As far as parental consent is concerned,
18 the -- I can tell you I've had countless number of
19 patients that have decided to carry their babies
20 because of parental support. And if you take that
21 away, you're losing lives. Okay? I became a doctor
22 to save lives, to do no harm. And this is what I'm
23 proposing, these two measures. Thank you very much.

24 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, sir.

25 Susan Smith. We have Victoria Roush, Mark Creek and

1 Dianne Wheatley. Smith, Roush, Creek and Wheatley.

2 MS. SMITH: Hi.

3 COMMISSIONER LEE: Go ahead, Ms. Smith.

4 MS. SMITH: Susan Smith from Odessa, Florida.

5 I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the
6 Commission today. However, I don't think your
7 members fairly represent the population. The
8 partisan nature of the appointments reinforces the
9 perception among the vast majority of Floridians
10 that the system is, once again, being rigged.

11 Nevertheless, I'm here to speak. My request
12 is that this Commission add language to Article 9,
13 Section 1 of the Florida Constitution in order to
14 strengthen and protect the rights of children to a
15 uniform, efficient, safe, secure and high-quality
16 system of free public schools that allows students
17 to obtain a high-quality education.

18 This is the paramount duty of the Florida
19 Legislature, yet session after session they
20 undermine that right. They starve overburdened
21 traditional public schools while diverting our tax
22 dollars to unaccountable charter and voucher
23 schools. With the deceptive term "parental choice,"
24 they avoid their duties to support and adequately
25 fund education, while furthering efforts to monetize

1 and privatize the very foundation of our democracy.

2 Conflicts of interest abound as they enrich
3 themselves, their relatives and friends through
4 charter and voucher schemes. These schemes widen,
5 rather than narrow, the divide between haves and the
6 have-nots. One need only look at House Bill 7069 to
7 see how this travesty is being perpetrated. The
8 bill was rushed through in the final hours of
9 session in secret without proper hearings, yet the
10 impact on our children would be devastating.

11 You have the ability to give voice to those
12 children next year through the amendment process. I
13 urge you to be that voice by strengthening language
14 in Article 9, Section 1 to prevent the harm that's
15 being done by the Florida Legislature. Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you. Ms. Roush.

17 MS. ROUSH: Hi. My name is Vicky Roush. I'm
18 a private citizen from Hernando County, and I
19 appreciate the opportunity to publicly urge you, the
20 Constitutional Review Commission, to take no action
21 to weaken Article 1, Section 23 that addresses a
22 person's right to privacy.

23 As the Florida Supreme Court had ruled, again
24 and again, laws restricting access to abortion care
25 violates the privacy clause of the Florida

1 Constitution. Any weakening of that clause would be
2 seen as a backdoor attempt to circumvent the high
3 court and to insert ideology and religious tests
4 into the intimate and personal and private decisions
5 made between a woman and her doctor.

6 Also, attempts at weakening the amendment
7 would clearly be seen as a way to limit access to
8 women's reproductive care choices, including the
9 legal and constitutionally-protected medical
10 procedure known as abortion. Some advocate that the
11 state should have agency over a woman's body, most
12 do not. Women must be trusted to make their own
13 decisions with accurate medical advice and -- from
14 their practitioner without governmental or religious
15 intrusion.

16 Reproductive care choices are private
17 decisions. There are perhaps no decisions more
18 private. And I would urge you to preserve the
19 explicit privacy protections afforded by the people
20 of Florida in Florida's Constitution as they relate
21 to reproductive choice and access to abortion care
22 services. Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, ma'am.

24 Mark Creek. Is Mark here?

25 All right. Ms. Wheatley.

1 MS. WHEATLEY: Good evening. My name is
2 Dianne Wheatley. I'm from Pinellas County. I want
3 to thank you each of you for serving on this
4 Commission, and I'm certainly grateful, as a
5 Floridian, that you are traveling around the state
6 to hear our concerns.

7 Now, relative to the constitution, I believe
8 that there have been many wise predecessors that
9 have enacted these many laws. I encourage you to
10 look at these and maybe not fix what isn't broken.

11 I would like to say though in the area of the
12 fair district litigation, legislatives claim that
13 they should be excused from testifying about how the
14 maps were drawn. They said that they had a
15 legislative privilege. Since the constitution now
16 prohibits drawing districts with intent to favor a
17 party or incumbent, the constitution should make
18 clear that there is no legislative privilege in
19 redistricting cases. Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, Ms. Wheatley.
21 Karen Karinja, if I said that.

22 MS. KARINJA: Karinja.

23 COMMISSIONER LEE: Please come forward.
24 Aymee Laurain and Jerry Shuman.

25 MS. KARINJA: Good evening, members of the

1 Commission. My name is Karen Karinja, and I'm
2 president of the League of Women Voters of
3 North Pinellas County. I'm here tonight on behalf
4 of the League to urge you to respect the
5 responsibilities that you are given, that have been
6 placed before you. So it is important for me at
7 this time to remind you to function independently of
8 legislative issues. Speaker Corcoran and
9 President Negron, who appointed almost half of you,
10 have publicly announced that they want the CRC to
11 offer certain revisions, some of which the League is
12 opposed to, such as legalizing school vouchers,
13 eliminating fair districts, allowing state money to
14 go to religious institutions, putting term limits on
15 judges and otherwise interfering with the operation
16 of the courts as an independent branch of the
17 government.

18 Why are these legislators leaning on you to
19 take up these very controversial issues when the
20 legislature has the power to put amendments on the
21 ballot? Another question for those legislative
22 appointees: Will you allow these leaders to be
23 setting the agenda of the CRC, or will you exercise
24 totally independent judgment before trying to alter
25 our constitution? We urge you to think

1 independently and to act independently.

2 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, ma'am.

3 Ms. Laurain.

4 MS. LAURAIN: Hi. I'm Aymee Laurain, and I'm
5 the director of Imagine Our Florida, a science-based
6 non-profit. I'm a veteran, and I was born and
7 raised here in Tampa Bay. I've enjoyed seeing
8 sights through Florida and throughout the world. So
9 it disheartens when I see other countries and other
10 states making more progress, environmentally, than
11 we are. It disheartens me when I see our state's
12 environment deteriorating.

13 It's clear that the current constitution was
14 established in a time when a lot of these issues
15 regarding our environment were not brought to light.
16 Florida has some of the most unique flora and fauna
17 in the country. Our biggest industry, tourism,
18 heavily depends on the health and stability of our
19 environment. How can we have a tourism industry
20 when we have dead fish in the estuaries down south,
21 when we have urban sprawl, when we have unstable
22 wildlife populations, when we have Enterococci
23 bacteria at our beaches? And our third largest
24 industry, our export industry, which Florida is
25 No. 1 in the country, was actually damaged when

1 Deepwater Horizon happened.

2 We need better oversight and more modern
3 approaches to better protect our wildlife, natural
4 resources and land. I'm currently working on a
5 proposal that would encourage more sustainability
6 and would protect biodiversity within our state. I
7 hope you chose to put biodiversity on the ballots.

8 More biodiverse ecosystems actually adapt
9 better to change and recover more quickly from
10 disasters. We need to stop focusing on reactive
11 plans and update our constitution to reflect
12 proactive protection for biodiversity. That
13 includes diversity in ecosystems, genetic diversity,
14 species diversity and diversity among the trophic
15 levels, including larger predators, whether they're
16 the apex predator, such as the Florida Panther, or
17 opportunistic predators, like the Florida black
18 bear.

19 Our constitution should reflect the values of
20 the Public Trust Doctrine. It should demonstrate
21 respect and ethics within our wild spaces and
22 promote overall health from habitats, wildlife and
23 humans.

24 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, Ms. Laurain.
25 Mr. Shuman. And then we're going to have

1 Scott Shoup, Javan, or Javan, Frinks and
2 Guyann Bracken-Fray.

3 Yes, sir.

4 MR. SHUMAN: Good evening, Commissioners. My
5 name is Jerry Shuman, and I have to change my order
6 of comments just a little bit. Since I've been here
7 this afternoon, several times, again, I have heard
8 people talking about democracy. The founding
9 fathers did not leave us a democracy. The
10 constitution guarantees we the people a Republican
11 form of government, which means that the people are
12 on top.

13 Okay. My topic for this evening was to be the
14 proverbial chicken-or-the-egg debate, but we're not
15 going to go into that because it goes without saying
16 that we the people preceded government as we know
17 it. We the people banded together to relinquish
18 some of the delegated authority to our elected
19 servants who were, and are, expected to perform
20 their duties as we the people instruct them to.
21 That is our public servants are expected to perform
22 their given tasks with the consent of the people.

23 Article 1, Section 1 of the constitution of
24 the State of Florida states that all political power
25 is inherent in the people. Why is it then that we

1 have a Commission of 37 people, many members of the
2 bar union, and all politically appointed, meeting in
3 some -- in many cities throughout the state who have
4 been charged with what should be presented to the
5 voters of the state as constitutional amendments?
6 The only way that a constitution can be changed or
7 altered is through the amendment process authorized
8 by we the people. The people must elect delegates
9 from the ranks of the electors of the state. We
10 don't want people appointed by politicians. You
11 don't represent us.

12 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, Mr. Shuman. I
13 apologize, but you're out of time, sir.

14 MR. SHUMAN: Okay. So I might be seeing you
15 again.

16 COMMISSIONER LEE: I hope so.

17 Mr. Shoup?

18 MR. SHOUP: Right here.

19 COMMISSIONER LEE: You're on.

20 MR. SHOUP: My name is Scott Shoup. I'm from
21 Tampa, and I wanted to sway you from considering
22 House Speaker Corcoran's idea or bill -- I don't
23 think he filed it -- term limits for Supreme Court.
24 I think that will undermine the legal integrity of
25 our judges, and I think they'll be more concerned

1 about life after they've been termed out. And I
2 don't think it really worked out too well for our
3 representative 20 years ago, what's evolved in
4 Tallahassee, with lobbyists and so forth.

5 Also, in terms of school choice, I
6 complete -- completely, excuse me, agree with this
7 gentleman here. But what's especially galling is
8 people who are writing these charter bills have skin
9 in the game. They have family that are actually
10 working for these companies, and it's an insult
11 really to public education and teachers. So thank
12 you very much.

13 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, sir.

14 MR. FRANKS: Javan Franks.

15 COMMISSIONER LEE: Mr. Franks, you're on, sir.

16 MR. FRANKS: I will be submitting a proposal
17 to significantly increase funding for public
18 education, including increasing teacher pay,
19 supporting after-school programs, a more equitable
20 sharing of those funds across communities and making
21 college free in the state of Florida.

22 You're probably thinking we can't afford that,
23 or where will the money come from? If we can afford
24 to give corporate welfare and tax breaks to those
25 that don't need them, then we can afford to give our

1 children a brighter future. Nearly every problem we
2 face today is because we continue to underfund
3 education, at the same time college is becoming more
4 expensive.

5 Go to the CEOs of Lockheed Martin, Mosaic,
6 Publix or any company and ask them, do you want a
7 tax break, or do you want to locate to a state with
8 the best educated population in the nation? Better
9 education leads to higher pay, more innovation in
10 every sector, lower healthcare costs, less crime and
11 lower incarceration rates, less poverty and lower
12 birthrates.

13 The erosion of our educational institutions is
14 the greatest threat to America, and this is an
15 issues that cuts across all racial and ethnic minds.
16 If you do not support increased funding for
17 education, you are sending a clear message that some
18 children matter more than others. You can fix this
19 problem.

20 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, Mr. Franks.

21 Guyann Bracken-Fray. Then we're going to have
22 Ciara Kauffman, Michael DeLoach and Reverend Russell
23 Meyer.

24 Bracken-Fray?

25 MS. KAUFFMAN: Am I next?

1 COMMISSIONER LEE: Yes.

2 MS. KAUFFMAN: All right. My name is
3 Ciara Kauffman. I'm here on behalf of the Huddle in
4 the Harbor Reproductive Rights Team, and I want to
5 urge this Commission to preserve the right to
6 privacy in the Florida Constitution without change.

7 The Florida Supreme Court has clearly stated
8 this applies to a woman's right to choose. They
9 said we can't conceive a few more personal or
10 private decisions that one can make in the course of
11 a lifetime. I have personally experienced how
12 deeply private this is. I've dealt with three years
13 of infertility and pregnancy loss. And being
14 pregnant is deeply personal, deeply emotional and
15 incredibly challenging.

16 I am fortunate the laws didn't dictate what
17 medical treatments I could have when I was trying to
18 become pregnant. They didn't dictate how I had to
19 deal with my miscarriage or my stillbirth. We need
20 to give that same compassion to women and men
21 dealing with unplanned pregnancies. And there are
22 others that are in far, far more painful situations,
23 dealing with desperately-wanted pregnancies that
24 incompatible with life.

25 The right to privacy in our constitution lets

1 these men and women make their complex decisions,
2 these difficult decisions, with their families and
3 with their doctors, and not with the government.
4 They value that right, the same way I valued my
5 right to make my choices.

6 The Florida Supreme Court and Florida voters
7 have repeatedly supported Article 1, Section 23
8 as-is. On that basis, and, frankly, out of your
9 compassion towards Floridians, I urge you, and our
10 team urges you, to protect the explicit privacy
11 rights in the Florida Constitution. Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you. Is
13 Guyann Bracken-Fray here? Okay. I just wanted to
14 double-check.

15 Mr. DeLoach.

16 MR. DeLOACH: I am Michael DeLoach. I know
17 I'm tired, and I'm sure you guys are tired. So I
18 will be brief. I think the biggest issue facing
19 Florida right now is, honestly, transparency at the
20 state level. I urge the Commission to consider
21 reviewing, not only the exceptions in the Sunshine
22 Law, but the sort of flagrant disregard for the
23 Sunshine Law by the state legislature. I think that
24 the budget and all of our bills should be developed
25 in an open and honest manner in front of the public,

1 and that it shouldn't be developed behind closed
2 doors.

3 And the last piece is I realize that probably
4 one of the biggest issues with developing those
5 things out in public is the time of session. So I
6 urge the Commission to consider a constitutional
7 revision to extend legislative session beyond
8 60 days as an ongoing factor so that laws can be
9 developed that actually represent the people. Thank
10 you.

11 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, sir.

12 Reverend Meyer.

13 REVEREND MEYER: Good evening, ladies and
14 gentlemen. Thank you for your journey to justice in
15 Florida. I'm the Reverend Dr. Russell Meyer. I'm
16 the executive director of the Florida Council of
17 Churches and the pastor to two congregations here in
18 Tampa. I'm also the chair of the faith-based Reform
19 Justice Campaign.

20 In Florida nearly one of out two families is
21 less than a paycheck away from poverty. Poverty is
22 the single biggest drag on this state's economy and
23 development. And when we look closely at what is
24 the social construct that generates poverty in this
25 state, it is one institution. It is the criminal

1 justice system. And at the center of the criminal
2 justice system are two of the primary things that
3 must be addressed constitutionally in order to
4 address poverty and put us all on the road to
5 prosperity.

6 One is rights restoration. When people finish
7 their time, they should have their life back. They
8 should be able to live with their family. They
9 should be hireable. And they should be able to rent
10 a place. They should not have to live underneath
11 the bridge because they have to continue to check
12 off the box and be subject to a continual
13 second-class citizenship. That creates poverty, not
14 just for them, but for their families and for their
15 children.

16 The second item is to end the death penalty in
17 the state of Florida. Nearly 350 people, plus, are
18 sitting there right now. If we were to successfully
19 execute every one of them, we would spend over
20 \$1 billion just to do that. Do not use my taxpayer
21 money to kill people. That is against the law of
22 God and ought to be the against the law of the state
23 of Florida. We do not need the death penalty. We
24 can protect society by putting people in a place
25 where they don't harm the rest of us for the rest of

1 their lives.

2 So these two things alone would make Florida
3 far more successful than any other business plan
4 that you would enact. Make them constitutional.
5 Thank you.

6 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, Reverend.

7 Is Susan Maslar here? Do we have
8 Susan Maslar? Andrew Learned, I believe,
9 Mark Rueden and John Maxwell. I'm not seeing a
10 Susan Maslar. Okay. Andrew Learned? Mark Rueden?
11 Go ahead, sir.

12 MR. RUEDEN: I'm Mark Reuden.

13 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Step closer to the mic.

14 MR. RUEDEN: My name is Mark Rueden. I grew
15 up with open primaries in Wisconsin. I was a
16 moderate Republican. Ballots there allowed us to
17 vote for who each of us liked best in the primaries,
18 for all the parties. However, as I was more
19 moderate than Republican, recently I have found very
20 few moderates to vote for in the general election.
21 Many of us tend to cherry-pick our news from the
22 Internet in such ways to reenforce our preexisting
23 beliefs. Since the Internet provides an abundance
24 of news sources, it is very easy to be caught in
25 this echo chamber. Closed primaries can have the

1 same effect, allowing views to become more extreme
2 over time.

3 One of my degrees is in mathematics. There
4 exists an entire mathematical discipline allowing us
5 to understand the effects of open and closed
6 primaries. It's called game theory. So you should
7 ask yourself are you tired of severe partisan
8 animosity of extreme ideologues and special interest
9 gaining our system to obtain positions of power?
10 Would you rather govern with reason and logic and a
11 needed compromise, instead of hewing to political
12 dogma? Then you might support open primaries.

13 I understand that elections are a popularity
14 contest, but governing should not be a political
15 war. Allow moderates to compete. Be a moderate.
16 Let Florida lead our country toward a brighter, more
17 reasonable future. Open primaries can help save us.
18 Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, sir.

20 Mr. Learned? John Maxwell.

21 MR. MAXWELL: Thank you. I'm going to talk
22 about something that the mainstream media is mostly
23 blacking out, and that is elite sex trafficking of
24 children by politicians and other people who are
25 extremely powerful businessmen and women.

1 In the Podesta e-mails which the mainstream
2 media is not covering, there is coded language of
3 pedophilia from John Podesta. I mean, I'll read
4 some of those e-mails. This is from the Sandler,
5 which is a billionaire family. They say, "Mary and
6 John -- "

7 COMMISSIONER LEE: Mr. Maxwell, if I could get
8 you to focus on what our constitution and --

9 MR. MAXWELL: Are you going to black it out
10 too?

11 COMMISSIONER LEE: I may. We're here to talk
12 about Florida's Constitution, and not what's going
13 on in federal government.

14 MR. MAXWELL: Well, it's happening in Florida
15 too, and --

16 COMMISSIONER LEE: Just do us a favor, try to
17 keep your focus on what it is you would like to see
18 us change to improve the Florida Constitution.

19 MR. MAXWELL: Okay.

20 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, sir.

21 MR. MAXWELL: Well, that doesn't sound very
22 democratic to me. I was going to say something the
23 media is blacking out, and now I'm being blacked out
24 here.

25 Would you guys like to hear the e-mails?

1 (Multiple audience response.)

2 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Excuse me. Excuse me.

3 MR. MAXWELL: In the Florida --

4 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Excuse me. You can take and
5 write your thoughts you want to share with us and
6 link it to our website, but this not the forum to
7 read e-mails that have nothing to do with what this
8 Commission --

9 MR. MAXWELL: So the e-mails were just going
10 to show that it happens. You know, I was just going
11 to show that happens. People don't understand
12 that's happening. Then I was going to suggest
13 things to the law that we can change.

14 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Okay. Why don't you give
15 us -- if you want to do that, you have 11 seconds.
16 Okay? But you have all the time in the world to
17 write and upload into our weblink, and it will be
18 clear --

19 MR. MAXWELL: It will be --

20 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Everything you said will be
21 in public for everybody to see on their computer at
22 their leisure. Thank you very much.

23 MR. MAXWELL: This Commission is bullshit.

24 COMMISSIONER LEE: Carmen Ines Schumacher.
25 And then we have Beverly Ledbetter and Jan Shelly.

1 Ms. Schumacher?

2 MS. SCHUMACHER: Yes.

3 COMMISSIONER LEE: You're recognized.

4 MS. SCHUMACHER: What do you mean?

5 COMMISSIONER LEE: You may speak.

6 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Welcome.

7 MS. SCHUMACHER: Hi. My name is Carmen Ines
8 Schumacher. We must preserve the right to privacy
9 in Florida. Article 1, Section 23 of the Florida
10 Constitution adopted --

11 COMMISSIONER LEE: If you could get just a
12 little closer to the microphone for us. Thank you.

13 MS. SCHUMACHER: Yes. Hi. My name is
14 Carmen Ines Schumacher. We must preserve the right
15 to privacy in Florida. Article 1, Section 23 of
16 Florida Constitution adopted by Florida voters in
17 1980 provides for a specific and explicit right of
18 privacy and should be preserved without change.
19 Specifically, it provides every natural person has
20 the right to be left alone and free from
21 governmental intrusion into the person's private
22 life, except as otherwise provided herein.

23 This section shall not be construed to limit
24 the public's right of access to public records and
25 meetings as provided by law.

1 Article 1, Section 23. There is nothing more
2 important or fundamental than my right to chose
3 whether or not I carry a pregnancy to term. It is a
4 right that I have treasured and celebrated with my
5 own children, because, as an immigrant, I have heard
6 firsthand of back-alley clinics where women have had
7 abortions that were not always successful.

8 Since I came to this country I found the
9 freedom to chose to be as important as my right to
10 privacy. So please respect both of them. My
11 children have grown believing in those principles.
12 So don't make me a liar. Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER LEE: Ms. Ledbetter.

14 MS. LEDBETTER: Thank you. There are four
15 areas of concern that I would like to address the
16 Commission on, and the first is Article 1,
17 Section 3. It's so nicknamed the Blaine Amendment,
18 which currently prohibits revenue -- tax revenues to
19 go to religious institutions. As a Christian, I
20 urge you to keep this prohibition in our
21 constitution to prevent any unintended consequences.

22 Article 1, Section 23 of our constitution
23 provides for a specific and explicit right of
24 privacy and should be preserved without change. The
25 CRC should not threaten the fundamental right of

1 privacy, especially as it is applied to women.

2 I also stand with those who support closing
3 the write-in candidate loophole which undermines the
4 fairness of our election system. And, lastly, I
5 would like to say that I stand with the League of
6 Women Voters, and I hope that the CRC does nothing
7 to weaken the Fair District Amendment by allowing
8 secret meetings out of the public eyes and allowing
9 the legislature to impose rules on this court
10 system. 63 percent of Floridians voted for the
11 Fair District Amendment, and we need to keep this in
12 the constitution. Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you. Jan Shelly.

14 MS. SHELLY: Hello. My name is Jan Shelly,
15 and I am here partially as a mother, partially as
16 someone who is involved in the women's march and is
17 now in the Safety Harbor Social Justice Team. And
18 mostly I think I'm here as an ex-public defender.
19 And I'm quite sure Ms. Bondi and
20 Commissioner Sprowls, and so forth, knows a lot
21 about what it's like to be in a criminal courtroom.

22 I don't know that many people know what it was
23 like, at least in St. Louis, Missouri, on Friday.
24 Friday was sentencing day. On Friday a lot of very
25 poor, mostly black, mostly minority people were sent

1 to prison, and that was a sad and unjust system.

2 It's the same system we have in Florida. At
3 least in Missouri, however, I could tell my clients
4 who were 20 years old and were going to be away from
5 their babies and their girlfriends and their moms
6 that, at the end of this, you had repaid what
7 happened. You had made amends. You are now going
8 to come back to be part of society. I could tell
9 them that they could have a job. They could have a
10 family.

11 I was absolutely astounded that in Florida
12 someone who has committed a felony, and that could
13 be a lot of different things as you all know, is
14 then that their right to vote is taken away for
15 their entire life.

16 The system from the beginning is very
17 dehumanizing to somebody who was convicted of a
18 criminal offense. And I can also tell you, from
19 being a federal prosecutor, that prosecuting the law
20 against corporations was a whole lot harder than
21 prosecuting the law against poor black people in
22 St. Louis.

23 Here's the deal: If you guys don't help us
24 and don't give our 1.68 million citizens their right
25 to vote back, strangely enough, one out of five, and

1 maybe four, depending on the statistics, of those
2 whom are African Americans -- if we don't give those
3 voting rights back, then you have done a terrible
4 disservice to everything --

5 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, Ms. Shelly.

6 MS. SHELLY: -- that I thought I stood for as
7 a lawyer. Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, Ms. Shelly. I
9 have another card. I think this is a
10 repeat -- Dr. Carlos Lamoutte. I believe he already
11 spoke. Deborah Salvensen, I believe it is,
12 Blannie Whelan and Angie Purkis. I hope I got those
13 somewhat close to correct.

14 Deborah.

15 MS. SALVESEN: My name is Deborah Salvensen.
16 I'm a resident of Spring Hill, Florida, for four
17 years, and 18 years in Tarpon Springs, Florida.
18 Florida is one of only five states with an explicit
19 privacy provision in its constitution which
20 guarantees each person the right to be left alone
21 and free from governmental intrusion into his or her
22 private life. This privacy amendment, which was
23 added to the constitution directly by Florida
24 citizens in the 1980 general election, was
25 intentionally phrased in strong terms in order to

1 make the privacy right as strong as possible.

2 The Florida Supreme Court has consistently
3 ruled that laws restricting access to abortion care
4 violate the privacy clause of the Florida
5 Constitution. For this reason anti-abortion
6 opponents will make it a priority to try to
7 convince the Constitution Revision Commission to
8 place one or more proposed constitutional amendments
9 on the 2018 ballot that would eliminate or weaken
10 Article 1, Section 23 of the Florida Constitution,
11 the privacy clause.

12 The last time politicians tried to weaken the
13 privacy clause in Florida's Constitution, Florida
14 voters overwhelmingly rejected the attempt.
15 Proposed Amendment 6 on the 2012 ballot was an
16 effort to limit the privacy clause in our
17 constitution, and it was soundly defeated by Florida
18 voters, 55 percent to 45 percent.

19 I urge you to preserve the Florida
20 Constitution's strong protection against political
21 interference with a woman's right to control her own
22 body. Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, ma'am.

24 Ms. Whelan.

25 MS. WHELAN: Yeah, Hi. I'm Blannie Whelan. I

1 am a mom, grandma, volunteer, a college professor
2 and a nurse practitioner. In my work in my career,
3 I never really thought of it as a career, but a
4 service. And I feel that my job is to treat my
5 students or my patients in the best way possible,
6 one that is the right thing to do and to listen to
7 their opinions.

8 I'm not an elected official. For those of you
9 who are, your job is to represent, is to be of
10 service, not a career. It shouldn't be considered a
11 career. It should be considered servicing people.
12 And sometimes that means going against your own
13 opinion, because you're listening to what the
14 people -- all these wonderful people are saying
15 here.

16 I just briefly -- I don't want to repeat
17 everything that's been said. There's some lovely
18 comments that have been said here. I did want to
19 talk about voting rights and increasing the ability
20 to -- for people to vote. I would like to see
21 constitutional changes to increase voting. I would
22 like to see that when somebody turns 18, they
23 automatically have the right to vote. I think there
24 are other states that do that, and certainly other
25 countries that do that. Also, open primaries.

1 And I would also like to see that nobody gets
2 elected if they don't have 50 percent of the vote,
3 and that means that sometimes there has to be a
4 runoff between the top two. I think if you
5 have -- if you can't get 50 percent of the popular,
6 you shouldn't be elected.

7 The main issues I want to talk about is voting
8 rights, and I would like to see that -- and I'm not
9 going repeat everything that everybody said, but
10 voting rights restoration for ex-felons. Please,
11 they're citizens. Give them their rights back.
12 Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, ma'am.
14 Ms. Purkis. And then we're going to have
15 Gerald White, Maryann Akey and Catherine Durkin
16 Robinson.

17 Ms. Purkis.

18 MS. PURKIS: Yes, good evening. Thank you for
19 hearing us today. I am here -- I'm a new graduate
20 of a Master's degree in nursing. Over the years I
21 have voted Republican, Democratic and Independent.
22 I'm a 34-year resident of Pasco County in Florida.

23 And it has become very apparent to me that our
24 government and our electoral system has been taken
25 over by those who seek profits. They optimize

1 control over our elections in hopes of winning. Our
2 rights are being squeezed. These actions continue
3 to disenfranchise certain groups of voters. It's
4 become an art form honed with each election by both
5 major parties. Even when citizens want to support
6 their party locally, they're blocked.

7 I have a group of friends who went in support
8 of President Bush -- so it's been a little while
9 ago -- to a Republican club meeting, and they told
10 them, "We don't know who you are. We don't know
11 your friends. This is a private party. You need to
12 leave. Don't come back." I know another gentleman
13 who was Democrat, and he was removed from the club
14 meetings because he missed three consecutive
15 meetings.

16 These private corporations that call
17 themselves the RNC and DNC -- and I'm not an
18 attorney, but, for lack of a better term, are
19 racketeering our system. They take money from
20 questionable and unknown sources. They don't allow
21 open participation in meetings. They manipulate
22 votes by gerrymandering, influencing processes and
23 staffing of polls, and they block voting areas and
24 groups.

25 This is cause for great concern. This is

1 control of our rule of law, and that means we are
2 not governed of by and for the people, which I
3 understand is a federal document. However, I
4 believe it applies to states as well. So this new
5 system of government that's being created does not
6 hold truth to inalienable rights as self-evident,
7 and it is one that does not respect life, liberty or
8 pursuit happiness. Please open the primaries for
9 all citizens and correct this.

10 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you for your
11 testimony.

12 Mr. White.

13 MR. WHITE: Good evening, Commissioners.
14 Gerald White, Hillsborough County Community
15 activist. First, welcome to Tampa Bay. I hope
16 you've enjoyed your stay here in our community.
17 Attorney General Bondi, it's good to see you.
18 Senator Rouson, it's good to see you. Senator Lee.
19 Senator Joyner, a dynamic representation of
20 Tampa Bay.

21 I was here 20 years ago. I was 34 years of
22 age. I'm now 54, a father of four. One of my
23 daughters graduated from West Point. She's now an
24 officer in the military. It's just great to be
25 here. Great to see you all. Great that you all are

1 taking in our concerns here in Tampa Bay.

2 One amendment that passed in 1998 was the
3 Cabinet -- the Florida State Cabinet Reform. The
4 issue, Article 4, Section 4, the Florida State
5 Cabinet, I was in support of that. I wanted that
6 changed. I wanted the governor to have more power.
7 Looking at what has taken place and how the Cabinet
8 of the state of Florida has worked in the last
9 20 years, I would like to see the Secretary of State
10 seat placed back into the Cabinet of Florida. I
11 think that's something we need.

12 I think you keep hearing the cry related to
13 voting, related to participation of citizens, and it
14 seems as though we need to have that seat back into
15 the Cabinet at the highest level of Florida state
16 government so this individual can carry out the
17 needs and the will of the people.

18 So I'm requesting that you all
19 review -- look at this amendment that you, the
20 Commission, placed on the ballot. Look at all the
21 issues that have come in the last 20 years and make
22 a decision and place the state -- the Secretary of
23 State back into the Florida Cabinet and allow all
24 the Floridians to vote on this position. And I look
25 forward to seeing you guys 20 years from now when

1 I'll be 74 years of age.

2 COMMISSIONER LEE: We look forward to seeing
3 you too, Mr. White.

4 Ms. Akey.

5 MS. AKEY: Thank you very much. My name is
6 Maryann Akey. I'm a Tampa resident, born and
7 raised, and a lifelong Democrat. I came here to
8 speak on open primaries. Many other people have
9 raised the issues as to why it is such an important
10 issue in the state of Florida for the Commission to
11 put an amendment to open up our primaries to
12 everybody that has the right to vote by our
13 constitution. Our constitution did not say you can
14 only vote if you're a Democrat, or you can only vote
15 if you're a Republican. If you're an American
16 citizen, you have the right to vote in this country.
17 And it's not an issue that should even be brought
18 before a commission. It's just common sense that we
19 all have that right to vote.

20 And as I sit and I listened to all the
21 problems that we have in our state, if more people
22 are brought into the process to vote, a lot of these
23 things would go away because more people would be
24 able to be our elected officials, not just a
25 Democrat and not just a Republican. Anyone.

1 This lady here should have as much of a right
2 to represent the people of this state as anyone, not
3 because she's a Democrat or because she's a
4 Republican. And I would also like to ask the
5 Commission to maybe lead this country in a
6 constitutional amendment to get the money out of our
7 politics.

8 Citizens United has been disastrous for our
9 democracy or our republic, however you want to look
10 at it. Money is buying our elections. Corporations
11 are not people, and they do not have the right to
12 put unlimited funds into our elections and decide
13 who is going to be our representatives.

14 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you.

15 MS. AKEY: So that's what I would like to say,
16 and thank you for your time.

17 COMMISSIONER LEE: Yes, ma'am. We have
18 Catherine Durkin Robinson. And then we have
19 Jim Hoefling, it looks like, and then Sharon Balic,
20 or Balic, and Jessica Lewis.

21 MS. ROBINSON: Hi. My name is
22 Catherine Durkin Robinson. I have the privilege of
23 organizing over 200,000 families in Florida who
24 chose magnet schools, virtual schools, home schools,
25 charter schools and private schools. These are

1 mostly minority, low-income families or families who
2 have children with special needs.

3 We respectfully ask all of you to please
4 consider any amendment that preserves their right to
5 chose the best school for their kids. Thank you.

6 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you.

7 Jim -- tell me how wrong I am.

8 MR. HOEFLING: Close enough. My name is
9 Jim Hoefling. The reminder that I remain
10 estopped -- and I'm not 22 years old anymore -- is,
11 by itself, a little disconcerting when I paid
12 attention to the last two full meetings and every
13 person that listened. Perhaps I'm being just as
14 sincere as yourselves in attempting of presence. I
15 have only one related point and that is with all of
16 your efforts and of the cities the attempt to bring
17 in numbers and numbers of persons hoping they could
18 explain what they would like, what causes are
19 sincere that are demanding legislation, attention by
20 government, the missing numbers of persons who are
21 not here are those who I'm curious about. Is there
22 any, at anytime, an opportunity for all of the
23 remaining persons who wish have a factual input,
24 with or without a vote, et cetera, their expressed,
25 their considered, their reason before persons like

1 myself or yourselves -- you seem to me to be paying
2 attention -- for all of us?

3 Is there any other mechanism, written or
4 otherwise, that would provide the opportunity for
5 those to have their considered input to this kind of
6 decision?

7 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, Mr. Hoefling.
8 We do have a website. Chairman, do you want to
9 speak to that?

10 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Yes. We have a website
11 where you can turn in your testimony.

12 MR. HOEFLING: Thank you. I don't treat
13 digital communication with --

14 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: But more --

15 MR. HOEFLING: -- of a unique individual human
16 person that I see here. Good evening.

17 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: But, more importantly, what
18 we'll do is we'll come back again, which is how we
19 best reach citizens, as by being available in your
20 cities, within an hour's drive, at least two more
21 times before we finish this process.

22 (Audience applause.)

23 COMMISSIONER LEE: Ms. Balic and Ms. Lewis.

24 MS. BALIC: Yes. Good evening, and thank you
25 to the members of the Commission for holding these

1 hearings. My name is Sharon Balic, and I live in
2 Lutz. I'm a retired state college administrator and
3 high school science teacher. I've lived in Florida
4 for 28 years, and I'm a registered Democrat.

5 I am here in support of open primaries in
6 Florida. I believe that no American should be
7 required to join a political party in order to
8 exercise their right to vote. According to a study
9 conducted in February of 2017 by the League of Women
10 Voters Florida, more than 3 million Floridians who
11 identified as no party affiliation were
12 disenfranchised during the 2016 primaries and denied
13 a voice in the election process granted to them by
14 the U.S. Constitution.

15 In Florida, elections are paid for by the
16 taxpayers, including those who were locked out of
17 the process. Additionally, under the closed primary
18 system, elected officials are often persuaded by
19 narrow party basis while other constituencies and
20 viewpoints are excluded.

21 In the 2016 primary, less than 24 percent of
22 registered voters decided who would represent the
23 other 75 percent. An open nonpartisan primary would
24 require -- excuse me -- all candidates to appear on
25 a single primary ballot. All registered voters

1 would participate, and the top two winners would
2 move on to the general election.

3 Candidates would then have to reach out to all
4 voters. States with open primaries have found that
5 open primaries create more competition, increase
6 voter participation and create a more productive and
7 representative legislature.

8 Again, referencing the League of Women Voters
9 Florida study, between 2004 and 2016, there was a 64
10 percent increase in nonparty affiliated registered
11 voters, 40 percent of these voters are age 18 to 34.
12 If Florida is to remain a thriving
13 technologically-advanced and economically-vibrant
14 state, we must reverse apathy and low voter turnout
15 and actively engage the next generation of leaders
16 in the democratic experience.

17 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, Ms. Balic.

18 MS. BALIC: Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER LEE: And we're going to
20 call -- let's see, we have Jessica Lewis,
21 David McCallister and Sarah Robinson.

22 MS. LEWIS: Hi. My name is Jessica Lewis. I
23 wanted to thank you guys for coming to listen to us.
24 And thank you for everyone who came to speak. You
25 guys are the heros. I have three things to ask of

1 you. One, reproductive rights, women's bodies and
2 decisions about our bodies are our individual
3 private decisions alone, no one else's. I'm asking
4 you to preserve privacy protections in Florida's
5 Constitution, especially as they related to women's
6 access to abortion.

7 Second, climate change. Florida needs a
8 climate action plan, period. Three, felon's rights
9 restoration. Felons deserve to have their rights
10 restored once they've served their time. Restore
11 their right to vote as soon as they are finished
12 with their time.

13 And, also, I lied about only having three
14 topics. Four, expand Florida conversation lands.
15 Five, constitutional amendments. What happens to
16 these amendments when we actually vote in favor of
17 them? You guys are the leaders. You're the
18 decision-makers. Some of you are the 1 percent. If
19 you're a Florida legislator, like you,
20 Senator Rouson -- you're my Senator -- represent us.
21 If you are a business owner, treat us, your
22 workforce, well. Enforce Floridian's will by making
23 constitutional amendments stick. Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, ma'am.

25 Mr. McCallister.

1 MR. McCALLISTER: Yes, thank you. Good
2 evening, Commissioners. My name is
3 David McCallister. I was born in Miami. I'm a
4 sixth-generation Floridian. I live in Hillsborough
5 County now, and I'm a member of the Hillsborough
6 County Veteran's Memorial Park and Museum Committee.

7 Florida prides itself on being a
8 veteran-friendly state. And we also have pride in
9 our law enforcement officers, firemen and first
10 responders. Yet, the monuments and memorials, these
11 heros -- to these heros have next, to no,
12 protection.

13 In the last two years, as Mr. Chestnut said
14 earlier, more and more uncivil disrespect has been
15 shown as people with an aggressive agenda are
16 vandalizing these memorials and using them as public
17 billboards to splash their hate-filled slogans in
18 the public landscape just to shock and get
19 attention, as a slap in the face to our veterans and
20 heroes.

21 This is not free speech. It is criminal acts.
22 And, yet, the penalties are so minor and so
23 haphazardly applied that there's less protection for
24 a monument in a county courthouse square or a public
25 park or cemetery than there is for a phone booth at

1 a gas station. This is shameful.

2 This legislative session, Senate Bill 418 and
3 House Bill 529, The Soldiers and Heros Memorial
4 Protection Act was introduced. But, while the House
5 members supported this unanimously in all their
6 various committees, individuals in the Senate
7 leadership, Democrat and Republican, effectively
8 squashed it for no good reason.

9 Therefore, since the legislature has let
10 Florida's veterans and first responders down, we
11 come to the Constitution Revision Commission to ask
12 for the chance to embed respect for veterans and
13 heros, and their memorials, their physical
14 memorials, in the constitution and let the citizens
15 vote in an actual election. Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, Mr. McCallister.

17 We're going to have Sarah Robinson and then
18 Andy Warrener and Michael Girard. And then we're
19 going to take a seven-minute break after Mr. Girard.

20 Ms. Robinson.

21 MS. ROBINSON: Hi. I'm Sarah Robinson. I
22 stand before you as a Floridian for 38 years. I've
23 seen a lot of changes, the biggest being the sheer
24 number of people who now live here. We have passed
25 New York and are now the 30 largest state in the

1 union with over 20 million people.

2 And, because of this, I've seen a lot of
3 farmland and green space disappear over the years,
4 permanently changing our landscape. While
5 development has meant jobs for some, as the housing
6 crisis proved, it is not a sustainable economy, and
7 it's putting an incredible amount of pressure on our
8 land, air and water.

9 Springs, rivers and lakes are becoming
10 polluted and our aquifer is threatened as well. We
11 cannot continue on this path. I was very
12 disappointed when the growth management laws of the
13 1980s were eliminated in the name of less government
14 regulation under the current leadership in
15 Tallahassee. Floridians have consistently voted for
16 strong common sense environmental laws.

17 So whatever steps you take, I urge you to do
18 so with honor and respect for the will of the voters
19 who care about Florida's natural environment in
20 combating sea level rise and stronger more dangerous
21 hurricanes due to climate change.

22 Secondly, voting rights. We have a bad
23 reputation and are often the laughingstock of the
24 nation. The 2000 presidential election comes to
25 mind, but there were so many other examples. As a

1 southern state, Florida has a sad history of denying
2 African Americans and other minorities their rights
3 to vote. And, just recently, Governor Scott ordered
4 a shameful and unnecessary purging of voter rolls
5 that mistakenly withdrew American citizens and
6 denied them their basic rights to vote.

7 I was ashamed of my state when I recently
8 learned that we were only one of three states in the
9 nation that do not automatically restore a citizen's
10 right to vote upon completion of their sentence
11 after a felony conviction, the vast majority of them
12 nonviolent offenses. Forty-seven other states do,
13 but we make it ridiculously hard. I urge you to
14 support the restoration of voting rights.

15 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you, Ms. Robinson.
16 Andy Warrener.

17 MR. WARRENER: Warrener, that's correct, sir.
18 First, I would like to thank the Commission for
19 being here. The ninth stop. Wow, that's great. I
20 would also like to give a quick shout-out to this
21 stenographer here who has somehow written down every
22 single word of this. That's been the most amazing
23 thing I've seen all day.

24 My name is Andy Warrener. I'm a citizen of
25 the great nation of the United States. I'm a

1 resident of Florida, and I happen to live in Odessa.
2 I am a no-party affiliate voter. And I'm actually
3 running as an independent candidate in Florida House
4 District 64 next year.

5 I wanted to address the Commission because I
6 feel like the will of Florida voters is being
7 thwarted. Two recent amendments came through.
8 Amendment 1, in 2014, the Water and Land
9 Conversation Amendment, and also Amendment 2 in
10 2016, the medicinal marijuana amendment.

11 Those are high bars. It's very difficult to
12 get a constitutional amendment on the ballot,
13 first, and then, furthermore, approved. It's an
14 extremely high bar. Okay. That bar was passed by
15 both of those amendments. And, furthermore, when it
16 got onto the ballot, Amendment 1, in 2014, The Land
17 and Water Conservation Amendment, received 74.96
18 percent of the vote. That's over 4.2 million votes.
19 I personally have not seen a greater mandate by the
20 voters of Florida since I've been alive or conscious
21 of it.

22 To add to that, Amendment 2, in 2016, received
23 71.32 percent of the vote, over 6.5 million people
24 approved that one. That was, obviously, a
25 presidential election year. 2014 being a midterm,

1 low turnout, understandable.

2 Now, the legislature has now finished. And
3 I'll give them some credit for Amendment 2. They
4 did come up with something for that. But, as far as
5 Amendment 1 is concerned, The Land and Water
6 Conservation Amendment was designed to post money
7 for the state to use to acquire conservation lands.
8 I don't know about everyone else in this room, but I
9 took a good hard look at the state budget, and I
10 didn't see a dollar in the state budget set to
11 acquire those lands.

12 That's a huge miscarriage, and I ask the
13 legislature -- the Commission if they would clarify
14 or create language in the state constitution that
15 would adhere the legislature to those constitutional
16 amendments. Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER LEE: Thank you for your
18 testimony.

19 Michael Girard.

20 MR. GIRARD: Yes. Mike Girard, Orlando. I've
21 been here since 1986. I'm a junior and also a
22 veteran officer. Thank you, Commissioners. I'm
23 actually going to talk, hopefully, about several
24 things, but certainly to start with the
25 Second Amendment.

1 The right to keep and bear arms is not about
2 sports. It is not about hunting. Its purpose from
3 the founders is to throw off tyranny. That was its
4 function. And the constitution, by the way, doesn't
5 grant rights, and the Bill of Rights does not. It
6 restricts government. That's what the Bill of
7 Rights does.

8 In the state of Florida there is no right to
9 keep and bear arms. It is a right being treated
10 like a privilege. If I have to ask permission, if I
11 have to have a permit or a license to carry and be
12 told how I'm going to carry, I am being used for a
13 privilege. It is a privilege only that I'm being
14 granted, not a right. And I would like to point out
15 that the Second Amendment forbids any restriction,
16 regardless of whatever our court says, on the right
17 to keep and bear arms suitable to a contemporary
18 soldier.

19 And I will read this from, by the way,
20 Tench Coxe, who may be one of your ancestors. He
21 says, "Their swords, and every terrible implement of
22 the soldier, are the birthrights of Americans. The
23 unlimited power of the sword is not in the hands of
24 either the federal or state governments, but, where
25 our trust in God it will ever remain, in the hands

1 of the people." That was Trench Coxe, February 20,
2 1788.

3 And, by the way, on open primaries, I don't
4 want a Democrat selecting my candidate, if you don't
5 mind. So let's not have that. Okay? Thank you
6 very much.

7 COMMISSIONER LEE: Okay. We will -- the
8 Commission will stand in recess for seven minutes or
9 upon the call of the Chair.

10 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: It is 8:17. We will
11 reconvene at 8:24.

12 (Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

13 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Good evening, everyone. If
14 everyone would take their seats, we're going to
15 reconvene this meeting.

16 Commissioner Bondi has the gavel. Thank you,
17 Commissioner.

18 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you. Okay.
19 Samuel Saporta, Ciara Kauffman, Emily Cruz,
20 Andrew Heneen and Thomas Smith, please come forward.

21 And our first one is Samuel Saporta.

22 MR. SAPORTA: Thank you. It's actually
23 Joe Saporta.

24 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Okay. It says Samuel.

25 MR. SAPORTA: Sorry. There's not another one

1 here, is there?

2 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Is this you? Are you
3 here to talk about open primaries?

4 MR. SAPORTA: No, I'm here to talk about --

5 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Wrong person. Okay.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Maybe if you spell it,
7 they --

8 S-A-P-O-R-T-E. Samuel?

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Daniel.

10 COMMISSIONER BONDI: All right. Samuel, we're
11 going to take a pass on you. Okay. Ciara Kauffman.
12 Ciara. Okay. Emily Cruz.

13 MS. CRUZ: Hi. My name is Emily Cruz, and I'm
14 just here as a parent and past teacher. I worked
15 for the public school system for four years -- these
16 past four years. I recently quit my job because it
17 contradicted with my ethics.

18 Step Up for Students Scholarship has given my
19 son the opportunity to choose a school he wanted to
20 go to, or that we thought was best for him. Before
21 that, he was in a public school in a deaf classroom
22 where the teacher didn't know sign language and the
23 interpreter only signed during story times, ignoring
24 his signs when he requested to use the restroom and
25 that he was hurt.

1 The public school system failed my son, and I
2 was fortunate enough to find a private school here
3 in Clearwater. We lost our home in Lake Mary that
4 we owned because we stopped paying our mortgage and
5 started paying tuition. And thanks to the Step Up
6 for Students Scholarship and the Gardener
7 Scholarship.

8 He has multiple special needs. He's hearing
9 impaired. He has hydrocephalus, epilepsy, cerebral
10 palsy and he's deaf. And no school, up until this
11 point, in Orange or Pinellas County was able to
12 accommodate him until we found this private school
13 called Blossom. And I just wanted to say thanks for
14 making that available, and I hope that that program
15 continues. Thank you.

16 MR. HENEEN: Hello. I want to discuss two
17 proposals I submitted on the website. Sorry for
18 speaking fast to get through them. First, many
19 others have mentioned fair districting. A proposal
20 I submitted last night and is awaiting moderation on
21 the website addresses this by using software that
22 determines legislative district boundaries. It's
23 too complicated to explain with my limited time,
24 but, basically, the legislature would vote on
25 metrics, such as compartment of districts, how well

1 districts represent minorities and political parties
2 and other constitutionally-mandated considerations.

3 In separate votes, the legislature would
4 decide the weight to give each metric. Software
5 would then crunch the numbers and determine the best
6 district map that balances the metric. The software
7 and all input data would be public without
8 restrictions incumbering reverse engineering or
9 similar ways that the public can scrutinize or
10 analyze the way the results were obtained.

11 Second, also awaiting moderation on the
12 website, is a proposal to annul Article 5,
13 Section 15 of the Florida Constitution which the
14 Supreme Court of Florida has interpreted to give it
15 both the exclusive legislative and judicial power to
16 decide what constitutes the practice of law, and,
17 thereby, the unauthorized practice of law.

18 It would then give the legislature the power
19 to define the unauthorized practice of law and would
20 require the state to define the unauthorized
21 practice of law in terms of actions, conduct or
22 speech, unlike current codification of defining the
23 practice of law.

24 Why? First, I'll comment why I believe
25 Article 5, Section 15, the dual legislative judicial

1 nature of the Supreme Court of Florida under that is
2 currently in violation of the due process clause of
3 the U.S. Constitution. When people bring
4 constitutional challenges to UPL of regulations and
5 the Supreme Court would have to determine whether
6 its own justifications satisfies strict scrutiny.

7 Second, shifting the authority to a less
8 biased rule-making body should allow software
9 developed by non-lawyer corporations -- for example,
10 software development by non-lawyer corporations to
11 provide basic legal services at a cost that the
12 average person can afford, something currently
13 prevented by ethical rules banning lawyers sharing
14 legal fees with non-lawyers and banning corporations
15 from practicing law.

16 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Andrew, thank you very
17 much. You can submit -- Andrew, you can submit all
18 your written notes, and we will get them all online.
19 Thank you.

20 And, Thomas, before you speak, if we can go
21 ahead and call up Cathy Protopapas -- I'm sorry, I'm
22 killing your name -- Denise Yettaw, Chris Pastura,
23 Bradley Litterow and Donald Kiernan.

24 And, Thomas, go ahead.

25 MR. SMITH: Thank you for this opportunity.

1 I'm here to advocate for addition to the Florida
2 Constitution for the provision of free
3 post-secondary education to adult residents. Those
4 with contemporary technical skills have higher
5 levels of employment, stability and higher wages
6 than those who are unskilled. Those with Bachelor
7 degrees have a lower unemployment rate than those
8 who did not have degrees.

9 Completion of a community college Associate's
10 degree program makes completion of a Bachelor's
11 degree program easier. Recently the states of
12 Tennessee and Oregon will offer tuition-free
13 community college to adult residents beginning in
14 2018. The state of New York will offer tuition-free
15 two and four-year degree programs at public colleges
16 and universities beginning in 2018.

17 So I would offer this wording based on the
18 wording that's similar in use in Tennessee and
19 Oregon. "The State of Florida shall provide
20 tuition-free education to Florida residents at
21 Florida community colleges and public technical
22 schools who meet the following criteria: One, the
23 resident must be at least 18 years of age; two, the
24 resident must have been a permanent resident of the
25 state of Florida for at least 365 days prior to

1 enrollment; three, the resident must not have
2 received a degree from a college, university or
3 trade school prior to enrollment; and, four, after
4 enrollment, the student shall maintain a grade point
5 average of at least 2.5, as determined at the end of
6 every semester to maintain tuition-free status".
7 That's all I have.

8 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you.

9 Cathy, could you say your name, please.

10 MS. PROTOPAPAS: Cathy Protopapas. We've
11 already talked about campaign finance reform, but I
12 think in order to gain the public trust and to not
13 have conflict of interest, it's important that they
14 pass -- it's similar to Move to Amend has a proposed
15 28th amendment to the constitution in which it ends
16 corporate personhood and that they represent natural
17 people.

18 That is important in regard to putting a
19 conscious into our democracy, because when money and
20 corporations rule, we do not have ethics. We have
21 power and corruption which basically rules. We do
22 not have integrity in our system. And in order to
23 have that integrity, you've got to represent human
24 beings, because human beings have a conscience, and
25 they will -- that will create a self-governing

1 democracy, which will create laws which will work
2 for the benefit of humanity. But that has to go to
3 the international level, to the UN.

4 Another thing is that I did pull a lot of
5 things from the South African Constitution. They
6 have a lot of good things in there. But one of them
7 is in regard to human rights, that they have a
8 commission, and they review how the Bill of Rights
9 are working in regard to housing, healthcare, food,
10 water, Social Security, education and the
11 environment. So if you've got those accountability
12 institutions in place, and people's human rights are
13 protected, it's going to fix issues in regard to
14 your education system.

15 Because I come from Canada, and they have a
16 social safety net. And I think one of the main
17 issues in the United States, and, particularly in
18 the state of Florida, is the choice to use mass
19 incarceration over social services.

20 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Cathy, thank you very
21 much. You can submit the rest of your notes, and
22 they will be posted on our website.

23 MS. PROTOPAPAS: Okay. Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you.

25 Denise, could you pronounce your name, please?

1 MS. YETTAW: Yes. You don't want to try?
2 Denise Yettaw.

3 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you. I had it
4 right then.

5 MS. YETTAW: Good job. My name is
6 Denise Yettaw. I'm a Florida native and a St. Pete
7 resident. Also, I'm a descendent directly from the
8 Mayflower as well. I'm a single mother of two
9 teens. I'm here to talk about women's reproductive
10 rights.

11 Because Florida's Constitution contains an
12 explicit right to privacy, the Florida Supreme Court
13 has long held that it embraces privacy interests and
14 extends more protections than does the federal
15 constitution, which contains only an implicit right
16 to privacy. Regardless of your religious or
17 ideological views on abortion, we urge the CRC not
18 to threaten these greater protections for
19 Floridians. Polls of Floridians, and specifically
20 Florida voters, have consistently found that a
21 majority of Floridians support legalized abortion.
22 Of the more than 25,000 people who participated in
23 the Women's March St. Pete, and rallied right here
24 in Tampa Bay, made it loud and clear in January, we
25 do not want access to our reproductive rights

1 attacked through a legislative process.

2 We do not want healthcare providers, like
3 planned parenthood, defunded and we certainly don't
4 want women's rights undermined in our state
5 constitution. The last time politicians tried to
6 weaken the privacy clause in Florida's Constitution,
7 Florida voters overwhelmingly rejected the attempt.
8 Proposed Amendment 6 on the 2012 ballot was an
9 effort to limit the privacy clause in our
10 constitution, and it was soundly defeated by the
11 Florida voters, 55 percent to 45 percent.

12 I also support restating felons' rights to
13 vote. I support open primaries. And I don't
14 support open carry. Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you.

16 Chris Pastura. No Chris. Okay.

17 Bradley -- and can you pronounce your last
18 name, please?

19 MR. LITTEROW: Bradley Litterow. Hello,
20 Commissioners. Thank you for your time. Thank you
21 for your attention. Yesterday 22 people died. They
22 died waiting for organ transplants that were not
23 forthcoming, and this is something -- it affects all
24 sorts of people -- children, adults, people of all
25 races, people of all ages. And this is something

1 that the state of Florida could change. The state
2 of Florida could enshrine in our constitution a
3 requirement that organ donation be mandatory, not
4 optional. But we're not going to do that, and the
5 reason we're not going to do that is because we all
6 understand the importance of people's right to
7 control their own body, even after they die.

8 And so I suggest, instead, that we enshrine
9 that instinct and that intuition that we share into
10 our constitution ensuring that the right to bodily
11 autotomy and control of one own's body is enshrined
12 in our constitution, regardless of the -- to
13 enshrine in our constitution that no person has the
14 right to use our body, to use our organs, regardless
15 of their age or their relationship to you. Thank
16 you.

17 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you.

18 Donald. Is that you?

19 MR. KIERNAN: Donald Kiernan.

20 COMMISSIONER BONDI: While you're coming up,
21 sir, could these other come up. Gary Gibbons,
22 Taria McCray, Louis Carliner, Carl Dahl and
23 April Thanos, I believe -- T-h-a-n-o-s.

24 Go ahead, Donald.

25 MR. KIERNAN: Hi. My name is Donald Kiernan.

1 I'm from Clearwater, Florida. I'm a retired
2 machinist. I'm married to my beautiful wife for 37
3 years. I have two children and three grandchildren.
4 I'm here today to express my concern for Florida
5 independence.

6 I want a nonpartisan primary election
7 according to the Florida -- I'm sorry. In my
8 opinion, Florida independents want a nonpartisan
9 primary election. According to the Florida Division
10 of Elections, over 3 million Florida voters are
11 registered as no party affiliation. I am. That's
12 25 percent of our elector, and they're barred from
13 voting in the primary elections.

14 Now, due to past gerrymandering by both
15 parties, safe districts still exist for both major
16 parties. And, unfortunately, most of the races are
17 decided in the primaries, instead of the general
18 election. I would like for all of Florida citizens
19 who are registered voters to be able to chose their
20 candidates rather than political parties doing it in
21 the backrooms. Regardless of your party
22 affiliation, all to appear on a single primary
23 ballot with all voters voting for their preferred
24 candidates in the primary, then the two top
25 candidates would advance to the general election,

1 and, if needed, a runoff.

2 In closing, please change the loophole for the
3 major parties and return the power back to us,
4 Florida registered voters. This Commission has the
5 responsibility to the voters of Florida, and you
6 have the opportunity to right the wrong that has
7 gone on for the last 20 years. It's up to you guys.
8 Thanks very much.

9 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, sir.

10 Gary Gibbons.

11 MR. GIBBONS: Good evening. My name is
12 Gary Gibbons. I'm from Tampa. I'm a lifelong
13 resident of Florida, fourth generation. A very wise
14 man once said that we'd all be better off if the
15 legislature met about once every five or ten years,
16 rather than every year. And, likewise, it's a good
17 thing that this Commission only meets once every 20
18 years.

19 The Florida Constitution should be something
20 that we don't easily amend. I want you to, first
21 and foremost, do no harm. Do not take away any
22 rights from us. Please use restraint in the number
23 of amendments that you propose. Don't put five or
24 ten amendments on the ballot. The Florida
25 Constitution should be amended with restraint. Once

1 something is in the constitution, you can't get it
2 out.

3 Having said that, amendments are often the
4 only way for the public to address things which
5 legislators fail to act upon. So please don't do
6 anything that would make citizen-initiative
7 amendments more difficult to pass. And don't do
8 anything to overturn any previously passed
9 public-initiative amendments that we've voted on.

10 Don't raise the voting percentage for passage
11 above 60 percent. And you would be doing us a
12 service if you would allow us four years to gather
13 the signatures -- the 800,000 signatures.

14 There's a lot of issues that -- as a lawyer, I
15 would like to see you do one thing, and that's
16 restore public voting rights for felons. There
17 should not be four people who make that decision.

18 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Taria McCray.

19 MR. McCRAY: Good evening. My name is
20 Taria McCray, and I represent the Roosevelt
21 Institute and its initiative to restore voting
22 rights to people convicted of felons in our state
23 and once they've completed all the terms of their
24 sentences.

25 Florida is often criticized as being one of

1 the most volatile states in the presidential
2 election with the potential to swing elections to
3 the left or right. What's not talked about is the
4 laws dating back to Jim Crow period embedded within
5 its constitution that bars 10 percent of Floridians
6 from voting from the polls. The law
7 disproportionately disenfranchises African American
8 and other racial minority votes. It's high time
9 to end this embarrassing characterization through
10 restoration of voting rights with those with past
11 felony convictions and unify our state.

12 We must automatically restore voting rights to
13 people in our state convicted of felony convictions
14 once they have completed the terms of their
15 sentences. We are Floridians, and we are
16 big-hearted people. We believe in second chances
17 and opportunities for those who have paid their
18 debts back to society.

19 As Florida is just one of three states with a
20 voting ban, the disenfranchisement of people with
21 felony convictions from voting draws serious
22 questions about the legitimacy and accuracy of
23 previous and future presidential and gubernatorial
24 elections. And the inclusion of all Florida adults
25 in the election process will yield a fair and more

1 transparent elections demonstrative of the values
2 that we share and the vision that we hold for our
3 state.

4 And if we expect leaders and policies which
5 represent our values of what we care about, we must
6 make it a the point to include every one of us in
7 our election process. We need an amendment to the
8 constitution to automatically restore voting rights
9 to those with felony convictions in our state.

10 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you.

11 Louis Carliner.

12 MR. CARLINER: I'll make sure I'm close enough
13 to the mic. I concur with the need for the open
14 primary because it would eliminate the write-in
15 spoiler trick that really denies people the right to
16 get the candidate of their choice. However, I would
17 like to add an instant runoff feature with maybe a
18 run, place and show columns where one could vote for
19 his first choice, his second choice and third. And,
20 from that, it would ensure that the ultimate winner
21 be in the primary or the general election has at
22 least a 50 percent majority.

23 I would also feel that we need to go with an
24 independent commissioner to do the redistricting,
25 like Iowa, and I believe Arizona, has done. And I

1 would also like to see a provision where -- term
2 limits have not worked out the way people expected
3 them to be. But, as an alterative, put in a
4 recall -- citizen's recall vote provision to remove
5 a bad candidate. This would keep the situation we
6 have with the lobbyist and the staffers since they
7 are the only ones who really know fully the system
8 from being able to weaken the ability to our
9 legislature to function and to pass laws favored by
10 the citizens.

11 And then, finally, we might want to consider a
12 proposition-type scheme like California uses where
13 you don't have to keep cluttering up the
14 constitution in order to be able to have laws which
15 reflect citizens' will.

16 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you.

17 Carl Dahl. Carl. April Thanos, T-h-a-n-o-s.

18 All right. The next five, Reverend Lois
19 Rogers-Watson, Eugene Watson, Harland G-r-e-c-h-e,
20 or Harland Greeve. I can't read it. And I believe
21 it's Connor Darken or --

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He left.

23 COMMISSIONER BONDI: He left? Connor left,
24 okay. Phil Walters. If you could all come up. No
25 one. Okay. Oh, I'm sorry, we've got someone.

1 Reverend? No? No one, okay. Reverend Watson,
2 Eugene Watson, Harland and Phil Walters.

3 Who do I have?

4 MR. WALTERS: Phil Walters.

5 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Great. Thank you.

6 MR. WALTERS: Good evening. Just a few things
7 I want to point out after all the speakers, but
8 since you're all educated and learned people, we are
9 a constitutional republic. A constitutional
10 republic, okay? As you all make these decisions to
11 go into the constitution, remember not everybody
12 votes. We're not a democracy. If you read history,
13 you know what the history of democracies are. It's
14 my rule, just by definition.

15 But, anyway, what I really wanted to talk
16 about -- veterans' monuments. Our veteran monuments
17 are being desecrated out there. They're being
18 removed. I know in Gainesville there's actually a
19 monument downtown that is on an actual battle site.
20 There were battles right there in Gainesville.
21 Voted to remove. One over in Orlando. We need to
22 do something about this. Rewriting history does not
23 solve any problems.

24 Bear hunting was brought up.

25 Commissioner Gaetz, you know about bears, do you

1 not? All right. For those of you that don't, the
2 FWC is set up as a constitutionally separate
3 non-political organization. They're biologists. I
4 was at that last meeting and recommended a bear
5 hunt. We were shut down. My liberty, my fellow
6 hunters' liberty was denied by hecklers' veto.
7 Okay. Hecklers' veto. A small amount of people
8 just raising hell about we don't want to kill a
9 bear.

10 Those of you who have to live in close
11 proximity of the predators will find out what the
12 problem is. There's people that -- we love our
13 wildlife, but you have to have leeway in dealing
14 with it.

15 Federal laws. Sometimes in the
16 constitution -- many of you all are elected. Our
17 legislature and Governor should protect our people
18 from often the laws that are illegal and shoved down
19 our throat by the federal government. That's
20 something you all should look at at times. Protect
21 us, the people, from these guys that pass laws and
22 try to instill them, like unfunded mandates is one
23 that comes to mind. So please keep that in mind.

24 But, anyway, thank you all for your service.
25 I appreciate it.

1 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you. Byron O. He
2 only did an initial O or D. Byron? I'm just going
3 to start calling some and -- Bob Wieland. No?
4 Wayne Schucker, Teresa Miller, Rochelle
5 Reback -- Shelly? I don't see you. Sydney Eastman,
6 Michael Cripe. Oh, who do I have? Oh, Teresa.
7 Okay. I can only see with my reading glasses. Now
8 I can see you.

9 MS. MILLER: Teresa Miller. Because the
10 privacy act has been misinterpreted by the
11 Supreme Court, a young girl is allowed to have an
12 abortion without parental knowledge. This is
13 emotionally, physically and spiritually a tragic
14 situation. Often it has lifelong consequences.
15 Please restore this amendment as it was intended, to
16 protect privacy, not promote an act that is
17 detrimental to both the baby and the mother. I'm
18 proud to say I'm pro life by birth, not by choice.

19 With respect to Amendment 2, we keep hearing
20 71 percent of the people voted for it. Well, that's
21 true, but the reality is that only 40 percent of
22 eligible voters voted for this. It's not an
23 overwhelming majority. And I believe if they better
24 understood that amendment, that many of them would
25 have voted no. However, because the Supreme Court

1 allowed the amendment to have the term "medical" and
2 be associated with marijuana, many of them were
3 mislead and had false hope that this is some sort of
4 miracle drug.

5 In essence, now our Department of Health and
6 legislators are tasked with regulating a drug that
7 is not a prescription drug, as it keeps being
8 referred to, is illegal under federal law, is a
9 Schedule One DEA substance, is not supported by
10 medical associations, nor research, is addictive,
11 often causes a variety of physical and mental
12 impairments, some of which are permanent, can't be
13 sold in pharmacies but can be grown in the backyard,
14 and it's a cash-only product.

15 To say we've added fuel to the fire of the
16 opioid epidemic is an understatement. Please don't
17 wait 20 years to revisit this. The people need to
18 better understand this amendment. And please do not
19 allow any form of medicine to be put forth and for
20 our people to be doctors and pharmacists. If we
21 don't put an end to this insanity, the next thing
22 we're going to do is legalize heroine as a pain
23 killer.

24 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, Teresa.

25 Rochelle is not here. Sydney is not here.

1 Michael Cripes is not here. We are going to move
2 on. John Carl Browning, are you here? Okay. John,
3 while you walk up, I'm going to call some more
4 names. Mike Suarez, Russell Patterson,
5 Lakeisha Black, Faithe Estes, Michael Ledbetter,
6 Kathleen Riley. If you are all here, please come on
7 up.

8 Okay. John.

9 MR. BROWNING: My name is Jonathan Carl
10 Browning. I'm from Brooksville, Florida. And what
11 I was here to talk today about was an emergency,
12 stuff that's been going on with our constitution.
13 And I just wanted to see if I could pass an
14 amendment to repay the people for where they took
15 the money from them when they were in jails. When
16 officers arrest you and they put you in jail, they
17 go to the statute where they took the money, and you
18 look underneath it and says any person in the jail
19 that's a prisoner. So they've been taking the
20 money. But really you're really an arrestee when
21 you first come to jail. You haven't even went to
22 court yet. You're an arrestee. And it don't list
23 that in the statute. So they've been taking the
24 money from all these people.

25 And then, when you go to court, when you get

1 an attorney, and he files a motion for discovery,
2 all documents pertaining to the case, the state's
3 attorneys hides it from your attorney.

4 So I feel it's an emergency. If you're going
5 to hide stuff, then you have to come up with a way
6 to repay these people. Even when you go to
7 court -- say I go to court and I'm drunk, the State
8 is going to argue all day long, you were
9 intoxicated. You didn't know what you were doing.
10 But, hold on, you entered into a legal obligation
11 with me when I'm asleep in my cell. Take the money.
12 Get them out of there.

13 I've personally had people shake the pepper
14 spray in front of me because I'm looking at this
15 machine. They took my money and put it in the
16 machine. They said if you try talking to that
17 machine, sir, we're going to put you in the mental
18 ward. What do you mean? Well, we take the money,
19 and we put it in a machine.

20 In Hillsborough County, Commissioner Reding
21 had some ordinance passed to -- a resolution that
22 any means possible, you can take the money from a
23 person in the jail. I know it sounds crazy. I've
24 never seen a law where you can take money while I'm
25 sleeping. You're saying I'm drunk and don't

1 understand what's happening. So in the morning,
2 when I am sober, where's my money? Don't you
3 remember, sir, we have a legal obligation with you?
4 Don't you remember? Talk to them. So I go court,
5 and I won my case in court, and I ask them, where's
6 my damn money? Well, I'm going to get my money back
7 by any means possible so --

8 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you very much. You
9 can submit your statements in writing online.

10 MR. BROWNING: You already know. You know it.

11 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you very much.

12 MR. BROWNING: I'll get my money back in any
13 means possible, and then we'll deal with it in
14 court. But you've got to repay the people.

15 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you.

16 MR. BROWNING: You took the money. You've got
17 to repay them.

18 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Mr. Suarez.

19 MR. SUAREZ: Thank you. Welcome to Tampa,
20 and, to our Tampa Bay Commissioners, welcome home.
21 My name is Mike Suarez. I'm a Tampa City
22 Councilman. I'm representing an at-large district
23 for the last six years, and I'm member of the
24 Florida League of Cities. In my capacity as an
25 elected official, I've seen our city have meaningful

1 and significant effects on our citizens' lives. Our
2 state constitution under Article 8, Section 2
3 enumerates the creation and powers of municipal
4 government, the essentials of home rule are defined
5 in that section, and it's the basis for all local
6 governments who provide governmental, corporate and
7 proprietary powers and to effectively conduct
8 municipal government.

9 These powers have been, for the most part,
10 exercised judicially to provide services necessary
11 for cities to flourish. In our city we have enjoyed
12 steady growth, and they're recognized as one of the
13 leaders in job creation and economic development.
14 This is no accident, but a concerted effort by the
15 Mayor, our City Council and our citizens. The
16 mechanisms we have employed to make Tampa one of the
17 top 50 best places to live includes the amenities we
18 have provided outside the essential services, such
19 as police, fire, clean water and solid waste pickup.

20 No city can function without these powers and
21 the ability to expand their services to meet growing
22 demand. However, we do need additional tools to
23 continue to be the center of economic activity for
24 our county and the entire west coast of Florida.

25 Currently, only counties are allowed to hold

1 referenda for the passage of additional revenue
2 through sales taxes, which makes it extremely
3 difficult for cities to continue to grow. I urge
4 this Commission to amend Article 8, Section 2 to
5 allow cities of 200,000 or more in population the
6 option of allowing their citizen the freedom to
7 raise revenue for municipal purposes. I also urge
8 this Commission to continue to protect the powers
9 that charter cities currently have without undue
10 interference from the state. Thank you for the
11 opportunity to speak, and thank you for being here
12 in Tampa today.

13 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, Councilman.
14 Russell Patterson.

15 MR. PATTERSON: Hello. I'm Russ Patterson.
16 I'm a career United States Air Force officer,
17 retired several years ago, and, as of July 1st, I'll
18 be a retired Hillsborough County school teacher.

19 As a school teacher I noticed, that the school
20 I was at, that the facilities, especially the music
21 facilities, are worse than what I had as a middle
22 school student or junior high school student in
23 Texas. It's unbelievable how poorly Florida funds
24 public education. And I believe we need to put
25 stronger language in our constitution to make sure

1 that the legislature actually does their job and
2 funds public education so that we'll actually have
3 the best in the nation.

4 I also stand in support of open primaries,
5 especially closing the write-in loophole. Then I
6 echo what Councilmember Suarez says about local
7 controls on taxes.

8 Now, I also have to say something about my
9 brother in arms, the Army veteran, about the
10 malitia. You know, I think it's a great idea that
11 we have a malitia and so folks that own guns need to
12 get trained every month on their guns, and they need
13 to go and do duty for two weeks in the summertime as
14 part of the militia. I want us to remember that the
15 Second Amendment wasn't about controlling guns. It
16 is about controlling slaves. And we need to make
17 sure that we don't allow guns in our schools, guns
18 in our churches and open carry is just an awful
19 idea. So thank you very much for letting me talk,
20 and do your job, please.

21 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, sir.
22 Lakeisha Black, Faithe Estes, Michael Ledbetter.

23 MR. LEDBETTER: Thank you for the opportunity,
24 and I will try to make this brief because the hour
25 is late, and I know all of you all are fatigued. So

1 thank you for staying this long.

2 I am Michael Ledbetter. I am the product -- a
3 proud product of the Florida schools and the
4 preeminent University of South Florida. I think our
5 Florida Constitution should ensure total equality
6 for every citizen without limitation.

7 It should include automatic restoration of all
8 citizenship rights to every felon upon completion of
9 their sentence. Three, maintain the right of
10 privacy for every citizen, regardless of age. Four,
11 continue a complete separation of church and state,
12 this includes prohibiting the legislature from
13 funding religiously-affiliated schools. Five,
14 disavow K through 12 voucher funding for charter and
15 private schools. Six, keep the judicial terms and
16 independents that they have as currently defined.
17 And, seven, and finally, strengthen fair district
18 amendments to require sworn, explicit legislative
19 intent. Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, Mr. Ledbetter.
21 Kathleen Riley. I'm going to keep calling names.
22 If you're here, please come forward.
23 Richard Warrener, Theresa Tessie Ferlita, Daniel
24 Paul Zutlar, Dr. Rick Garrity, Lee Essrig. I'm
25 going to keep going. Kent Bailey, Pam Eliopulos.

1 Sir, could you state your name?

2 MR. WARRENER: Richard Warrenner. Odessa
3 resident since 1978. And to echo Mr. Ledbetter's
4 comments, thank you all, Commissioners, for staying
5 to hear us.

6 One topic, minimum wage. As you all know, in
7 2004 the citizens of Florida took upon themselves to
8 do the right thing by establishing a minimum wage
9 for our state via a citizen-initiated constitutional
10 amendment. It passed by over 70 percent. The
11 stated purpose was to establish a wage sufficient to
12 provide a decent and healthy life for workers and
13 their families.

14 However, the current minimum wage is \$8.10.
15 Clearly, the intent of the amendment has not been
16 achieved. With only one opportunity for the CRC
17 every 20 years, now is the time to do the right
18 thing by increasing the minimum wage to a level
19 which would actually accomplish that purpose. Thank
20 you.

21 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, sir.

22 Theresa Ferlita, Daniel Paul Zutlan,
23 Dr. Rick Garrity, Lee Essrig, Kent Bailey.

24 MR. BAILEY: Good evening. Kent Bailey, Chair
25 of Tampa Bay Sierra Club. Since 1944, the water in

1 Tampa Bay has come up a total of seven and a half
2 inches. The first couple of inches took 46 years.
3 The next couple of inches took only 20 years. And,
4 in the last seven years, the water has come up an
5 additional three and a half inches, almost as much
6 as in the preceding 66 years.

7 Zillow says that 6 feet of sea level rise will
8 cost Florida \$413 billion in lost real estate. But,
9 long before that, soaring insurance rates will have
10 forced millions of Floridians into foreclosure.
11 Mortgages will have become unobtainable or, at best
12 unaffordable, and our economy will be on its way to
13 a collapse. But we are not helpless in the face of
14 this disaster.

15 There are more than 300,000 jobs waiting to be
16 created in a transition to renewable energy in
17 Florida alone. Two-thirds of these jobs will not
18 require a college degree. The average wage of
19 solar workers is \$26 an hour. And, in Georgia,
20 farmers are getting \$300 to \$700 an acre renting out
21 to solar companies.

22 Today, Florida remains one of the only four
23 states that prohibits third-party sales of energy to
24 the grid. So I call on you tonight to bring forward
25 an amendment that will remove the prohibition of

1 third-party energy sales to Florida's grid. Do it
2 for capitalism. Do it for free enterprise. Do it
3 for Florida's future. But let's bring solar to the
4 Sunshine State. Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, sir.

6 Pam, bear with me for a second, because while
7 you're speaking --

8 MS. ELIOPULOS: Bring them on.

9 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Excuse me?

10 MS. ELIOPULOS: Bring them on.

11 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Oh, all right. While Pam
12 is speaking I'm going to ask that you all come up.
13 Flandra Ismajli. I'm sorry I'm hurting your name.
14 Sandra Odom, Andrea Braboy, Thomas Cabrero,
15 Tim Heberlein, Stephanie Baxter Jenkins,
16 Daniel Fittro, Dewitt Bunch, Danica Fields and
17 Austin Collier.

18 Pam, go ahead. Thank you.

19 MS. ELIOPULOS: Thank you. And bless you all
20 for sitting through this. My name is Pam Eliopoulos.
21 I'm a 20-year resident of Hillsborough County, a
22 former prosecuting attorney, and I stand here to ask
23 you please end the farce in Florida of not allowing
24 any sort of hope of restoration of felon's rights.
25 It's an embarrassment, and we need to end it now.

1 Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, Pam.

3 All right. Flandra.

4 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Would you announce your
5 name? Go ahead.

6 MS. BRABOY: My name is Andrea Braboy.

7 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. We'll find you.
8 Go ahead and speak.

9 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Go ahead, Andrea.

10 MS. BRABOY: Again, my name is Andrea Braboy.
11 I'm a resident of the New Tampa area of the City of
12 Tampa, and I'm a retired senior military officer.
13 And I'm really going to talk about Article 6 and
14 Article 8 primarily.

15 And Article 6, Section 2 should be rewritten
16 to state every citizen of the United States who's at
17 least 18 years of age and who is a permanent
18 resident of a state, shall be automatically
19 registered to vote and shall be an elector of the
20 county of permanent residence.

21 Article 6, Section 3, the oath, should be
22 changed to simply read, each eligible citizen, upon
23 registering, shall subscribe to the following: "I do
24 solemnly swear or affirm that I am qualified to
25 register as an elector under the constitution and

1 laws under the State of Florida".

2 That part about protect and defend the
3 constitution, as a retired military officer, I know
4 what that means. It cannot be proven the way you
5 can prove if somebody is eligible to vote. So it
6 really serves no purpose.

7 Article 6, Section 4, disqualification. As
8 you've already heard before, I also believe that any
9 person convicted of a felony who has completed the
10 terms of the sentence should have his or her rights
11 to vote immediately restored.

12 Article 8, Section 5, local option. I'm going
13 to make this real easy. Okay, I, like a lot of
14 people, have a concealed carry license. I know how
15 to use firearms. I also have, like most of you
16 have, a Florida driver's license. I had to prove I
17 was competent to use a certain kind of vehicle to
18 get this. I don't have to do that for this. That's
19 wrong. I know that people who may be competent in
20 handling a handgun probably can't handle a rifle.
21 So please reconsider that particular section. If
22 you're going to handle a deadly weapon, you better
23 know how to use it. Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, ma'am.

25 Flandra is not here. Sandra Odom,

1 Thomas Cabrero. Thomas, come on up.

2 MR. CABRERO: Hello. I look forward --

3 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Can you talk a little
4 closer, please?

5 MR. CABRERO: I look forward to meeting each
6 and every one of you guys individually. Anyway, I
7 just heard about this meeting very recently. I just
8 got off of work at MacDill. I'm a civilian helping
9 them build a new building. And, at my age, for
10 being a new citizen to this county and this state, I
11 can see, historically, how things have changed from
12 1776 to before Florida was called Florida. To
13 understand how much time I have to get on every
14 topic that I can bring to light that's already in
15 the books of law by man kind of thing.

16 But to touch on few that touch me is a
17 baby -- a woman's right is her right, obviously, but
18 to take a life that's what's considered is a baby is
19 considered a life. Also -- I have a little bit of
20 time left. The hate crimes, also I wanted to touch
21 a little bit on that. Juveniles before and
22 after -- obviously, next time I'll be a little more
23 prepared than 30 minutes as I write, and I've been
24 writing as I've been -- I look forward to seeing you
25 guys in the Capitol of Florida.

1 I apologize. Oh, yeah, and also about the
2 right to carry, if you feel the people that don't
3 need to be carrying, that's the type of direction
4 you should be -- obviously, first responders is the
5 type of thing. And, just to close it off, I look
6 forward to meeting everybody individually, and also
7 the Governor. And nobody appointed me here to be a
8 civil person in my right to speak, and I look
9 forward to speaking to you again.

10 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you for coming.
11 Thank you.

12 Tim Heberkein, Stephanie Baxter Jenkins,
13 Daniel Fittro.

14 MR. FITTRO: Hi. I wanted to just speak in
15 favor of a few things. Open primaries, as a lot of
16 people said before, I'm in favor of that; voting
17 rights restoration; eliminate corporate money in
18 politics; eliminating super delegates in Florida. I
19 would like to see us do like California did with
20 State Bill 542 and have single-payor healthcare and
21 Medicare for all. And also increase support for our
22 solar power, like many people mentioned here.

23 Just two facts, Vermont gets 18 percent of its
24 power from solar. That's Vermont, which is, you
25 know, way up north. Burlington, Vermont gets

1 100 percent of its power from green energy. That's
2 214,000 people in the metro area. So we have, you
3 know, Tampa/St. Pete, just a little bit larger than
4 that. If we could have our two counties running on
5 100 percent renewable energy, that would be awesome.
6 Tiny countries such as Italy, Japan and Germany each
7 create more solar power than the whole USA, so we're
8 falling way behind in that. Legalize industrial
9 hemp, which can be used for fuel, clothing, paper
10 products, packaging materials. I work in a school,
11 and I see so much waste and so many things that we
12 use and throw away that are not even recyclable or
13 we don't have a chance to recycle them, plastics,
14 et cetera.

15 I would like see us do like New York did and
16 make college tuition free through public funding,
17 which some people spoke on as well today. And we
18 must protect net neutrality. There's an FCC vote
19 coming up soon. If we can at least protect it for
20 Florida residents, that would awesome. Thank you
21 very much.

22 COMMISSIONER BONDI: And you were Dewitt,
23 right, sir?

24 MR. FITTRO: Pardon me?

25 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Your name was?

1 MR. FITTRO: It's Danny Fittro -- Daniel
2 Fittro.

3 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you. Dewitt Bunch.
4 Thank you.

5 MR. BUNCH: My name is Dewitt Bunch, and I
6 wasn't really planning on speaking tonight, but I
7 just sat here and watched and listened. So I have a
8 few things of my own. We'll see how many I can
9 squeeze in.

10 The first one is open primary. I've got four
11 words for you: Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump. The
12 least popular of all time. That's who we get. What
13 else is there to say about it?

14 Next is medical marijuana. Technically, I'm
15 against it, because I don't know why a plant is
16 illegal. You want to know why it's illegal?
17 Because somebody said it makes white girls listen to
18 jazz and go out with black men. Look it up. It
19 were perfectly legal until then. Why is it still
20 illegal in most places, and why is there so much
21 difficulty getting it? You have the pharmacies who
22 have Marinol, marijuana in a pill. You have beer
23 companies and liquor companies, they don't want to
24 lose their business. That's all it is, is business.

25 Let's see, there's gun control. There are

1 several groups of people that were here and most of
2 these groups have three different subjects that they
3 agree on. One of them was gun control, the other is
4 pro-abortion and --

5 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you.

6 MR. BUNCH: -- the one they don't mention is
7 vaccines.

8 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, sir. You can
9 give your notes if you have more to say. Thank you.

10 Danica Fields.

11 MS. FIELDS: Hi. I'm Danica Fields. I'm the
12 Executive Director of Kids Need Both. It's a
13 non-profit organization whose mission is to educate
14 those who are impacted by high-conflict families.
15 And it has been my own personal experience, and also
16 the experience of many of the people that I teach,
17 that we're a highly competitive nation. It's not a
18 surprise. However, when you're dealing with
19 children, children can be destroyed over it.

20 There was -- Lee and Stargel tried to get
21 something passed a year ago to try to get the
22 children out of the middle of high-conflict custody
23 tug-of-wars, and it was shut down.

24 And, in my own personal experience on the
25 local level, I went through a five-and-a-half-year

1 custody battle. I went from stay-at-home mom to
2 fighting to have part -- some visitation with my
3 children. And the children were devastated in the
4 whole process, and their lives -- part of the
5 childhood was taken away from that. And that could
6 have been changed if the judges -- if there was
7 something that was mandated on the state level of
8 children's bill of rights or something so that the
9 judges personal opinions don't take a part of it,
10 because children should by just their
11 birthright -- they should have a meaningful
12 relationship with both parents, and equally.

13 And I'm glad to say that, through my pain and
14 suffering, I have been able to make and -- I'm a
15 state author of a co-parenting curriculum, and my
16 job is to educate those who are impacted so that we
17 can make a difference in children's lives.

18 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, ma'am.

19 Austin, is that you? Austin, if you can hang
20 tight, and if the rest of you folks can come
21 forward. Joe Saporta, Joan Noble -- You, Y-o-u,
22 Z-h-o-y, Bill Bunkley, Gary Stein,
23 Leonard Schmiede -- sorry about that -- Joseph Sook
24 and Ron Weaver.

25 Austin, go ahead.

1 MR. COLLIER: Hello. My name is
2 Austin Collier. I've lived here my whole life,
3 graduated at Sherman High School last year. I'm
4 attending HCC now. This is my city. But my mother
5 is from Mexico, and my father is from Germany. I'm
6 the only one actually born here. So I have seen
7 other worlds, have seen what things can and actually
8 are.

9 The first thing I want to touch on is medical
10 marijuana. I have Crohn's, and I was diagnosed in
11 2013. And it actually does work. I'm not sure what
12 it is, and I think we need to do more research into
13 that. But they had me on pills, and they were
14 moving me into injections, but nothing was working.
15 I missed almost nine weeks of school. You can't do
16 that in high school.

17 In 2014, when they did pass the Charlotte's
18 Web, those things did help, and I was actually able
19 to go to school and to get a job. And I work at a
20 bank. I'm able to get up in the morning. These
21 things actually do affect real people. On expansion
22 of that, the drug's here. So we need to recognize
23 that and understand that. If you don't believe me,
24 I can take you to where I live, Sulphur Springs,
25 it's everywhere.

1 On voting, I don't agree with open primaries
2 mostly because you pick a party and you pick your
3 candidate, and, if you don't agree with that
4 candidate making your party, pick a new one.

5 On guns, coming from Mexico, I've seen what
6 happens when guns are taken away. I've seen what
7 happens when guns are put in the wrong hands.
8 200,000 people -- and it's the second most deadliest
9 country in the world. And we like to look at
10 Western Europe and say it could be, but we don't
11 look at Eastern Europe. We like to look at Canada
12 and say it could be, but we don't look at Mexico.

13 We have to understand where we actually are.
14 Understand the demographics and understand that it's
15 not the guns, it's the culture of violence towards
16 police and violence towards our communities and one
17 that glorifies drugs and guns. And we need to
18 educate, not ban things that allow people
19 protection. That's all I have to say.

20 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you.

21 Joseph Saportas.

22 MR. SAPORTAS: You guys are holding up very
23 well. I'm Joseph Saportas. The one thing I really
24 want to talk about is there is no citizen's
25 initiative to be able to remove an elected official.

1 In other words, we need an amendment that will allow
2 citizens to say, you're not doing your job.
3 Otherwise, it's term limits, arrests, or whatever,
4 or being voted out. I would like the Commission to
5 consider putting that amendment in so we can at
6 least make legislators more responsive to the
7 voters. You know, do the job. Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, sir.

9 Joan Noble.

10 MS. NOBLE: Good evening, Commissioners. I
11 appreciate you all being here so late. I know you
12 could be like making a lot more money than you are
13 sitting here. So thank you, again.

14 I have two issues. One, I would like you to
15 consider voting against, or not supporting, judicial
16 term limits. That's absolutely a crime in my book.
17 And the reason I say that is already we have recall
18 by votes for any judge that the populus thinks needs
19 to be replaced, and those recalls come up on a
20 regular basis. We also have aged out for any
21 judicial state appellate judge or Supreme Court
22 justice who reaches a certain age. They need to
23 leave the bench.

24 We need to keep our judges out of the
25 political realm as much as possible and protect them

1 from the politics. We also would lose the expertise
2 of the people that have been voted in because of
3 their expertise and/or appointed because of their
4 expertise. And so term limiting this expertise
5 would do nothing but a disservice to our community.

6 The second issue that I'm very passionate
7 about is that healthcare always needs to include
8 mental healthcare. We have a stigma in Florida
9 against mental healthcare. 70 percent of the people
10 who need mental health treatment in this state can't
11 get it -- cannot get it. 660,000 adults have severe
12 mental health issues, and close to 200,000 children.
13 Nearly one-half of our population struggles with
14 much less devastating forms of the same issue of
15 mental health.

16 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you so much, ma'am.
17 You can submit any written statements to our
18 website. Thank you for being here.

19 You, can you pronounce your name for us -- for
20 me?

21 MR. ZHOU: Thank you. It's You Zhou.

22 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you.

23 MR. ZHOU: Good evening, Commissioners. Thank
24 you for coming and staying up so late. I really
25 appreciate the opportunity to speak.

1 One gentleman talked about organ transplants
2 tonight. Today I want to bring up the topic of
3 organ tourism and organ trafficking. How many
4 people die yesterday waiting for an organ? I think
5 it's 26 or 27. And how long can you wait for an
6 organ, maybe a kidney or liver? Maybe two years,
7 three years. But, in China, the situation is
8 different. You can get an organ in weeks, in
9 months. As result, a lot of people coming to China
10 for organ transplant. It's called organ
11 tourism -- even some Floridians.

12 But they don't know where is the organ source.
13 The organ source are from the prisoner of the
14 countries. They are killed for their organs. There
15 are hundreds of thousands people who are put into
16 prison because of their beliefs. And these people
17 in the prison become an organ pool for the
18 government in China. And they kill these people for
19 their organ, and they're sold in enterprise. You
20 can even find them online, like 50-some dollar for a
21 kidney. You can get a kidney or liver in one month.

22 What's happening in China is related to
23 everyone, even in Florida. Several years ago a
24 friend told me that they had a film screening in
25 Daytona Beach and a lady come after that with tears

1 and she say she witness one at a Chinese hospital
2 and a U.S. man getting an organ in one month. And a
3 lot of efforts have been put forward. Last summer
4 U.S. Congress passed --

5 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Sir, thank you. I'm
6 sorry. You're making some very important points.
7 If you could submit them. They will be online for
8 us to read. Thank you.

9 MR. ZHOU: Thank you very much, Commissioner.

10 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you.

11 Mr. Bunkley, you're up.

12 MR. BUNKLEY: Thank you, General Bondi --
13 Commissioner Bondi. I'm sorry. Members of the
14 Commission, thank you for this late hour. I
15 appreciate you hanging in. My name is
16 William Bunkley. I'm president of the Florida
17 Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. Among
18 others, I represent the Florida Baptist Convention,
19 which is the affiliate of the Southern Baptist
20 Convention. The Florida Baptist Convention is
21 comprised of about one million Florida Baptists and
22 3,000 churches statewide. I've represented the
23 Baptist Convention in the legislative area for the
24 last 21 years.

25 I rise to speak to call attention to

1 Article 1, Section 23 -- well spoken of tonight, and
2 many issues -- of the Florida Constitution, more
3 commonly referred to as Florida's so-called right to
4 privacy.

5 Arguably, it is the most misapplied passage in
6 the entire state constitution. There is no doubt in
7 my mind that the original drafters of this language
8 had no idea, nor any intention, that it would be
9 used to arrive at such a wide assortment of
10 unrelated decisions desired outcomes requiring an
11 active judicial contortion when no other legal
12 provision would fit.

13 For decades I've shaken my head on numerous
14 occasions when the right to privacy provision was
15 misapplied to thwart the will of the people by way
16 of the majority vote of their duly-elected
17 representative, as well as their duly-elected
18 governor.

19 This is your opportunity to rein in this
20 excessive judicial overreach. It is time for our
21 courts to rule based on the original intent of
22 Florida's right to privacy protections, not to apply
23 a self-granted legislative prerogatives.

24 Simply put, we want our judiciary to be the
25 umpire that simply calls the balls and strikes based

1 on the rules of the game. No longer should we see
2 the will of the people you served away by a
3 non-legislative branch of the state government.
4 Thank you for your service. I wish you well on your
5 19 additional stops.

6 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, Bill.
7 Gary Stein.

8 MR. STEIN: Thank you very much. I met many
9 of you during your very first listening stop at the
10 University of Central Florida, and I thank you for
11 the opportunity to speak again, since many of you
12 were serving in Tallahassee at that point in time.

13 My proposal is now currently online as
14 Public Proposal 100200, and it's entitled "Regarding
15 the removal of the slang term marijuana in Florida
16 law to be replaced with the proper term cannabis."
17 You would hard pressed to find a slang term anywhere
18 in the Florida law and the U.S. Constitution, but it
19 does exist in Florida law, and that slang term is
20 marijuana. Now, my good friend Senator
21 Dennis Baxley often states, words matter, and this
22 particular word has a particularly negative history
23 and impact. And this is why he originally submitted
24 this proposal to drafting for the Florida Senate.

25 This word came to us from a 1937 law, and it

1 was placed there using a campaign of racism and
2 misinformation. Harry Anslinger, the very
3 commissioner of the Bureau of Narcotics, used
4 depression-era hatred of immigrating Mexicans and
5 African Americans as the engine to make his idea of
6 making cannabis illegal, after prohibition ended,
7 despite the fact it was on the U.S. pharmacopeia.
8 Anslinger was quoted in saying ridiculous and
9 revolting things, such as the primary reason to
10 outlaw marijuana is its affect on the degenerate
11 races and a reefer makes darkies think they're as
12 good as white men.

13 If you check the Harper Collins
14 Spanish-English Dictionary for the proper Spanish
15 translation for cannabis, you'll find that is
16 cannabis, not marijuana. And, even in Mexico it is
17 a slang term, like mota. It originated in the 1880s
18 when Mexican pheasants tried to pronounce the word
19 they had heard from Chinese workers whose Mandrin
20 word for it was (foreign language spoken).

21 A slang term has no place in Florida law. My
22 proposal requests that we place each and every
23 incident of the word marijuana with the proper term
24 cannabis and right this 80-year-old wrong. And my
25 proposal is hard copied, and it's available to each

1 and every one of you.

2 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, sir. You can
3 submit it. Leonard Schmiede.

4 MR. SCHMIEGE: Schmiede.

5 COMMISSIONER BONDI: I'm sorry. Can you
6 pronounce it for us?

7 MR. SCHMEIGE: My name is Leonard Schmiede.

8 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you.

9 MR. SCHMEIGE: I'm the director of a Florida
10 political committee sponsoring Initiative 1509,
11 which would raise the minimum wage in Florida to not
12 less than \$10 per hour and leave the current annual
13 cost of living increases in place.

14 I can tell you how the average voter feels
15 about this, because we polled them. In July of
16 2015, StPetePolls.org conducted an all-email poll by
17 inviting, by email, over one million Florida voters
18 to participate in our survey. The 2,788 respondents
19 were weighted by party, age, gender and race. We
20 found over 65 percent would vote for an amendment
21 raising minimum wage to \$10 an hour, and,
22 furthermore, 23 percent would support raising the
23 minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

24 I'm not asking you to give the lowest paid
25 workers a raise. But I urge you to give the voters

1 the chance to do so. The last time this happened
2 was on November 4th, 2004, when 72 percent of
3 Floridians voted to raise the minimum wage to \$6.15
4 an hour. That minimum wage is now \$8.10 an hour,
5 thanks to automatic annual increases for inflation.
6 Commissioners, I believe this is a very small ask
7 for the lowest paid workers in Florida.

8 To recap: One, the amendment is very simple.
9 It's virtually identical to the existing language.
10 We just change the number. Two, polling shows it
11 will pass successfully. Three, it will be an
12 immense help to the poorest and some of the hardest
13 working Floridians. For those interested in
14 contacting me or reviewing the proposed Amendment
15 1509, it can be found online at the Secretary of the
16 State's website. The committee is named League of
17 Voters, Extraordinaire.

18 One more thing. Commissioners and others
19 participating tonight, we plan to conduct another
20 statewide survey by emailing 1.5 million Floridians
21 a survey on minimum wage, but I would like to
22 include a few other issues as well. I would
23 encourage other groups to contact me about the
24 surveys so we can consider including their issues as
25 well. I thank the Commissioners and the public here

1 tonight for their time.

2 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you.

3 Joseph Sook.

4 MR. SOOK: Yes. Thank you. It's a pleasure
5 to be here tonight at the Commission meeting. I
6 would like to thank all the Commissioners for being
7 here. I would like to thank you. I would like
8 thank you Commissioner Sprowls. You're also my
9 representative. I live in Dunedin, Florida, in
10 Pinellas County.

11 I'm talking about tonight -- I want to talk
12 about my concerns with medical marijuana. I've read
13 numerous cases about both this Commission and the
14 legislation seems to be bent on how much we can put
15 more and more regulations on what the people passed,
16 instead of making it easier and more obtainable to
17 get.

18 Now, I was reading also there's a senator -- I
19 believe it's Jeff Brandes. He wanted to make it
20 have a free-market system, similar to other states
21 have done, but the bill is never considered.
22 Instead we have these bills that are considered that
23 are lobbied hard by Caldena (phonetic) and the same
24 groups -- these anti-Florida drug organizations that
25 continue to try and block the will of the people. I

1 mean, the more interest they have in it is money.
2 They don't care about saving people's lives, which
3 is what the people of Florida wanted with this
4 amendment.

5 And it's unfortunate that's really not being
6 considered by the legislature. I mean, I hope it is
7 soon. But I just haven't really seen much being
8 done with that. I just really hope that the
9 legislature and the Commission find a way to really
10 do that, whether it's an amendment or a law, to make
11 it easier for patients to get access, instead of
12 having to drive to like a pharmaceutical company
13 just to get Marinol, which is ridiculously
14 expensive. I mean, a lot of people cannot afford
15 some of that. There are people who are suffering,
16 and I just think that's really unfortunate.

17 I also think it's important that we look at
18 the reasons why marijuana is still criminalized,
19 which is also a problem.

20 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, sir.

21 Mr. Weaver.

22 Sir, did we miss your name?

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No. I submitted my
24 name. I just --

25 COMMISSIONER BONDI: We have more people that

1 I'm going to call. Thank you.

2 Mr. Weaver -- Ron, while you come up, let me
3 go ahead and call some other names, if I could.

4 MR. WEAVER: Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER BONDI: If you folks could come
6 forward. Frank Borja, Joe Welbourn, Dylan Lobo,
7 Ella Coffee and Thomas Cabrera. Thank you.

8 Go ahead, Mr. Weaver. Nice to see you.

9 MR. WEAVER: And you. General, Commissioners,
10 my name is Ron Weaver. I'm a Tampa attorney, and I
11 would I like to rise for two occasions. One, the
12 urgency of transportation funding alluded to by our
13 great chairman of the City Council, Mike Suarez, but
14 I would like to add to that. I have a property
15 rights proposition for you as well.

16 That we change that 200,000-people trigger in
17 Article 8, Section 2, as advocated by
18 Chairman Suarez, and not leave out the Brandons and
19 the hundreds of other communities in the state that
20 deserve their 100,000 people or more to have the
21 ability to vote to use the unused discretionary
22 sales tax available in that jurisdiction. And I
23 believe you could give the Brandons and the other
24 hundreds of communities around the state the same
25 benefit as the Article 8, Section 2 proposed

1 amendment for cities over 200,000, that they too get
2 on the fair transportation funding and the urgent
3 need for transportation funding without the
4 awkwardness of the current technique of waiting for
5 1.3 million other people to come together in
6 political will in order to solve each of your
7 transportation problems, whether your jurisdiction
8 is 50,000. And I thank Manatee County,
9 Mr. Chairman, for a half-cent sales tax and the
10 political will and the courage of Manatee County for
11 a half-cent sales tax, and others among you for the
12 courage of your funding transportation. But we need
13 to get the mechanisms to others.

14 Property rights is the second issue. The
15 current Constitution Article 1, Section 10,
16 protection of the property from taking without
17 compensation, is outdated. The 1995 Bert Harris Act
18 has, unfortunately, been frustrated by the adoption
19 by the legislature of a prohibition of use of the
20 Bert Harris Act indirect effects upon property
21 rights, including a marine fire station approved
22 against an owner named Smith in Jacksonville.

23 He brought the property in good faith, and
24 then the local jurisdiction adopted a marine fire
25 station in the face of his good-faith purchase of

1 his property. The courts, under the Bert Harris
2 Act, threw out the claim. And then the legislature
3 amended the law to say indirect effects upon
4 property owners by zoning next door cannot be
5 enforced under the Bert Harris Act. That needs to
6 be fixed by the constitution.

7 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, Mr. Weaver.
8 Would you submit that online too?

9 MR. WEAVER: Of course, General.

10 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you.

11 Frank Borja. Frank?

12 MR. BORJA: Good evening. It's an honor to be
13 with all the highest representatives of the State of
14 Florida. I was in class, and I wasn't fully
15 prepared to speak. So I apologize if I sound out of
16 topic.

17 I'm here to talk about two things. First
18 thing is education. I think that every race,
19 everybody in any tax bracket should have all
20 resources available to get an education, because
21 that is the key to a lot of things, solving a lot of
22 problems. People aren't incarcerated. You know,
23 there's no teenage pregnancy. You know, ordering
24 food at fast food places, people aren't competent.
25 So I do feel that we need to allocate all the

1 resources possible to education. It's for the
2 future. This is something that's -- we shouldn't
3 have issues over trying to learn. It's a key to a
4 lot of us, a way out. So please I know that the
5 funding for the public -- that the education is low.
6 Let's try to find some money for us, because the
7 teachers need it. We need it. And if they're not
8 getting the proper funding, then we're the ones that
9 are suffering. And it goes on at the Hillsborough,
10 Ybor City Campus, which I can go into further.

11 Secondly, I want to say that one of the
12 founding fathers, Mr. Henry Plant, had etiquette
13 signs at his hotel. I think that we're going away
14 from that as a state of Florida. I think we should
15 all come together and be more caring. I think we
16 should have signs around. For example, in St. Pete
17 there's signs on Central Ave -- you are my sunshine.
18 We don't have that here in Tampa. Signs reflect,
19 and people see these things. I think we should have
20 them in nightclubs also. You know, take care of
21 that person. Do not take advantage of her. Respect
22 one another. And I think they'll register. And
23 that's something you guys could put in the
24 constitution. You have the power do that now.

25 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you. Thank you for

1 your thoughtful statements. Thank you.

2 Joe Welbourn.

3 MR. WELBOURN: Hi. I'm no stranger to
4 testifying. So when I found out you guys were here,
5 at about 7:30, I couldn't waste the opportunity,
6 because normally when I get in front of you, it costs
7 me a 3 o'clock wake up and a long drive to
8 Tallahassee.

9 I'm here to talk about Florida's water. I've
10 been fighting this battle with Captains for Clean
11 Water for over a year. Members of the Commission
12 have personally been involved with me in my efforts
13 to get clean water flowing south in Florida. Thanks
14 to the courage of Senator Negron and Bradley, and
15 some of the other House members that supported the
16 House side of the bill, we do have a bill.

17 The sad part is during this one-year process
18 of learning how corrupt the Florida Water Policy has
19 become at the hands of very, very large
20 corporations, I also learned that Amendment 1 from
21 2014, which was passed with 74 percent popular vote,
22 has also been squandered. In closed-door meetings
23 with others of your colleagues, I've learned that
24 the money that was supposed to be used for
25 restoration and Florida clean water initiatives have

1 been used for salaries, for cars, for palm trees,
2 for stuff that has nothing to do with what the
3 original amendment was designed for and passed for
4 by popular vote.

5 So for the colleagues of this Commission that
6 voted for clean water and good water policy, I
7 commend you. For those of you that voted against
8 it, shame on you, because all of you are drinking
9 water, and that water didn't come from Italy. It
10 comes from our aquifers. It come from the
11 Everglades. It come from Florida. So if you don't
12 understand Florida water quality, you better educate
13 yourself, because we're coming. This is a movement,
14 and we're going to change it. And if you're against
15 water and you're pro sugar, you're going to pay the
16 price. Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Dylan Lobo.

18 MR. LOBO: Yes.

19 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, Mr. Lobo for
20 being so patient.

21 MR. LOBO: Thank you very much for giving me
22 this opportunity and for waiting so long to give me
23 this opportunity. I know it's late. I'll make it
24 quick. Just a couple of points. I wanted to
25 express concern about the FCC putting in this

1 opportunity for ISPs to sell our personal
2 information or to -- because if a lot of them are
3 going to profit for a service that they charge us
4 for, we should have the right to determine whom my
5 privacy -- whom my information is sold to. Google
6 and Facebook don't profit from it. They provide a
7 free service. So when they sell the information,
8 they're not really charging us it. But, when we pay
9 for it, we should have the right to determine who my
10 information is sold. It's a question of privacy.

11 The second thing is also I wanted to express
12 the -- that it's important that Florida fund public
13 education and fund public transit, because when
14 companies are looking to relocate to Florida,
15 they're looking for a world-class state city and
16 world-class cities. Having infrastructure and good
17 education -- a good educated workforce is like
18 primary on their list. It's more important than
19 anything else, including lower taxes. So I would
20 definitely encourage you to support good public
21 education. Having a good educated workforce,
22 skilled and ready for the 21st and 22nd centuries.

23 And open the primary because we ask taxpayers
24 to fund these primaries. So it would be good if we
25 have the opportunity, even if you're an independent,

1 to go and vote at these primaries, because those are
2 the candidates who are building our future. And I
3 know, together, you all have the best interest for
4 us. You want us to be a world-class state, and so
5 do we. So I think we could have a good partnership.
6 Thank you.

7 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you, Mr. Lobo.
8 Ella Coffee.

9 MS. COFFEE: Am I the last one?

10 COMMISSIONER BONDI: There's one more.

11 MS. COFFEE: I was going to say let's take a
12 picture for Instagram.

13 Anyway, my name is Ella Coffee. And I thank
14 you all for being here on the Floridian's Speak and
15 listening. I certainly appreciate that. I feel
16 well-represented. My former senator, Senator Lee,
17 is here, and my current senator, Senator Rouson, and
18 definitely a mentor, Senator Joyner, who has
19 listened to me in the past. So I feel
20 well-represented.

21 But what I would like to have on the record
22 this evening is Article 9, Section 1 states the
23 education of children is a fundamental value of the
24 people of the state of Florida. It is, therefore, a
25 paramount duty of the State to make adequate

1 provision. And, paraphrasing the rest of the
2 section, to obtain a high-quality education, the
3 legislature must make adequate provisions. And, in
4 order to make those adequate provisions, it means
5 you must fund school districts.

6 I feel that the legislature has almost
7 committed a crime, broke this law, by failing to
8 make those adequate provisions by moving in a
9 regressive manner. They've rolled back spending per
10 child this year. We're spending maybe \$7,100 per
11 student, without an adjustment for inflation. Maybe
12 if we built higher-education institutions based on
13 our third grade population versus prisons, where
14 we're spending 18 to \$19,000 per prisoner, then our
15 per pupil spending would increase.

16 What I'm asking of the Constitutional Review
17 Committee is that we have a provision that forbids
18 regression in the Department of Education, with an
19 increase in the Department of Corrections. Our laws
20 must reflect our values. The education of our
21 children are not always reflected in our budget but
22 should be stated strongly in our constitution.

23 Thank you all.

24 COMMISSIONER BONDI: Thank you.

25 And our last speaker is Thomas Cabrera.

1 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Actually, he's already
2 spoke.

3 COMMISSIONER BONDI: He spoke. Okay. We are
4 finished for the evening. Thank you, everyone, for
5 coming.

6 CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you for this evening.
7 (Whereupon, the proceedings were concluded at
8 9:49 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF FLORIDA)
COUNTY OF PINELLAS)

I, Melinda McKenna, certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the proceeding; and that the foregoing pages are a true and complete record of my stenographic notes taken during said proceeding.

I further certify that I am not a relative, employee, attorney, or counsel of any of the parties, nor am I a relative or employee of any of the parties' attorneys or counsel connected with the action, nor am I financially interested in the action.

Dated this 2nd day of June, 2017.

Melinda McKenna