

1 CONSTITUTION REVISION COMMISSION

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TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC HEARING

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DATE TAKEN: Thursday, April 27, 2017

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TIME: 11:00 a.m. to 2:46 p.m.

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PLACE: Florida State College at Jacksonville
 3939 Roosevelt Boulevard
 Jacksonville, Florida 32205

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 This cause came on to be heard at the time and place
aforesaid, when and where the following proceedings were
reported by:

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 Naomi McCracken, Court Reporter

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1 COMMISSIONERS:

2 Carlos Beruff, Chairman
Jose "Pepe" Armas
3 Pam Bondi
Lisa Carlton
4 Timothy Cerio
Hank Coxe
5 Jose Felix Diaz
Erika Donalds
6 Don Gaetz
Emery Gainey
7 Anna Marie Hernandez Gamez
Brecht Heuchan
8 Marva Johnson
Darlene Jordan
9 Arthenia Joyneer
Fred Karlinsky
10 Belinda Keiser
Frank Kruppenbacher
11 Tom Lee
Gary Lester
12 Patricia Levesque
Roberto "Bobby" Martinez
13 Rich Newsome
Chris Nocco
14 Jeanette Nunez
Jimmy Patronis
15 Sherry Plymale
Darryl Rouson
16 William "Bill" Schifino, Jr.
Chris Smith
17 Bob Solari
Chris Spowls
18 John Stemberger
Pam Stewart
19 Jacqui thurlow-Lippisch
Carolyn Timmann
20 T. Nichole Washington

21 ALSO PRESENT:

22 Meredith Beatrice, Director of External Affairs
Dr. Dynthia Bioteau, FSCJ President
23 Marcia Thorne, Americans for Prosperity
Robert Chute, Americans for Prosperity
24 Ricky Deaton, Operation New Hope
Garret Scis, Operation New Hope
25 Mike Todd
Kristen Keiman

1 Ronald Rozier
Leigh Ann Gustavis
2 Lauren Cephus
Corey Wilborn
3 Nancy McPherson
Rodger Dowdell
4 Christopher Hopkins
Glen Gibellina, Why Dads Matter, Inc.
5 Judy Weber
Mary Catherine Damon, Diocese of St. Augustine
6 Tony Kolenc
Seber Newsome, III, Veterans of Florida
7 Deborah Luyster, Jacksonville Area Chapter National
Organization for Women
8 Richard Graybill
Duane Myra, Concerned Veterans for America
9 Gene LaCross
Tameiko Grant
10 Nathan DiPietro
Kimberly Bailey-Eifersy
11 Aaron DiPietro
Bob Loewen
12 Sue Stepp American Cancer Society/ACSCAN
German Vivas
13 Jen Silva, Florida State College at Jacksonville
Adrian Miller
14 John A. Crawford, Clerk of the Circuit Court
Roger Gannam, Liberty Counsel
15 Anthony Orzechowski
Tammy Tibbles
16 Phillip Laibe, AFP
Mable Lee Quina
17 Peyton Quina
Sheila Anderson
18 Ray Treadwell
Laila Milatyar
19 Summer Phillips
Victor LaBelle
20 Rabbi Merrill Shapiro, Americans United
for Separation of Church and State
21 Mary Hirsch
James Herman
22 Bill Partington, Ormond Beach Mayor
Dwan Love
23 Joanne Pulen
Shirley Reed
24 Amber Paoleomilio
Travis Christensen
25 Luis Zaldivar
Bruce McGee

1 Dennis Fields
Ann Gipalo
2 Gale Hall
Clay Henderson
3 Charlie Cofer
Enrique Dick Aquino, Asian, American
4 Federation of Florida
Carolyn Wolfe, Florida Fair and Open Primaries
5 Jackie Bowen, Florida Fair and Open Primaries
Diego Echeverri, Concerned Veterans for America
6 Bobbie Jo Fouts
Gloria Einstein, National Council for
7 Jewish Women, Florida
Carla Voysard, Nassau County Democratic
8 Executive Committee
Jennifer Wildes, Nassau County Democratic Committee
9 Rob Mason
Joyce A. Frink, Nassau County Democratic
10 Executive Committee
Luann Bennett
11 Janice Billy
Eric Friday, Florida Carry, Inc.
12 Jeff Williams
Tom Nolan
13 Ruth Stafford
Devin Coleman, New Florida Majority
14 Charlie Latham, Mayor of Jacksonville Beach
Linda Myers, Florida Tax Collectors Association
15 Robert Demasco
Lisa Williams
16 Christine Pearre
Margaret Lamkin, Somerset Eagle Academy
17 Joe Hannoush
Marshall Clayton Rowson
18 Luis Brac
Joey Vaughn
19 Wen Raiti, AAFF/JCA
Kyle Collins
20 Fred Gottshalk
Marcia Cotton, Power of Parents & StepUp for Students
21 Catherine Durkin Robinson
Nancy Shaver, Mayor of St. Augustine
22 Ryan Jones
Rose Mary Danforth
23 Douglas Adkins, Dayspring Senior Living
Richard Cardell
24 Eunice Barnum
Judy Hankins
25 Doreszell Cohen
Lake Ray

P R O C E E D I N G S

April 27, 2017

11:00 a.m.

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MR. BERUFF: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the Constitution Revision Commission meeting, the first one we're having in Jacksonville. And we are commonly referred to as the CRC. And those of you that've been around government realize that the government will set up an acronym for everything, so. But that was a good one.

My name is Carlos Beruff. I'm the acting Chair. I was appointed by Governor Rick Scott.

I'd like to thank the Florida State College of Jacksonville for allowing us to use this wonderful venue. And I appreciate everybody taking time out of their lives to be here this morning. This is an important mission and we're -- all of us up here are happy to be a part of it.

We're going to start the invocation.

I'm sorry.

Please.

From the Jacksonville State College.

DR. BIOTEAU: Chair Beruff, I wanted to thank you and introduce you.

And -- and to all of you in the audience, this is such an important part of our democracy. I am Cynthia

1 Bioteau, President of the Florida State College of
2 Jacksonville and I'm absolutely delighted to welcome
3 the Constitution Review Commission hearing today and
4 to all of these Commissioners.

5 It is amazing the dedication that they are
6 sharing with our state to get input for something that
7 is happening only every 20 years. This is a historic
8 moment, a time when people can come forward and say,
9 here are the issues as we look at the state's highest
10 governing document.

11 As an institution of higher education, we welcome
12 and encourage this kind of conversation. This kind of
13 dialogue, to me, is what a democracy stands upon. And
14 it's so fitting, I would suggest, to hold this public
15 hearing here at our Kent Campus because this is the
16 main site for FSCJ School of Business Professional
17 Studies and Public Safety.

18 This is a place where we welcome thousands of
19 students every year who will become our policy makers,
20 our community leaders, the people that run our state
21 in the future. Students come to FSCJ from all walks
22 of life, from all income levels, from all levels of
23 education and they come here to share a goal, and
24 that's to pursue a better future for themselves and
25 their families. It's quite appropriate that that's

1 the reason we are here today.

2 So, with that, I will now turn it over as I am
3 honored to share this time with Chair Carlos Beruff
4 and welcome all the Commissioners here. We thank you
5 so much and look forward to a very, very productive
6 and informative time. So thank you.

7 MR. BERUFF: Thank you.

8 As is our practice, we will start with the
9 Invocation, Commissioner Patronis leading that.

10 MR. PATRONIS: Dear Heavenly Father, first let me
11 say thank you. Thank you on all the behalf that are
12 here today. Thank you for your many blessings. Thank
13 you for life itself, for the measure of health that we
14 need to fulfill our callings with sustenance, and for
15 friendship. Thank you for the ability to be involved
16 and useful and work in honor of being appropriate with
17 our responsibilities.

18 In the Scriptures you have said citizens ought to
19 obey governing authorities since you've established
20 those authorities to promote peace or in justice.

21 Therefore, I pray for our Governor, our
22 President, the various levels of officials here today
23 and those who gather here this morning.

24 I ask you that you would graciously grant them
25 wisdom to gather amongst the interest and issues of

1 our times, a keen thirst for justice and Rightness,
2 competence in what is good and fitting, the ability to
3 work together in harmony even when there's honest
4 disagreement, personal peace in their lives and joys
5 in their tasks.

6 I pray for the agenda before us today. Please
7 give us the assurance that we will do what pleases you
8 and what benefits those that live and work in our
9 great state of Florida, in your Most Blessed Name.
10 Amen.

11 ALL: Amen.

12 MR. BERUFF: The Pledge of Allegiance will be led
13 by Commissioner Washington.

14 (The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

15 MR. BERUFF: Thank you.

16 As everyone knows, this Commission meets once
17 every 20 years, so the actions that we're
18 contemplating in taking, some of us may not see in
19 full view in the next 20 years.

20 Florida's changed a lot. We have five million
21 more people than 20 years ago and social media didn't
22 exist. So in those efforts, we have a website that's
23 up and running where anyone can put proposals forward
24 for us to consider. It's pretty interactive. We look
25 forward to hearing from you and the friends that can't

1 make it here today to go to the website and share your
2 thoughts with us.

3 Because we want everyone to be heard, we limit
4 testimony to two minutes. So please try to be
5 respectful, everyone. We prefer that if you support
6 something, you either -- in some cases, we have red
7 and green cards. But we prefer no clapping or
8 comments and treat everybody with the respect you'd
9 like to be treated yourself.

10 With that, I'm going to hand the gavel over to
11 Commissioner Coxe who will start with the first
12 testimony.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. COXE: Thank you, Chairman Beruff. And I
15 echo Dr. Bioteau and Chairman Beruff: Welcome to
16 everyone here. We recognize that you're taking your
17 valuable time to prepare any remarks you may have and
18 make arrangements to physically be here. We
19 appreciate that and have great respect for that.

20 Chairman Beruff said that we have scheduled
21 comments each for two minutes, and there is a clock
22 that's available. When it gets very close to the end
23 of the two minutes, I will probably do one of those
24 time-out signals just to give you a little heads up.
25 I'm not going to cut you off mid-sentence or mid-word.

1 But we ask that everybody try to respect the
2 two-minute time as best they can.

3 So we were given or have been given the sign-in
4 sheets as they come in. And I believe Chairman --
5 Mr. Chairman, they're in the order in which people
6 signed in?

7 MR. BERUFF: That's -- that's correct.

8 MR. COXE: What I will do is call three names so
9 people know they're about to be called upon to speak
10 to us. And the microphones are on both sides.

11 MR. BERUFF: Great.

12 MR. COXE: What I have to begin with are Marcia
13 Thorne -- and I'm going apologize to the extent I
14 mispronounce anything -- Stephen Cummons, and Ian
15 Tartt or Ian Tartt.

16 So Marcia Thorne. And if I mispronounce that,
17 please begin by telling us your name.

18 MS. THORNE: My name is Pastor Marcia Thorne.

19 Dear Mr. Chairman and the members of the CRC, my
20 name is Pastor Marcia Thorne. I am an activist with
21 the Americans for Prosperity.

22 I am here first to ask you to simply do nothing.
23 And then hold all of us, the citizens of Florida,
24 harmless.

25 If this Commission does see the need for putting

1 something forward, we hope that it will be done in the
2 most transparent way possible.

3 We also ask that if you must fix anything, please
4 fix Article IX of the State Constitution. We hope you
5 will rework it to ensure and codify school choice as
6 an option in Florida. We believe school choice has
7 been under attack in the court system and we hope that
8 if the CRC does anything, they will make sure school
9 choice will be ratified in the constitution.

10 And, for me, as a former home-schooling parent, I
11 have done public school, I have done home school, and
12 I have done private school. Everything does not fit
13 every child. And at different times during the course
14 of a parent's journey with their children in raising
15 them, the need arises for parents to do something
16 different because something different may have gone on
17 in their life or in that family and they need to
18 regroup and restructure, just like we're doing now
19 with the Constitution with all the changes in Florida
20 over the past years. We are looking to regroup and
21 restructure. So this is the same thing I'm asking.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. COXE: Thank you.

24 Stephen Cummons?

25 MR. TARTT: I'm Ian Tartt. Stephen had to leave

1 for a medical emergency so I'll speak for the both of
2 us.

3 MR. COXE: Could you tell us your name for --
4 Ian, just because this is all recorded by the Florida
5 Channel, too, so for us to be able to go back and look
6 at some of this.

7 MR. TARTT: Yes, sir. My name is Ian Tartt. I'm
8 an activist with Americans for prosperity.

9 I'm here to first ask you to simply not do
10 anything and hold all the citizens of Florida
11 harmless.

12 If this Commission does see the need for putting
13 something forward, I hope it will be done in the most
14 transparent way possible.

15 I also ask that if you must fix anything, please
16 fix Article IX of the State Constitution. I hope you
17 will rework it to ensure and codify school choice
18 options in Florida. I believe school choice has been
19 under attack in the court system. And I hope that if
20 the CRC does anything, they'll make sure school choice
21 will be ratified in the Constitution.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. COXE: Thank you.

24 Is Stephen Cummons not present?

25 MR. TARTT: No, sir. He had to leave for a

1 medical emergency.

2 MR. COXE: Thank you very much.

3 Robert Chute, Ricky Deaton, and -- forgive me --
4 Garret Scis -- Garret Scis, 3620 Forest Boulevard.

5 MR. CHUTE: My name's Robert Chute and I'm an
6 activist with Americans for Prosperity. I'm here
7 first to ask you to simply not do anything and hold
8 the citizens of Florida harmless.

9 If this Commission does see the need for putting
10 something forward, we hope that it will be done in the
11 most transparent way possible.

12 We also ask that if you must fix anything, please
13 fix Article IX of the state Constitution. We hope
14 that you will rework it to ensure and codify school
15 choice options in Florida. We believe school choice
16 has been under attack in the court system and we hope
17 that if the CRC does anything that it will make sure
18 that school choice will be ratified in the
19 constitution.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. COXE: Thank you.

22 Ricky Deaton?

23 MR. DEATON: Good afternoon. My name's Ricky
24 Deaton. And, first of all, I'd like to say that I'm
25 here to do something positive on my negative actions.

1 I am a convicted felon and I'm here on behalf of
2 Operation New Hope and other felons. I wouldn't be
3 speaking here today because I don't like speaking to
4 crowds if it wasn't for Operation New Hope.
5 Rehabilitation is possible.

6 To give you a little bit about my background, I
7 was a general manager for a furniture store. I was
8 over five stores. We hire convicted felons. At first
9 I didn't know what to think. But I got to know a lot
10 of them and a lot of them are great guys, and they
11 just made some bad decisions. And one of the common
12 things was they felt like now that they have -- did
13 their time, that they were alienated from society.

14 I also believe that America -- its backbone is
15 democracy. And I'm asking that you give us our voting
16 rights back because I believe if you take the voting
17 rights away from the felons, that you might as well
18 take their citizenships away.

19 So I want to thank you. And I also want to say
20 that I was glad to hear us pray this morning because I
21 believe that we need to get back to our roots in God.
22 And I know that my God, -- our God is a God of second
23 and third chances. So I'm asking you today to give us
24 our rights back.

25 Thank you.

1 MR. COXE: Thank you, Mr. Deaton.

2 Garret -- is it Scis? Help me.

3 MR. SCIS: Good morning. My name is Garret Scis.

4 I am here on the behalf of Operation New Hope,
5 convicted felons, as well as myself. I would simply
6 like to ask the CRC to take into consideration the
7 restoration of rights of convicted felons as they see
8 fit based upon length of time being out of trouble as
9 well as seriousness of crime.

10 Myself, I have struggled with addiction in my
11 past, which has been the reasoning behind all of the
12 crimes which I have committed. I take full
13 responsibilities for those crimes, not justifying
14 them. I was wrong. My actions were wrong. However,
15 I do personally feel that after a certain amount of
16 time of being clean and being out of trouble, being a
17 productive member of society, those constitutional
18 rights should be looked at to be restored.

19 Thank you so much.

20 MR. COXE: Thank you, Mr. Scis.

21 Next would be Mike Todd, Kristen Kieman --
22 Kieman, and Ronald Rozier.

23 Mike Todd?

24 MR. TODD: Hey, thank you for having me. Mike
25 Todd. I'm a -- let me get this here.

1 All right. I'm just coming here as a concerned
2 citizen of Duval County. I went to school at FSCJ.
3 Well, FSCJ before it was FSCJ, and then graduated UNF.

4 All throughout my years of being in school I find
5 that the one base that we all stand on is voting
6 rights. And I really feel that opening the ballet,
7 opening the primaries to allow anybody to vote for
8 anyone no matter what party affiliation they're with
9 is the way we need to go. It'll -- it'll allow us
10 to -- to see the actual views per candidate and people
11 won't just vote for which party they want to vote for
12 just to vote for them. That's pretty much -- pretty
13 much what I have, so.

14 I appreciate your time.

15 MR. COXE: Thank you, Mr. Todd.

16 Kristen Kieman? Is Kristen Kieman present?

17 MS. KIEMAN: I'm right here.

18 MR. COXE: Okay. And then Ronald Rozier after
19 that.

20 MS. KIEMAN: He's tall.

21 I'd like to take this time to thank you, members
22 of the Commission, for being here and being positive
23 and open-minded for listening to the citizens of
24 Jacksonville promote a fair and open primaries in
25 Florida.

1 My name is Kristen Kieman. I've lived in Florida
2 my entire life. I work in the dental field and I'm a
3 registered Democrat for the time being. Open
4 primaries in Florida will give the voting opportunity
5 to over three million citizens in Florida alone that
6 do not have it in the primary election. Open
7 primaries will give that right -- not just a right, it
8 should be our civic duty to vote.

9 Earlier this year I attended an Independent
10 conference in New York. And, actually, over 40
11 percent of the electorate are now registered in PA.
12 Open primaries will cut the gerrymandering and give
13 The People what they want.

14 The Independent movement is not new. This has
15 been going on for a very long time. It is now moving
16 faster than ever. We need the primary election to be
17 just as open as they are publicly funded. It is in
18 the best interest of our state to validate our growing
19 population of NPA voters with a voice, and open
20 primaries is the way to cut out the partisan voting
21 process and bring back the voice of our people.

22 Independents are growing and we need to be
23 prepared by redesigning our voting process. All but
24 20 states have open primaries and Florida needs this
25 voter justice. Why ostracize the NPAs and the other

1 minority-party voters from the elections? It's not
2 only our right, it is our duty and we should be
3 allowed to do it.

4 Do the right thing and allow the voters in
5 Florida to decide upon the open primaries on the
6 ballot. Florida could be the trailblazers and -- for
7 a more free and open elections to ensure that our
8 elected officials work for the voters and not their
9 parties.

10 I appreciate your time today. Thank you very
11 much for putting this into consideration.

12 MR. COXE: Thank you.

13 Mr. Rozier? And after Mr. Rozier will be Leigh
14 Ann Gustavis or Gustavis, Lauren Cephus, and Corey
15 Wilborn -- Wilborn.

16 MR. ROZIER: Hi. I'm Ronald Rozier. I've lived
17 in Florida pretty much my whole life.

18 The main reason I feel that we should have the
19 open elections for the primaries is because when we're
20 kids, our parents tell us to be ourselves. You know,
21 they tell us to stand up for what we believe in, to be
22 true to who we are.

23 And the very first lesson we're told when we turn
24 18 is: You have to pick a side. You have to pick,
25 you know, a color to be your representative. And I

1 feel that that kind of limits us, you know, because
2 not everybody believes in the same thing that the
3 party stands for, you know. I believe in some things
4 the Republicans are okay with and some things that the
5 Democrats are okay with.

6 But nobody really covers the whole spectrum. So
7 by limiting me to only be able to vote for certain
8 people because of what it says on my voter
9 registration card is kind of -- you know, it seems
10 un-American, if you ask me.

11 And that's pretty much all I have to say about
12 it.

13 MR. COXE: Thank you.

14 Leigh Ann Gustavis or Gustavis.

15 MS. GUSTAVIS: Good morning. I'll tilt this down
16 a little bit.

17 My name is Leigh Ann Gustavis. Thank you for
18 being here and thank you for having us.

19 I have been a resident of Florida since I could
20 vote. And since then I have been registered as an
21 Independent, mostly thanks to my father, a very vocal
22 libertarian in the Clinton era. So you can imagine.

23 Growing up in a household with ideas swirling
24 around that didn't adhere to the two-party system, I
25 think instilled a sense of importance and reverence

1 for independent thinking. The idea that you can vote
2 for a candidate that aligns with your issues that
3 concern you without regard to the party that they
4 subscribe to, I believe, is inherent to being an
5 active and involved citizen in this country.

6 Parts and primaries are designed to advance the
7 interest of local parties and they do nothing to
8 advance the quality of our democracy. To the
9 contrary, they inhibit the participation of candidates
10 who do not have party backing. This type of primary
11 reduces turnout while open primaries increase
12 participation.

13 Parties are not fundamental to American
14 democracy. In fact, the founding fathers detested
15 them. Parties have no business running what is
16 fundamentally a public function managing elections.
17 Public dollars demand public elections.

18 That's all I have to say. Thank you.

19 MR. COXE: Thank you.

20 Lauren Cephus? Cephus?

21 MS. CEPHUS: Hello. My name is Lauren Cephus. I
22 have this letter I wanted to present to you.

23 Dear Constitution Review Commission, recently
24 there was school slot lottery for a school within a
25 county sharing the border of Duval County. It was

1 highly advertised throughout Duval County stating that
2 students could submit a request for the school.
3 However, they needed to find transportation to the
4 school should they be accepted.

5 According to the Florida Families and Children
6 below the federal poverty level, a study done by
7 Florida Legislation Office of Economic and Demographic
8 Research on the behalf of the Florida subcommittee of
9 Children, Families, and Seniors dated February 17th,
10 2016 states: "Forty of Florida's counties have a
11 poverty rate of 16.6 percent. Most of these are in
12 the heartland and northern part of the state. 20.3
13 percent of Florida's families in poverty have three or
14 more children. 56.4 of those families are female
15 households, no husband present," end quote.

16 One could infer that even if a child in one of
17 these households won the lottery for a
18 higher-performing school, the mother who, even if she
19 had a car, would find it nearly impossible to get that
20 child to the school and yet the other children to
21 another school and/or daycare.

22 The proposal presented today is that under
23 Article IX, Section 1 made public education of the
24 Florida Constitution there be a mandated -- a mandate
25 placed as a subsection which provides for children who

1 have an opportunity to attend school outside of their
2 designated area through a voucher or lottery,
3 transportation be offered through the local school
4 district bus system or a contractor of the district's
5 choice.

6 If we want our children to have equity in
7 education, then we need to provide them with the tools
8 to access it.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. COXE: Thank you very much.

11 Corey Wilborn?

12 MR. WILBORN: Good morning. My name is Corey
13 Wilborn. And I would like to personally thank the
14 Commission for coming to have this listening tour.
15 This is one of the only states where we have the
16 opportunity as citizens to interact with the board
17 that is going to make recommendations to the
18 Constitution. So I thank you guys for your commitment
19 to that assignment and for being here in Jacksonville
20 today.

21 I applaud Florida's efforts to create greater
22 access to the ballot box by providing additional ways
23 to vote through statute. Early voting and vote by
24 mail is offered here in the state of Florida, which
25 some states do not enjoy the option to do so.

1 In continuing in the spirit to create greater
2 access to the ballot box, we must support free and
3 fair elections that make it easier for people to vote
4 and not harder and more confusing.

5 Sixty-seven Counties have different voting rules
6 and responsibilities and that is because it is not
7 tucked away in Florida's Constitution. Early vote,
8 vote by mail, election day voting, voting by
9 electronic device, open primaries, automatic
10 registration when a person turns 18, vote by mail
11 request form being included on the voter registration
12 form, and some other ideas that create greater access
13 to the ballot box should be considered by this body.

14 Florida has steadily grown to 20 million people,
15 13 million of those are voters. In 2018, it is
16 expected that 50 percent of people will come out to
17 vote. That is around 6 million people. We're losing
18 a lot of people that would vote if they could vote if
19 we just made it easier to do so.

20 Thank you for your time.

21 MR. COXE: Thank you, Mr. Wilborn.

22 Nancy McPherson, then Roger Dowdell, Christopher
23 Hopkins.

24 MS. McPHERSON: I'm Nancy McPherson. I'm a
25 69-year-old widow who lives alone and I support

1 conceal carry. And I would like to see the waiting
2 period reduced or eliminated. As long as someone can
3 pass the federal background check, I see no reason why
4 they should have to wait two, three, four days to get
5 their weapon.

6 There are too many cases where a woman has filed
7 for a restraining order and while she was waiting for
8 her permit for a gun, whoever she had the order
9 against has attacked her. We don't need to restrict
10 that.

11 Florida had been a leader in gun rights and I
12 would like to see Florida remain a leader in this
13 area. No new restrictions.

14 Gun control is not about guns. It's about
15 control over people. An armed society is lot safer
16 than having all of your law-abiding citizens disarmed
17 because that only empowers those who do not obey the
18 laws.

19 MR. COXE: Thank you, Ms. McPherson.

20 Roger Dowdell?

21 MR. DOWDELL: My name is Roger Dowdell. I'm one
22 of the People.

23 What is the purpose of the Constitution? We the
24 People created a government to protect our rights, to
25 limit the size, scope, and authority of the

1 government. We the People write laws called the
2 Constitution. It specifies the authority we are
3 delegating to our elected or appointed public
4 servants. So a Constitution is our law to our public
5 servants and, therefore, only We the People have the
6 authority to amend it. It is an inherent right of
7 self-government.

8 We The People never delegated any authority to 37
9 political appointees to take over our right of
10 self-government to write amendments to our
11 Constitution. Today, instead of protecting our
12 rights, our public servants typically ignore the rules
13 of office to protect and defend our Constitutions.

14 In fact, our judicial system, which is supposed
15 to hold the other two branches accountable to our
16 Constitution, has been -- has become completely
17 corrupted that whistle blowers like Terry Trussel and
18 Candia Williams (phonetic) get thrown in jail
19 unlawfully when they stand up and point out the
20 lawlessness that went on in our government.

21 In order to fix the root causes of this judicial
22 tyranny, We the People must re-establish our
23 assemblies and our common law grand juries in order to
24 re-establish effective oversight for our out-of-
25 control judicial system. This judicial tyranny has

1 resulted in the unlawful incarceration of our people
2 who have not injured anyone. It is your duty to
3 resign so as to enable We the People to write own
4 amendments to our own Constitution, which is our law
5 to our public servants.

6 MR. COXE: Thank you, Mr. Dowdell.

7 Christopher Hopkins. And after that would be
8 Glen Gibellina, Judy Weber, and Mary Damon.

9 MR. HOPKINS: Good morning. My topic is on
10 electors. Please read the Article I, Section 2 of the
11 U.S. Constitution. It's backed up by Federalist 52 by
12 James Madison:

13 "The first view to be taken of this part of the
14 government relates to the qualifications of electors
15 and the elected. The definition of the rights of
16 suffrage is justly regarded as a fundamental
17 republican form of government."

18 I say republican -- it's low case "R" -- q
19 republican form of government, which is the type of
20 government we have.

21 "It was incumbent on the convention, therefore,
22 to define and establish this right in the
23 Constitution."

24 By your own admission, none of you have -- say
25 one, have read the Florida Constitution. We have

1 heard about -- a lot about education over these
2 meetings. We hear a lot more today.

3 Well, we're offering you -- all of you -- there's
4 a free Constitution course by people who study the
5 Constitution their whole life. You name the place and
6 time, we'll provide the training.

7 Please read the Supremacy Clause, Article VI,
8 Clause 2. It says the following: Binds the states to
9 the Constitution. Article I, Section 10 binds the
10 states to the Constitution. The Bill of Rights binds
11 the government to protect the rights of the People.

12 The 17th Amendment took away the rights of the
13 states.

14 And now we have no representation in the U.S.
15 Senate. The 10th Amendment was nullified for all of
16 that by the 17th Amendment. The States could nullify
17 any act of Congress before the 17th Amendment, but not
18 after. You can't do it now. The states could nullify
19 any of those.

20 As an elector, did you know that a voter
21 registration is an adhesion contract? Maybe you
22 should find out what an adhesion contract is because
23 it can be used against you in a court.

24 So I ask you for your own edification, please
25 think about having one of us teach you the

1 Constitution or many of us, teach you the
2 Constitution.

3 Thank you for your time.

4 MR. COXE: Thank you, Mr. Hopkins.

5 MR. HOPKINS: I'd also like to ask you, is there
6 a place where I can drop off my card?

7 MR. COXE: Yes.

8 Glen Gibellina -- Gibellina. And if I
9 mispronounce, I know you'll help me.

10 MR. GIBELLINA: My name is Glen Gibellina. I'm a
11 father and a parental right activist in Mantatee
12 County.

13 We as parents are protected by the Constitution
14 or should be protected by the Constitution. We have a
15 right to petition the regress our government --

16 MR. COXE: Mr. Gibellina --

17 MR. GIBELLINA: Yes.

18 MR. COXE: Could you lean up a little closer to
19 the microphone, please?

20 MR. GIBELLINA: How's that? Better?

21 MR. COXE: Yes.

22 MR. GIBELLINA: Okay.

23 MR. COXE: Thank you, kindly.

24 MR. GIBELLINA: The Declaration of Independence:
25 "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men

1 are created equal, that we are endowed by their
2 Creator..." That's in the Declaration.

3 Our judicial system is flawed. We have this big
4 wrecking ball and it's in all 67 counties and 20
5 circuit courts of Florida. It's called family court.
6 It's beyond repair. It needs to be dismantled. There
7 is no due process. There are no jury trials. There
8 are no cameras. There certainly is no protection when
9 the judges with the high conflict attorneys that
10 destroy our lives, destroy relationships with our
11 children.

12 Parental alienation is a hate crime. You call --
13 you call family courts civil? There's not one thing
14 that's civil about family court. It destroys
15 families, it alienates children, and it needs to be
16 dismantled.

17 I've been around the state with Judge Labarga on
18 the Supreme Court. I've testified many times in those
19 hearings. I've been in Tallahassee twice -- twice.

20 A shout out to Tom Lee. He's one my personal
21 heroes and family rights advocates.

22 Twice Governor Scott veto-ed our shared parental
23 rights. It's a -- it's a destructive practice. It
24 has to stop. And I'm asking this court to -- to do
25 something about it.

1 We as parents -- we're not visitors. We are
2 parents. We will be parents until we die. And as a
3 judicial law jurat, every time I hear the word
4 "visitor," I get sick to my stomach. We are parents.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. COXE: Judy Weber.

7 MS. WEBER: I'm Judy Weber and I'm here to ask
8 you to remove the privacy clause because I believe it
9 hurts Florida women, especially young women.

10 I'm the CEO of First Coast Women Services. Since
11 we began in 1994, we have helped over 40,000 women,
12 most of them very young, sadly as young as
13 12-years-old. The two things that those young women
14 and all women need when they're facing an unplanned
15 pregnancy is time for reflection and also some wise
16 counsel, someone who cares about them and will support
17 them in this decision.

18 Now, because of the privacy clause, laws that
19 were passed in this state which would have provided
20 that have been enjoined. One of them is the 24-hour
21 reflection period before an abortion. The other one
22 is the parental consent regulation.

23 Our organization began with a 15-year-old
24 pregnant gal in Jacksonville who didn't want to tell
25 her parents. Like many of our young clients, they

1 feel they can just have an abortion and make this
2 problem go away. They're afraid their parents will be
3 embarrassed, that they'll be embarrassed in their
4 churches, that people will reject them.

5 Thank goodness this young person went to her
6 parents and told them. And after being disappointed,
7 like most of us would be when we find out that our
8 young teen is involved in sexual activity, then they
9 joined around her and supported her in her pregnancy.
10 She made an adoption plan and went on later to
11 graduate from college and have four children of her
12 own. And that is the kind of answer we want for so
13 many of these young people that we see.

14 They come to us and they are scared and they
15 think they have no choice. They have multiple choices
16 in the state of Florida. And so we want them to have
17 the time to reflect. It can't hurt anything to give
18 them that time to reflect before they make a decision
19 that is irreversible in terminating the pregnancy. We
20 want them to have the support of loving parents for
21 whom this is the grandchild that the future is being
22 decided for.

23 My three children, all grown now, said they have
24 many friends in high school who had abortions without
25 their parents ever knowing and still don't know.

1 That's a tragedy. We need to help these young people.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. COXE: Thank you.

4 Tony Kolenc? I'm sorry. Go ahead.

5 MS. DAMON: Thank you, Commissioner.

6 MR. COXE: I'll let you go first and then --

7 MS. DEMON: My name is Mary Catherine Damon and I
8 coordinate Respect Life Ministry for the Diocese of
9 St. Augustine, which covers the Catholic churches of
10 the 17-county area of northeast Florida.

11 Through this work, I have spent time counseling
12 women who are vulnerable to abortion and don't feel
13 fully prepared to make the decision but feel pressure
14 to do so anyway. I have also spent time talking with
15 women who have had abortions and are in pain. And
16 some of them within a month after their abortion, some
17 of them 10, 20, 30 years after their abortion.

18 In 1989 our state struck down a parental consent
19 law that has been upheld at the federal level because
20 of the privacy clause. Just last year our state
21 courts also enjoined the 24-hour reflection period
22 prior to an abortion even though this kind of law has
23 been upheld at the federal courts.

24 In the Jacksonville area there have been 20 women
25 in the last two years who have sought an abortion pill

1 reversal. Within 24 hours of taking the first pill of
2 the abortion pill protocol.

3 In a 2004 study by Dr. Vincent Rue who is a
4 leading expert on post -- excuse me -- post-abortion
5 trauma. He is also local to our area. He found that
6 among America women who obtained an abortion, 52
7 percent reported that they needed more time in the
8 decision, and 54 were not sure about their abortion
9 decision at the time of making the decision, and 64
10 percent felt pressured by others to obtain the
11 abortion.

12 So I ask for you to consider an amendment that
13 would clarify the privacy clause in Florida's
14 Constitution that does not intend to grant any greater
15 rights to abortion than the U.S. Constitution.

16 Thank you very much.

17 MR. COXE: Thank you.

18 Tony Kolenc? And after Mr. Kolenc, it would be
19 Seber Newsome and Deborah -- looks like Luyster.

20 MR. KOLENC: Great. Good morning, Chairman
21 Beruff, the members of the Commission. My name is
22 Tony Kolenc. I'm an attorney, graduate of the
23 University of Florida, Levin College of Law, and I
24 currently teach Constitutional Law here at Florida
25 Coastal School of Law in Jacksonville.

1 I'm urging this Commission to help clarify and
2 amend Article I, both Section 3 on religious freedom
3 and also Section 23 on the Right of Privacy.

4 First, on the Right of Privacy, the provision has
5 been interpreted too strictly with respect to abortion
6 and it does make it difficult, as you know, for the
7 state -- to them -- for -- to, therefore, enact
8 reasonable regulations to help protect women in this
9 grave choice, as we've just heard from the last two
10 speakers.

11 I just want to read a very brief passage from the
12 2007 Gonzalez V. Carhart decision at the U.S. Supreme
13 Court where a majority of the U.S. Supreme Court said
14 this, quote: "Whether to have an abortion requires a
15 difficult and painful moral decision. Some women come
16 to regret their choice to abort the infant life they
17 once created and sustained. Severe depression and
18 loss of esteem can follow. States are free to enact
19 laws to provided a reasonable framework for a woman to
20 make a decision that has such a profound and lasting
21 meaning. The state has an interest in insuring so
22 grave a choice is well-informed," unquote. That's
23 from the U.S. Supreme Court.

24 But this overly-strict interpretation of our own
25 privacy provision is preventing Florida from giving

1 women the appropriate amount of time to reflect on
2 this grave choice. And that's why this court should
3 reconsider -- this Commission should try to reconsider
4 that provision.

5 With regard to Article I, Section 3, is the
6 no-aid provision on religious freedom. Once again, a
7 strict interpretation of this provision is stopping
8 the state from working constructively with faith-based
9 organizations. And as we heard just last week in the
10 oral arguments in the Trinity Lutheran case at the
11 U.S. Supreme Court, these types of no-aid provisions
12 actually harm the public. And so I urge this
13 Commission to, once again, look at Article I, Section
14 3 and change the no-aid provision.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. COXE: Thank you, Mr. Kolenc.

17 Seber Newsome?

18 MR. NEWSOME: Hello. My name is Seber Newsome,
19 III. I live in Ulee, Florida.

20 I'm a veteran. My father was a veteran. He was
21 in Omaha Beach during WWII. And my great grandfather
22 was a veteran.

23 An amendment to the State Constitution is needed
24 to protect the war memorials to our dead soldiers in
25 Florida. The Florida House passed a bill unanimously

1 to do this by increasing the penalties for vandalism.
2 As a detriment by Senator Negron, the Senate President
3 led the bill, Senate Bill 418, The Soldiers and Heroes
4 Monuments and Memorials Protection Act. He didn't let
5 it be heard in the Senate, so the bill's going to die.

6 Veterans' monuments have been targeted as
7 billboards for social protests recently in Florida.
8 Are our veterans and monuments more important than
9 pregnant pigs, which is protected in the State
10 Constitution? Florida is the third most populace
11 state with veterans. There's many right here in
12 Jacksonville and in this audience.

13 Please adopt an amendment -- amendment to protect
14 the monuments to our veterans from being vandalized by
15 increasing the penalties and to prevent -- to prevent
16 them from being moved.

17 I'll e-mail you a draft language for this
18 amendment.

19 And I appreciate you for letting me speak.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. COXE: Thank you, sir.

22 Deborah Luyster or Luyster?

23 And after Ms. Luyster will be Richard Graybill,
24 and Duane Myra, and Gene LaCross.

25 MS. LUYSER: I'm Deborah Luyster. I'm

1 representing the Jacksonville area chapter of the
2 National Association for Women. I thank you for your
3 service on the Commission and for the opportunity to
4 speak to you. And I'd also like to thank all of those
5 who were here in support of my statements, arguing
6 against restricting abortion from the privacy clause
7 of our State Constitution.

8 As a lawyer, I respect the clarity in the law.
9 However, the allegations that the State Supreme Court
10 misinterpreted the privacy clause is not addressing an
11 issue of clarity. It is a camouflage for yet another
12 attempt to impose additional obstacles through
13 political interference upon women's access to safe and
14 legal abortions. I ask you to consider the
15 consequence of this restriction on the privacy clause.

16 What else might we exclude from this beginning?
17 Will we next consider the Right to Privacy regarding
18 vasectomies, condoms, and other forms of contraception
19 or anovulation?

20 Those who argue the intent of Article I, Section
21 23 was to prevent government intrusion into the
22 private lives of individuals for the collection of
23 information argue that to ignore that to exclude
24 abortion from the Right of Privacy facilitates
25 government intrusion and intrusion of others and could

1 lead to more exclusions.

2 Finally, those who do not support abortion have a
3 right to their belief but not to the right -- not to
4 the right to impose it on others who have the right to
5 privacy and to women making their decisions.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. COXE: Thank you.

8 Richard Graybill?

9 MR. GRAYBILL: Richard Graybill and I am a
10 veteran and I do support this gentleman over here. We
11 talked about this earlier coming in.

12 Also, I'd like to say something to every one of
13 us here: We're in a form of a republic government.
14 We're not a democracy, as has come out of so much of
15 our education. As a teacher of 36 years, I always
16 taught them in physical education, english and math as
17 well as a coach, we're a republic form of government.

18 I'd like to continue with this thought: All of
19 you people that have legal minds should know this
20 portion of this statement: A known duty, a breach of
21 which is the causation of damages.

22 We have allowed you people -- it's our fault --
23 to take and change criminal law and add to it
24 violations those may lay prohibitive crimes, which are
25 really violations but criminal. We're seeing more and

1 more people go to prison for things like walking on
2 the grass, disagreeing with a few people and things of
3 this nature.

4 The Terry Trussell case was a very ideal
5 situation. My wife and I observed four days of that
6 and watched the illegal actions there.

7 The next thing I'd like to say is this: The
8 criminal law actually has to do with those damages
9 where you have such things as murder. In the bible it
10 says the five no's, as far as the commandments. Those
11 are the yes are controlling us righteous people who
12 are trying to do right.

13 For the qualifications of all our people, we have
14 a responsibility as well as you people. And I'll give
15 you Exegesis 18:20 and 21: The four standards each
16 one of you should have before you're in your position.
17 I'm not going to talk today about the fact that I
18 really believe most all of you are not delegates like
19 you should be because you need to be an electorate
20 before you could function in the position that you're
21 in.

22 The next thing is this: On the Constitution, if
23 you make a law, it should have a delegation of
24 authority number to it. It's should not be an act.

25 And, also, if you're going to take and make

1 something, if you're taking money out my pocket and
2 someone else's pocket and giving it to another person,
3 that's a form of socialism, so that's a good way to
4 check that.

5 And the third one is, I appreciate the gentleman
6 who prayed. One of the comments to keep in mind,
7 though, is God holds every one of us to be accountable
8 to the Bible and God's law over whatever rulings man
9 makes. So when you make a ruling or law that goes
10 against the Bible, we have to make a choice. Do we
11 follow God or do we follow you? And you should be
12 following the Bible also because those rules make up
13 the natural law for the whole universe.

14 MR. COXE: Thank you very much, Mr. Graybill. I
15 appreciate it.

16 MR. GRAYBILL: Thank you.

17 Duane Myra?

18 MR. MYRA: Good morning. First off, I'm a native
19 Jacksonville person.

20 MR. COXE: Could you --

21 MR. MYRA: I'm also a ten-year Air Force veteran,
22 so --

23 MR. COXE: If you could turn it up -- thank you.

24 MR. MYRA: That good? Can you hear?

25 MR. COXE: Thank you.

1 MR. MYRA: I'm a ten-year Air Force Desert Storm
2 veteran, and I'd glad to be this morning. I'm here on
3 behalf AFP. I would like to state that if you do
4 change anything in the Constitution, that you do it
5 with Article IX of the State Constitution to ensure
6 that you codify school choice options for those that
7 are wanting school choice.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. COXE: Thank you very much.

10 Gene LaCross?

11 And after Mr. LaCross, it will be Tameiko Grant
12 and Nathan DiPietro and Kimberly Bailey-Eiffersy.

13 MR. LACROSS: Good afternoon. Gene LaCross of
14 Ocala, Florida.

15 I'm here on conversations about the Florida
16 Constitution. We've had six. And in its total life,
17 we've had six constitutions. Every single one
18 eventually have been taken over by lawyers. They make
19 the rules. They're changing things people want and
20 don't realize how much freedoms they've lost over the
21 years. And now this one's going to be changed.
22 This'll probably be the seventh one. So I think it's
23 time the People rise up and make their own
24 Constitution, the way it's specified in the
25 Constitution, the organic Constitution.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. COXE: Thank you, sir.

3 Tameiko Grant?

4 MR. GRANT: Good morning Chair Beruff and members
5 of the CRC, I'm here today as a concerned citizen and
6 also an education administrator. I -- I want you to
7 consider the continued existence of scholarship
8 opportunities for students of the state of Florida,
9 but most in particular, the right future of the
10 scholarship program.

11 As an education administrator, I come into
12 contact with a variety of students from various
13 backgrounds. And as we know, student loan defaults
14 rates are continuing to be on the rise. There are
15 tuition costs that continue to increase when our
16 students are saddled with loan debt. It does not
17 promote a good progression for them once they are able
18 to complete their programs. So scholarship
19 opportunities help students get a leg up and are able
20 to further whatever career that they chose without
21 being saddled with loan debt if the students are able
22 to meet the eligibility requirements for those
23 programs. We would ask that you continue it to be in
24 existence.

25 Also, as students continue to attend school, they

1 don't need to be -- continue to be worried about
2 whether or not programs will still continue to be in
3 place as long they are meeting certain eligibility
4 requirements. The State of Florida has an vested
5 interest in continuing those programs and investing in
6 our students. We all know that students who are a
7 society that is educated and that is able to be
8 employed definitely promote a more rigorous and
9 enriched society.

10 So, again, I'm just asking for the continuing
11 existence of Right to Scholarship Program and those
12 opportunities for our students and continue to invest
13 in our exclusive Florida student population.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. COXE: Thank you, Ms. Grant.

16 Nathan DiPietro?

17 MR. DIPIETRO: "All men are created equal endowed
18 by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that
19 among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of
20 Happiness."

21 These famous words state plainly why governments
22 exist. Sadly, though, our government has not always
23 defended these fundamental liberties. Most notably
24 was the issue of slavery. Some thought of slaves as
25 being less human because of the color of their skin.

1 Many people were unaware of the many atrocities that
2 were being inflicted on slaves and tragically, many
3 even turned their heads from the plight of slaves in
4 the name of wanting to avoid public controversy.

5 Thank God some had enough courage to stand up and
6 make society see the reality of slavery.

7 Today we face a different yet similar
8 controversy, that of abortion. Many muddle the topic
9 with all kinds of sophisticated arguments. However,
10 the bottom line on this issue is this: If the fetus
11 is a living human being, then each one of us, as well
12 as the State, have an obligation to protect that life.

13 However, I will not try to answer the question of
14 when life begins right now. Instead, I will discuss
15 when it should be instantly recognizable that the baby
16 is alive.

17 Let's say you are in a room and saw an
18 unresponsive person lying on the floor. What would
19 you look for to see if that person was alive? A
20 pulse. A heartbeat. Whatever else that may indicate
21 life, one thing is clear: A heartbeat is a sign of
22 life, a sure sign of life. When the baby has his or
23 her own heartbeat, it should be obvious that the
24 baby's not simply a part of the mother's body since
25 women don't have two hearts. He or she is a living

1 human being with DNA and life distinct from that of
2 the mother.

3 Thus, I propose an amendment that would protect
4 life from the moment of a detectable heartbeat because
5 a baby with a heartbeat is clearly a human being
6 deserving of the God-given and Constitutional right to
7 life. The only justifiable reason for a termination
8 of pregnancy after that point would be while
9 attempting to save the life of the mother, the baby's
10 life is unintentionally lost.

11 Because slaves were unable to vote, many
12 politicians paid no attention to the cruelties that
13 were inflicted upon them. In a similar way, babies in
14 the womb have no voice and no vote. Let us not deny
15 the fact that -- each and every one of you --
16 approximately 70,000 surgical abortions that occurred
17 last year in our state and every one of the nearly 60
18 million surgical abortions that have occurred in the
19 U.S. since Roe versus Wade stopped an active beating
20 human heart and measurable brain waves.

21 To those who have objections to protecting the
22 lives of the unborn, there are answers available, that
23 is if you want to know the truth. I urge you don't
24 hide from the truth.

25 Please visit 180movie.com to see the truth of

1 abortion.

2 MR. COXE: Thank you, Mr. DiPietro.

3 MR. DIPIETRO: Pregnancy alters the life of
4 woman. Abortion ends the life of the baby.

5 MR. COXE: Thank you very much.

6 Kimberly Bailey-Eiffersy. Am I saying that
7 correctly?

8 Ms. BAILEY-EIFERSY: Hi. It's Kimberly Bailey-
9 Eifersy and I'm from St. Augustine.

10 It's an honor to meet all of you.

11 I'm a mother and I have survived five years of
12 cancer misdiagnoses that almost took my life and the
13 violation of my Patient's Rights by a Florida
14 provider, which compels me to ask you to please amend
15 Florida patient's Bill of Rights Statute 381.026.

16 It is known in the legal and medical communities
17 that Florida's Patient's Rights are not enforced and
18 were enacted for political show. According to legal
19 experts and malpractice law educators, this
20 legislation was snuck in and passed on the fabricated
21 alleged malpractice crisis that never happened in
22 Florida.

23 Florida Patient's Rights are misleading and
24 present a false sense of protection. The clause in
25 the bill states our rights cannot be used for any

1 civil or administrative action preventing legal
2 recourse when our rights are violated. Unethical
3 providers are not held accountable.

4 I had no recourse when my two cancers were
5 misdiagnosed when the administration at a renowned
6 Jacksonville medical clinic abandoned my care. They
7 did not keep their promise that the patient comes
8 first. They punish me for their mistakes to protect
9 themselves and my Patient's Rights did nothing to
10 protect me. I was left without equal care for my rare
11 cancer and dumped without concern for my life against
12 the wishes of my oncologist.

13 I suffered negligence, delayed diagnoses,
14 cancerous misdiagnoses and a subversive systematic
15 effort by a corrupt provider to avoid liability and
16 they got away with it because of unfair legislation
17 that does not protect Florida patients.

18 And I am not the first one. Florida patients
19 think they are protected and they are not. The
20 Patient's Bill of Rights are not worth the paper
21 they're written on. Patients need a champion to amend
22 and enforce our rights. Stand up for us when they're
23 violated. And I can't find that person but I keep
24 looking and haven't given up. And I hope that person
25 is in this room today.

1 I looked to the agency for health care
2 administration, the state attorney general, our state
3 and congressional reps, our senators, our governor and
4 beyond. I have looked to people --

5 MR. COXE: Ms. Bailey -- if you could conclude
6 it.

7 MS. BAILEY-EIFERSY: I have looked to the people
8 who I thought had our backs and everyone has let me
9 down. I have protested in the streets, traveled from
10 Capital Hill to Tallahassee. I am David under the
11 heel of Goliath here.

12 MR. COXE: Ms. Bailey, I just --

13 MS. BAILEY-EIFERSY: And I need your help.

14 MR. COXE: You can leave us the materials, if you
15 like, and we'll --

16 MS. BAILEY-EIFERSY: I just have one more
17 sentence, if you could just give me a few more
18 seconds.

19 MR. COXE: I'll give you one sentence.

20 MS. BAILEY-EIFERSY: Thank you.

21 Please amend and enforce Florida Patient's
22 Rights, establish a board to review violations, find
23 violators and restore ethics and compassion; and, if
24 not, I say to my fellow citizens: Pray you get your
25 doctor on a good day in the state of Florida.

1 Thank you and God bless everyone.

2 MR. COXE: Thank you, ma'am.

3 MS. BAILEY-EIFERSY: And I have -- every copy's
4 for everybody on the Commission.

5 MR. COXE: Aaron DiPietro, Bob Loewen, and Sue
6 Stepp.

7 MR. DIPIETRO: Good morning. My name is Aaron
8 DiPietro and I reside here in Jacksonville, Florida.
9 I am grateful for the opportunity to be able to speak
10 before this history-making commission.

11 And I have two points I'd like to address.
12 First, I believe that we must propose an amendment to
13 the State Constitution codifying parental rights as a
14 fundamental right.

15 According to a poll done several years ago, over
16 90 percent of Americans were reported as supporting a
17 federal constitutional amendment to protect the rights
18 of parents from interference by intrusion by
19 government bureaucracy or any other entity.

20 The majority understands that in our diverse
21 society, parents have the best knowledge, ability and
22 hold the greatest care to be able to guide and oversee
23 the recreation, medical care, education, religious
24 instruction and general upbringing of their own
25 children. However, in recent years, this long-held

1 American right and tradition has slowly been
2 undermined by some misled court systems across this
3 nation.

4 As the rights of parents are being slowly eroded
5 away, we must take action to ensure that the rights of
6 parents are protected in all cases for the best of the
7 child. I believe this amendment is not only crucial
8 at this time in our state, but I believe it is one
9 amendment which would receive strong bipartisan
10 support uniting conservatives and progressives alike
11 to protect the children of our state by empowering
12 their parents and defending parental rights as a
13 fundamental Right of our State Constitution.

14 Finally, I would encourage an amendment to
15 clarify the original intent of the language of Article
16 I, Section 23 in our State Constitution. The original
17 intent of the amendment was to provide protections for
18 Floridian's private information from unlawful
19 government intrusion. However, the real purpose of
20 this amendment is at risk from activist state judges
21 who have sought to use the language of the article to
22 create a broader right to abortion than is guaranteed
23 in the U.S. Constitution. Those who understand the
24 history of this amendment know that this is a blatant
25 distortion of the intended meaning.

1 It is crucial for an amendment restoring the
2 original meaning that declares the language in Article
3 I, Section 23 does not confer a broader right to
4 abortion than is contained in the U.S. Constitution.
5 In order for the legislature to make real progress in
6 areas of the health and safety of women and children
7 of this state and to re-affirm the real meaning of the
8 section protecting the information and privacy --

9 MR. COXE: Mr. DiPietro --

10 MR. DIPIETRO: -- of Florida citizens.

11 Thank you very much.

12 MR. COXE: Thank you very much.

13 Bob Loewen? And then Sue Stepp will be after
14 that. And after Ms. Stepp, we're going to take a very
15 short break.

16 MR. LOEWEN: My name is Bob Loewen and I am
17 retired from the Navy after 24 years of service. I
18 served in Vietnam and was exposed to Agent Orange at
19 sea. There's a bill before congress now to be
20 considered for what they call Blue Water Sailors.

21 I'm in my fourth cancer and the VA says I'm not
22 exposed to Agent Orange. Great Britain and Australia
23 both had Navies in Vietnam and they considered those
24 at sea ten times more exposed to Agent Orange than
25 those ashore. We drank the water and the Agent Orange

1 went inside of us. Those that were exposed externally
2 was washed off when they took a shower. Well, when
3 you drink it, you can't wash it off. So greatly
4 exposed.

5 So this bill is before Congress to be considered
6 and anything you can to help get this passed would be
7 greatly improved. There's a lot of sailors like
8 myself -- that was 50 years ago when the Forrestal
9 blew up, which I wear that hat today. I would have --
10 I would have died if I would been on my duty station.
11 But the good Lord had me go down to legal the day of
12 the fire and I was saved from being burned up alive.
13 But those who did survive it, walking around, with
14 cancer just like myself.

15 The other thing I'd like to speak about is gun
16 control. If there's ever a consideration to take the
17 guns away from us citizens, we're going to wind up
18 like folks in Chicago and New York who are very
19 exposed to crime. So we need to stay armed, which I
20 carry a license to be carrying arms.

21 Thank you so much for your time. I appreciate
22 you being here.

23 MR. COXE: Thank you, Mr. Loewen.

24 Sue Stepp.

25 MS. STEPP: My name is Sue Stepp and I'm here

1 today on behalf of the American Cancer Society.

2 The Cancer Action Network, the ACSCAN. I
3 appreciate the opportunity and speak in support of two
4 tobacco control-related amendments that were added to
5 the State Constitution through the Citizen's
6 Initiative Process.

7 Article X, Section 20 of the Florida Constitution
8 passed in 2002. It prohibits smoking in most indoor
9 work places, including restaurants. That was your
10 American Cancer Society that helped get that on the
11 ballot.

12 Prior to the implementation of this amendment,
13 more than 70,000 Floridian -- Florida businesses
14 allowed smoking on the premises as well as an
15 additional 12,000 restaurants. This meant that
16 approximately 800,000 private sector employees, 2
17 million dinners, 1 million restaurant employees were
18 exposed to second-hand smoke each day.

19 There's no question that making most indoor work
20 places in the state smoke-free has improved public
21 health for both workers and patrons.

22 Article X, Section 27, which is the second one,
23 passed in 2006 and it mandates that the state allocate
24 a portion of tobacco settlement money for tobacco
25 prevention. The resulting program is administered by

1 the Florida Department of Health. It's better known
2 as Tobacco-Free Florida.

3 We know how devastating tobacco can be and how
4 damaging second-hand smoke is to those around them.
5 28,600 adults in Florida die from smoking each year.
6 For every person who dies, another 20 suffer with
7 other serious injuries and illnesses from smoking.

8 The Tobacco-Free Florida program focuses on
9 prevention, especially our youth, which they like to
10 -- big tobacco companies like to get addicted early.
11 And I just want to say to you-all that helping -- we
12 help tobacco users quit.

13 ACSCAN stands ready to provide any additional
14 information this body may need in order to protect
15 those important health provisions of Florida's
16 Constitution.

17 Thank you for the opportunity to speak and for
18 your service to our great state.

19 I would say I am a cancer survivor. I use that
20 term loosely. I'll go every six months for the rest
21 of my life, however long that may be. And I will say
22 I did not get my rare form of cancer from smoking.
23 Very few forms -- very few things do we know causes
24 cancer. Smoking is one of them.

25 MR. COXE: Thank you.

1 MS. STEPP: Thank you very much.

2 MR. COXE: We're going to take a break for seven
3 minutes. It's an odd number. But when we come back,
4 the first -- when we start, the first four people will
5 be German Vivas, Jen Silva, Adrian Miller, and John
6 Crawford.

7 And the reason for getting more than five is that
8 they need to do some repairs with the camera up there.

9 Thank you.

10 (Recess taken.)

11 MR. COXE: We're going go ahead and begin with
12 German Vivas, then Jen Silva, then Adrian Miller, and
13 John Crawford.

14 German Vivas?

15 MR. VIVAS: I am German Vivas. And I'm a kidney
16 transplant patient and I'm here to address the CRC
17 regarding the preamble to the Constitution of the
18 State of Florida, which has words like "ensure" and
19 "ensure." And a person named Elisha Wilson, she was
20 waiting for a liver transplant and these words did not
21 help her.

22 I've seen a lot of organ transplant patients wait
23 and then they are told that somehow they need to have
24 \$5,000 in the bank to prove that they can have
25 immunosuppressant medication.

1 It's tough enough being sick, confused and not
2 being helped.

3 So my suggestion to the CRC is: address the very
4 beginning of the Florida Constitution, which is the
5 preamble to the Constitution, which guarantees and
6 ensures public and civil in the right to benefits.
7 This is right on the preamble to the Constitution.

8 I hope you write it -- write it down. I'm not
9 going to say a lot of other things because I know that
10 you folks have a lot of work to do. But the right to
11 benefits, please address that.

12 Thank you.

13 MR. COXE: Thank you, Mr. Vivas.

14 Jen Silva?

15 MS. SILVA: Good afternoon. Thank you, Chairman.
16 Thank you, Commissioners. Thank you for being here at
17 the CJ.

18 My name is Jen Silva. I'm an administrator here
19 at FSCJ. I've I worked with over 50,000 students and
20 over 800,000 students across Florida and Florida
21 college system. We see a lot of work on behalf of our
22 college affordability programs, our scholarships,
23 Bright Futures, but we are also looking at Last
24 Dollar. That means the student debt and overwhelming
25 academic and financial burden that keeps many of our

1 students back.

2 We ask that, through your work, through the
3 revision of the Constitution that you take a look at
4 some of the national programs out there, the College
5 Promise National Movement. The last two months, FSCJ
6 implemented the FSCJ Promise. This is a Last Dollar
7 program that will fully fund the students that come
8 from Duval and Nassau Counties. Those graduates that
9 are highly responsible adults yearning for a future in
10 academic success. And we at the FSCJ want to see that
11 happen. So we've done our part. We're asking for you
12 and your help to institute a state-wide college
13 Promise Program.

14 And so I thank you for coming here today. And
15 hopefully we can work together to make this happen
16 across Florida as well.

17 Thank you so much.

18 MR. COXE: Thank you, Ms. Silva.

19 Adrean Miller?

20 MR. MILLER: Good afternoon. Thank you
21 Commissioners and Chairman for being here.

22 I'm Adrian. I'm a student at FSCJ.

23 MR. COXE: Mr. Miller, if you could move the
24 microphone a little closer. Thank you.

25 MR. MILLER: I'm a student at FSCJ and I'm asking

1 for increasing the financial aid.

2 I -- I was raised by a single mother and she
3 didn't make a lot of money. I didn't have a lot of
4 people that went to college in my family. I didn't
5 really know much about college and how to apply and
6 things like that. But working with FSCJ and as a
7 student worker, I've seen a lot of kids come in that
8 are a lot like me that aren't -- parents aren't very
9 involved but they need financial help.

10 And, honestly, like, financial aid -- because of
11 financial aid, I have been able to pay my rent
12 sometimes. Like, there's been times in January, you
13 know, when I got laid off, I came back to FSCJ to
14 work, I was able to pay my bills because of financial
15 aid.

16 So a lot of kids, you know, they don't have a
17 parent to come in and they're overly involved, which
18 I've seen in the school working with the -- working
19 with the students. And they just don't have the means
20 of paying for school or paying their bills. And they
21 have alternative situations and they have a lot of
22 problems.

23 And because of financial aid, I've been able to
24 pay my bills and I've been able to continue in school
25 and not have to stop. And because of financial aid,

1 I've been able to actually not have to worry about
2 "Okay. I need a job because I just got laid off," and
3 I was able to actually look for a job in my field.
4 Now I'm working with kids. I'm going to graduate with
5 my associate's this next month. And it's been -- it's
6 really an important tool.

7 And that's all I have to say.

8 MR. COXE: Thank you.

9 John Crawford?

10 MR. CRAWFORD: Good afternoon. Mr. Chairman,
11 Commissioners, thank you for this opportunity. Thank
12 you for your service on the Commission.

13 The Florida Constitution is the People's document
14 restricting the reach, the overreach of government in
15 protecting the rights of its citizens. The Florida
16 clerks of the court and comptrollers, we stand sentry
17 at the doors of the courthouse. We refer to it as the
18 People's House. It's the People's House where people
19 come to solve a problem that must be solved, a crisis
20 that must be averted, a wrong must be righted, a
21 threat that must be eliminated, and a good that must
22 be done. Empowered by the People's document, the
23 Florida Constitution, clerks are charged with
24 preserving and protecting the public trust. That is
25 our greatest responsibility because we are the

1 People's clerk.

2 Tragically, more than 120,000 cases of domestic
3 violence were reported in Florida last year and it was
4 clerks who stood on that frontline to grab those
5 victims and those survivors and bring them in for
6 protection in our communities, working with judiciary,
7 law enforcement, and other agencies. That's what we
8 do.

9 As the constitutionally charged recorder,
10 accountant, custodian of all county funds, it is the
11 clerk and the comptroller who are assuring checks and
12 balances, creating a level of transparency and
13 accountability for every dollar of the citizens'
14 hard-earned money across the State of Florida. And as
15 described in Alachua versus Power -- Alachua versus
16 Powers, the clerk is, in fact, the watchdog for the
17 tax payers.

18 Florida's clerks and comptrollers stand ready to
19 assist the CRC wherever we may. The Florida's
20 Constitution is the People's document and the clerks
21 are charged with doing the People's business.

22 I pray you will diligently continue to protect
23 the important Constitutional role of the clerks and
24 comptrollers across Florida. We are the People's
25 clerk.

1 Thank you so much.

2 MR. COXE: Thank you, Mr. Crawford.

3 Roger Gannom, which will be followed by Anthony
4 Orzechowski, Tammy Tibbles.

5 MR. GANNOM: Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, good
6 afternoon. I'm Roger Gannom, assistant vice president
7 of legal affairs for Liberty Counsel. I'm here
8 regarding the privacy amendment on Article I, Section
9 23.

10 This amendment was passed in 1980 by the voters
11 of the state of Florida with the intention to protect
12 informational privacy. There was no intention by 1977
13 CRC or the voters of Florida to confer or expand or
14 even address abortion rights in the passage of the
15 privacy amendment. There's no record in the
16 proceedings surrounding that amendment, that anyone
17 was discussing or even thinking about abortion when it
18 was passed.

19 Prior to 1989 the Florida Supreme Court upheld
20 and recognized this informational privacy intention of
21 the amendment. However, in 1989 in the T.W. case the
22 Florida Supreme Court found in Section 23 an expanded
23 right to abortion, beyond even what was found by the
24 U.S Supreme Court in the Roe case. And the Florida
25 Supreme Court even found that that expanded right

1 included the right of a minor to obtain an abortion
2 without parental consent.

3 The court has continued since then, the Florida
4 Supreme Court, to expand the meaning of the privacy
5 amendment to now even include the right not to have to
6 wait a modest and reasonable 24-hour reflection period
7 before obtaining an abortion. This was not the intent
8 of the voters or the CRC, your counter part in
9 1977-'78 when they passed this amendment. And,
10 therefore, we urge this Commission to put forth an
11 amendment that preserves and re-affirms the original
12 information privacy intent of Section 23 and clarifies
13 that it was never intended to -- to expand or confer
14 or even address any right to abortion.

15 And we've prepared a brief explaining the origins
16 and purpose of Article 23 -- or excuse me -- Section
17 23 that we'd like -- and I brought copies for each
18 Commissioner that I'd like to submit.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. COXE: Thank you. Thank you for bringing
21 those materials.

22 MR. ORZECOWSKI: Hi. My name is Anthony
23 Orzechowski. I live here in Duval County. I'm a
24 concerned citizen. Probably one of the -- you could
25 consider a single issue voter, but being here, I might

1 have to amend that.

2 I am here about removing the firearm purchase
3 verbage from the constitution, any firearm's limiting
4 verbage to the citizens of Florida. Some of the
5 unintended consequences of this last amendment that
6 was put to the Constitution are, as we speak, gobbling
7 up resources in Tallahassee right now to kind of amend
8 or fix some of the unintended consequences of the
9 current verbage.

10 Manpower and resources are being used in
11 Tallahassee right now to undo waiting periods for, of
12 all people, law enforcement in some of the counties in
13 the State of Florida that have imposed some of these
14 waiting periods for long guns. And if you review the
15 statistics, you'll see that these laws have little to
16 no effect on crime in Florida and the United States.
17 These fact can be verified though law enforcement
18 statistics. And Dr. John Lott has done a lot of
19 research on this and his writings are available
20 online.

21 Florida must be a leader, not a follower.

22 Thank you very much for your time.

23 MR. COXE: Thank you, sir. Tammy Tibbles?

24 MS. TIBBLES: Hi. Good day. My name is Tammy
25 Tibbles and I'm a proud America and a citizen of

1 Florida and happy to be here today. And thank you for
2 your service.

3 I would like to suggest that Article I, Section
4 27, which is marriage defined, be changed to read: In
5 so much as marriage is a legal contract between two
6 human beings identifying themselves as married, the
7 state shall provide lawful means for the assistance
8 or -- sorry -- for the issuance of marriage licenses
9 to satisfy this legal contract.

10 Article I, Section 17, which is excess
11 punishments, should be changed to remove all language
12 permitting capital punishment and the death penalty.
13 It is ridiculous that a state says we condemn the
14 taking of life by taking life. It makes no sense.

15 There also needs to be a section added in Article
16 I, which is to state that every natural person has
17 dominion over their own body. The government shall
18 make no laws impeding or intruding on one's right to
19 make decisions for their health, safety, and death
20 except for those determined mentally unfit by a court
21 of law.

22 Also add in Article II, Section 8, ethics and
23 government. Add that no elected official after the
24 end of term, resignation, or other reason for leaving
25 office shall lobby another elected official, their

1 staff or their council for five years after the date
2 of leaving their elected position.

3 And, finally, to a portion electoral college
4 votes based on how Florida voted.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. COXE: Thank you, Ms. Tibbles. I have
7 Phillip -- and I'm -- I'm going to say Laibl [sic].
8 It appears to be L-A-I-B-L, 8039 San Jose Village.
9 Mable Lee Quina, Peyton Quina.

10 MR. LAIBE: Hi. My name is Phillip Laibe. I'm
11 an activist with the Americans for Prosperity. I'm
12 here to first ask that you simply not do anything and
13 hold all the citizens of Florida harmless. If this
14 Commission does see the need for putting something
15 forward, we hope that it will be done in the most
16 transparent way possible.

17 We also ask that if you must fix anything, please
18 fix Article IX of the State Constitution. We hope
19 that you will rework it to ensure and codify school
20 choice options in Florida. We believe school choice
21 has been under attack in the court system. We hope
22 that if the CRC does anything, it will make sure
23 school choice will be ratified in the Constitution.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. COXE: Thank you, sir.

1 Mable Lee Quina.

2 MS. QUINA: I'm Mable Lee Quina. I'm asking to
3 -- for consideration for our -- our Second Amendment
4 rights, to keep them in place. And also to protect
5 monuments to our military, fallen heroes, first
6 responders.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. COXE: Thank you, ma'am.

9 Peyton Quina?

10 MR. QUINA: Hi. My name is Peyton Quina. I live
11 here in Jacksonville.

12 Just two quick issues. One, the right to bear
13 arms. I feel that Standing Your Ground Law is great
14 and I want to make sure that legislators and
15 decision-makers ensure that prosecutors have the
16 burden of proof in cases where deadly force is used.
17 It's bad enough to have to shoot somebody and then
18 have to get an attorney to represent yourself to prove
19 it.

20 And, number two, this monument thing, I just
21 can't believe that the legislature has not acted on
22 Senate Bill 418. If anybody's curious about it, they
23 can go in there and research that themselves.

24 So, anyway, that's all I have to say.

25 Thank you very much.

1 MR. COXE: Thank you, Mr. Quina.

2 Sheila Anderson, Ray Treadwell, it appears to be
3 Laila Milatyar and Summer Phillips.

4 Sheila Anderson?

5 MS. ANDERSON: Thank you all for your service.

6 Article II, Section 8 is -- an amendment to that
7 has been submitted to you through your website and
8 copies were given to the clerks this morning.

9 There have been three grand jury presentments
10 since 1989, 1990 referring to the gaping hole in
11 Florida's governments. I call it the foundation of
12 Florida laws. And without a solid foundation, we
13 really don't have a lot of structure that applies to
14 government conduct, government misconduct, who should
15 be accountable, and what functions they should be
16 responsible for providing to the citizens.

17 So without filling the gaping hole that the
18 presentments have referred to all these years and
19 still counting, I think the first step in your review
20 ought to be is: What's missing? What does that mean?
21 How do we fill that hole? And how does the state
22 catch up with the rest of the country in terms of
23 adequate and meaningful governments?

24 MR. COXE: Thank you, Ms. Anderson.

25 Ms. Anderson, if you have the information that

1 identifies the grand jury presentments, could you give
2 it to the staff over here?

3 MS. ANDERSON: I had --

4 MR. COXE: No. No. If you have --

5 MS. ANDERSON: -- 44 seconds left before I stop
6 speaking.

7 MR. COXE: Oh. Okay.

8 MS. ANDERSON: So I can tell you what they are.
9 1989-1990 state-wide grand jury. Palm Beach was in
10 2009. And in 2010 there was another state-wide grand
11 jury. And in 2011 the Palm Beach grand jury
12 reconvened or -- or went back to what was talked about
13 in 2009. It has not been addressed satisfactorily,
14 has not been adopted. So the piecemeal parts of the
15 grand jury presentments also cry for standard complete
16 governments.

17 MR. COXE: Thank you, Ms. Anderson. I appreciate
18 that.

19 Mr. Treadwell?

20 MR. TREADWELL: My name is Ray Treadwell. Here
21 in Jacksonville much of the controversy in last year's
22 election cycle revolved around the so-called closure
23 of party primaries by one write-in candidate. Many
24 voters understandably felt disenfranchised by closed
25 primaries and I have no doubt that you will be asked

1 to remove this write-in loophole.

2 But if this Commission decides to revisit Article
3 VI, Section 5B known as the Universal Primary
4 Amendment, I would ask that you do much more than
5 simply address the write-in loophole.

6 The Universal Primary Amendment was passed in
7 1998. But two years later, the United States Supreme
8 Court issued a decision that I strongly encourage you
9 to read. The decision: California democratic party
10 versus Jones was a 7-2 decision and it seriously calls
11 into question the federal constitutionality of
12 Florida's Universal Primary Amendment as it stands.

13 You heard me correctly. I believe the current
14 version of Article VI, Section 5B is likely
15 unconstitutional. The essence of the Jones decision
16 is that a political party has a first amendment right
17 of association to choose its own nominee without the
18 participation of nonparty members.

19 I studied the First Amendment and election law at
20 Yale Law School, and my recommendation to you is
21 either commit fully to open nonpartisan primaries in
22 all elections with the top two candidates advancing to
23 the general election as necessary or revert back to
24 closed-party primaries that respect our First
25 Amendment associational rights.

1 You may be asking, if this 7-2 Jones decision is
2 so convincing with respect to the unconstitutionality
3 of forcing political parties to open its primary, then
4 why hasn't a court struck down Florida's Universal
5 Primary Amendment in the intervening 17 years? Well,
6 courts are not pro-active. Judicial review requires
7 that someone first file a lawsuit challenging the law.
8 And, believe it or not, no one has -- withstanding,
9 has filed a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality
10 of Florida's Universal Primary Amendment. So if you
11 keep the status quo, be warned that someone in the
12 next 20 years probably will file a lawsuit.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. COXE: . Thank you, Mr. Treadwell.

15 Laila Milatyar?

16 MS. MILATYAR: Good evening, everyone. Thank you
17 for being here. My name is Laila Milatyar and I'm a
18 student here at FSCJ, Florida -- Florida College of
19 Jacksonville. And I'm also a part of the college
20 programing board and I also work two jobs -- working
21 two jobs.

22 Sorry. I'm kind of nervious.

23 So -- and I go to school full time. So thanks to
24 financial aid. Financial aid helps me -- helps me pay
25 for my classes and also helps me sometimes pay the

1 bills.

2 I'm currently studying informational technology
3 management and I am currently enrolled in the
4 bachelor's program. Financial aid has helped me
5 because when I graduate, I would be -- I won't be in
6 so much debt. And I ask you to increase student aid
7 so students like me can be debt free.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. COXE: Thank you.

10 Summer Phillips. And after Summer Phillips will
11 be Victor LaBelle, Rabbi Merrill Shapiro, and Mary
12 Hirsch.

13 MS. PHILLIPS: Hello. My name is Summer
14 Phillips. I'm a student leader here at FSCJ and I'm
15 here to speak on behalf of myself and the student body
16 here.

17 I -- when I started my college journey, I was
18 working two jobs and still struggling to pay for
19 classes and books. So I ask that you guys find a way
20 to make college more affordable for myself and the
21 students that have financial aid.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. COXE: Thank you.

24 Victor LaBelle?

25 MR. LABELLE: Good afternoon. I feel we're

1 actually being slightly misrepresented by you for the
2 job that you've been appointed to do. It's not so
3 much your fault as it is the people that appointed
4 you.

5 South Florida, Tallahassee, and Orlando are
6 highly represented here in this panel. The rest of
7 the state, not so much. You-all are represented
8 mostly by attorneys, business people.

9 My question actually is: Do the people that
10 appointed you think that the laymen of this state,
11 engineers such as myself, doctors, plumbers,
12 electricians, don't we have enough common sense to
13 participate in such an endeavor as the State
14 Constitution Revision?

15 That's the only question I have.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. COXE: Thank you, sir.

18 Rabbi Shapiro?

19 MR. SHAPIRO: I am Rabbi Merrill Shapiro. I've
20 served congregations in Florida since 1983. I thank
21 you for this opportunity to speak before the
22 Commission.

23 I want to thank Mr. Patronis in particular for
24 his work as a ham radio operator. I am K2VSB. That
25 makes me Florida's Kosher ham.

1 On behalf -- I'd like laughter time added to my
2 two minutes.

3 On behalf of thousands of Floridians associated
4 with Americans United for Separation of Church and
5 State, of which I am the -- also the immediate past
6 national president, I extend my hand to you and ask
7 you to partner with us as we rise to preserve,
8 protect, and defend Florida's Constitution Article I,
9 Section 3, especially its third sentence: No revenue
10 of the state or any political subdivision or agency
11 thereof shall ever be taken from the public treasury,
12 directly or indirectly, in aid of any church,
13 including my own synagogue, sect, or religious
14 denomination or any aid of any sectarian institution.
15 This clause has served us well since the
16 constitutional revision of 1885.

17 I support and we support keeping strong
18 protections from religious freedom in our constitution
19 that currently exist. It protects the integrity and
20 independence of houses of worship as well as the tax
21 payers.

22 For me, for all of us, religious freedom means
23 that tax payer dollars are not used to fund houses of
24 worship and religious schools. No one's forced to
25 fund a religion with which they do not agree, or even

1 a religion with which they do agree. Government
2 cannot become so intrusive as to tell us which
3 religious organization we should support. We as
4 individuals get to decide for ourselves whether and
5 how our money goes to support religion. It is not
6 government's role to tell us what religious beliefs to
7 support.

8 Every faith community should have the freedom to
9 raise its own funds. You and I -- it's a support on
10 our own, these organizations. The state should not be
11 involved.

12 Thank you.

13 MR. COXE: Thank you, sir.

14 Mary Hirsch? Ms. Hirsch, before you start --

15 After Ms. Hirsch will be James Herman, Bill
16 Partington, and Dwan Love.

17 MS. HIRSCH: Hi. My name's Mary Hirsch. Thank
18 you so much for -- for giving me the opportunity to
19 speak with you guys today.

20 I'm a born-and-raised Floridian. I grew up in
21 Lakeland Florida in central Florida. I'm a law
22 student and I'm also gay. And as you consider
23 proposals for the ballet in 2018, I would encourage
24 you to not roll back any of the progress we've made
25 for the LGBTQ community this passed year.

1 However, as a woman, I am concerned about the
2 conversation around eliminating or weakening Article
3 I, Session 23 of the Florida Constitution. The Right
4 to Privacy allows every individual to have an open and
5 honest conversation with their doctor.

6 The decision about whether to end a pregnancy or
7 carry a pregnancy to term is a personal, private
8 medical decision. There's no decision more private.
9 And we urge the CRC to preserve the explicit privacy
10 protections in Florida's Constitution as they relate
11 to a woman's access to abortion services.

12 Thank you so much for your time.

13 MR. COXE: Thank you. James Herman?

14 MR. HERMAN: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman,
15 Commissioners. My name is James Herman. I'm here as
16 a private citizen.

17 As a retired soldier, I just have one proposal.
18 If you're considering proposing an amendment to
19 curtail our gun rights further than they've already
20 been curtailed, please don't. We have enough laws on
21 the books now. The Second Amendment to the United
22 States Constitution is all the guidance we need: "The
23 right to keep and bare arms shall not be infringed."
24 I don't know how it could be any clearer.

25 Thank you.

1 MR. COXE: Thank you, Mr. Herman.

2 Phil Partington?

3 MR. PARTINGTON: Good afternoon, honorable
4 Commissioners. I appreciate your time, your service
5 and you're listening to Floridians.

6 I'm Bill Partington, mayor of the City of the
7 Ormond Beach. We are a beautiful beach front
8 community approximately 90 miles south of here. I'm
9 also past president of Alachua League of Cities and a
10 current member of the Board of Directors of Florida
11 League of Cities.

12 My purpose before you today is to talk about the
13 protection of Home Rule powers, also known as local
14 control. Fifty years ago the Florida -- Florida
15 voters approved Home Rule powers, which was a
16 recommendation of the then-existing CRC. That led to
17 in 1973 the Florida legislature approving the
18 Municipal Home Rule Powers Act. And since that time,
19 over 400 Florida villages, towns, and cities have been
20 able to enact rules, codes, and ordinances that
21 reflect the values and desires of the residents who
22 live there.

23 Home Rule is a fantastic thing. In Ormond Beach,
24 just a couple quick examples of how we have used it to
25 benefit our residents and reflect their standards.

1 Another existing government agency allowed a pink --
2 a neon pink strip club right outside of our city's
3 jurisdiction but on the primary gateway into our
4 community. Using Home Rule Powers, we annexed that
5 building and enforced our codes and community
6 standards. And now, as a result, we have a retail
7 establishment there that reflects our community's
8 values and standards.

9 Another is beach front parking. We needed beach
10 front parking. Our citizens using the Home Rule power
11 came to us. We raised money, worked with the trust of
12 Florida Public Lands and our citizens voted to tax
13 themselves to create a beautiful beach front park with
14 over 200 parking spaces.

15 Home Rule works and we ask that you protect it
16 and hold it harmless.

17 Thank you very much.

18 MR. COXE: Thank you, Mayor.

19 Dwan Love?

20 And after Dwan Love would be Joanne --
21 Jeanne Pulen -- excuse me -- Shirley Reed and Amber
22 Paoloemilio.

23 MS. LOVE: Hello. My name is Dwan Love. Thank
24 you for being here and allowing me the opportunity to
25 speak.

1 As stated earlier, I am one of the 5 million new
2 residents to the state, so thank you for having me.

3 As a graduate of UNF and a concerned citizen, I
4 ask that any changes that would diminish the rights of
5 the LGBT community and those seeking reproductive
6 services be avoided. Please do not change Article I,
7 Section 23 of the Constitution. By expanding the
8 Right to Privacy, more rights are strict and
9 restrictions are imposed. They will ultimately
10 threaten and harm the lives of those affected.

11 Thank you very much for your time.

12 MR. COXE: Thank you.

13 Jeanne [sic] Puleo?

14 MS. PULEO: Thank you. My name is Joanna Puleo.

15 MR. COXE: That's my fault.

16 MS. PULEO: Okay.

17 MR. COXE: Could you say your name again for us?

18 MS. PULEO: Yeah. I'm Joanne Puleo. I live in
19 Palm Coast, Florida. I've been in Florida for 12
20 years. I've lived in a number of states and this is
21 the first time anything like this has come up in our
22 State Constitution Revision. We usually do it by
23 amendments.

24 Anyway, so my question is more related to the
25 rules by which you operate. And in terms of

1 transparency, you've published some draft rules for
2 the CRC. And while they talk about open records and
3 meetings, why did you change the requirement that
4 records be open to requiring that the Commission
5 records be accessible? I mean I don't know why you
6 went through the -- the -- the -- you know, the
7 work --

8 MR. COXE: Ms. Puleo, for one moment -- it may
9 help yourself and everyone else. The rules for the
10 Commission are going to be determined in their
11 finality at a meeting, I believe, in May.

12 Correct, Mr. Chairman?

13 MR. BERUFF: That meeting --

14 MR. COXE: Hopefully --

15 MR. BERUFF: -- will be in June.

16 MS. PULEO: In May. Okay.

17 MR. COXE: Discussed in May, concluded in June,
18 so. The issues you're discussing.

19 MS. PULEO: Okay. All right.

20 And so just what does accessible mean versus open
21 is -- is one of my questions.

22 The other thing is, the rule is that the Chairman
23 has the right to stop the distribution of literature
24 in the public areas of the Capital like the hallways
25 and the galleries and it doesn't seem fair to me. It

1 might be a violation of our rights to speak freely and
2 petition our government.

3 And then the other one, and I have ten pages but
4 I'm only going to give you three. We're concerned
5 about the possible influences that can be brought to
6 bare on elected officials on this Commission, and I
7 understand that not all of you are elected. But while
8 your ethical rules provide that Commission members
9 cannot take anything of value from someone lobbying an
10 issue, there is an exception for campaign
11 contributions. So it could mean that legislatures and
12 other elected -- elected officials might be attempted
13 vote on issues based on whether their votes will yield
14 campaign contributions, which doesn't seem fair.

15 And that's all I want to say. Those are my
16 comments. And thank you for -- for allowing me --

17 MR. COXE: Thank you, Ms. Puleo.

18 Shirley Reed?

19 Ms. Puleo, can we -- can have a copy of what you
20 have?

21 MS. PULEO: We don't have an extra copy.

22 MR. COXE: If you don't have an extra copy, you
23 could make one.

24 I'm sorry, Ms. Reed. I didn't mean to interrupt
25 you.

1 MS. REED: That's fine.

2 Good afternoon, gentleman.

3 MR. COXE: If you could wait a moment so you're
4 not distracted here -- thanks.

5 MS. REED: Okay. Good afternoon to the
6 Commissioners. My name is Shirley Reed and I
7 represent -- I'm here on behalf of Wrongful
8 Incarcerated/Convicted, Jacksonville Leadership
9 Justice Coalition, Westside Women and American
10 Ministers League.

11 MR. COXE: A little -- a little closer to the
12 microphone, if you could, ma'am?

13 MS. REED: Okay. I'm sorry.

14 Okay. I'd like to address first Article I,
15 Section 5 that says the People have the right to
16 peaceably assembly and instruct their representatives
17 and petition for a redress of grievances. I am here
18 standing in the gap for We the People and I say to
19 your panel, the Constitution of the State of Florida
20 Article I, Section 1 states: "All political power is
21 inherent in the people. The enunciation of certain
22 rights shall not be construed to deny or impair others
23 retained by the people." You are not appointed nor
24 retained by the people. You are appointed and
25 retained within your own circle to include the

1 governor, the senate, the speaker, the chief justice
2 and the attorney general. Where is We the People on
3 your panel? Until the CRC upholds the law, provides
4 an outline in Article I, Section 1, already stated, of
5 the Florida Constitution, you are acting without
6 authority.

7 To revise the Constitution only people can
8 delegate to make or revise the Constitution. Once
9 this is adequately done, then and only then can the
10 Revision Commission of Florida -- the Constitution
11 process take place. We are We the People. When -- it
12 has been 60-some years -- when are We the People going
13 to take a seat where you are sitting?

14 Other than that, until you uphold the
15 Constitution of the State of Florida as stated in
16 Article I, Section 1, you are in violation of We the
17 People.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. COXE: Thank you, Ms. Reed.

20 Amber Paoloemilio?

21 And after that would be Travis Christensen, Luis
22 Zaldivar, and Tom McCullough.

23 MS. PAOLOEMILIO: Thank you, chairman and to the
24 entire commission for taking the time to hear me today
25 and for your service to the state of Florida.

1 My name is Amber Paoleomilio. I'm the state-wide
2 field director of Equality Florida. We are the
3 state's largest LGBTQ, lesbian, gay, bisexual,
4 transgender and queer rights organization here in
5 Florida. We represent almost a quarter million people
6 who believe in the rights of the LGBTQ community,
7 reproductive justice, and personal autonomy and gun
8 violence prevention. We have seen amazing progress
9 for the LGBTQ community here in Florida. And I want
10 to remind the Commission to please do not roll back
11 those protections for our community as the state
12 continues to move forward and provide full equal
13 protections to the LGBTQ community.

14 Part of equal treatment for our community as the
15 LGBTQ citizens is the right to feel safe and to make
16 our own decisions about our lives and our bodies. As
17 a member of the LGBTQ community and a civilly engaged
18 -- a civically Floridian, I've been -- I've been a
19 Floridian my entire life. I grew up in Orlando,
20 Florida. I believe that all people regardless of
21 their sexual orientation or gender identity or
22 anything have the right to privacy in Florida. That's
23 why I ask you: Do not expand Article I, Section 23 of
24 the Florida Constitution. There is nothing more
25 fundamental to a woman and the LGBTQ than any person's

1 right or any person's life to the right to make
2 decisions about their bodies in private and on their
3 own terms with them and their doctor.

4 Please do not propose Constitutional amendments
5 that would threatened a woman's right or anyone's
6 Right to choose to make this decision. I urge you to
7 ensure that protections that currently are guaranteed
8 under Florida's privacy clause are -- remain in
9 Florida's constitution.

10 Thank you so much.

11 MR. COXE: Thank you. Travis Christensen?

12 Mr. CHRISTENSEN: Travis Christensen, Green Cove
13 Springs. All members of the Commission, I want to
14 speak to you on some education matters.

15 Is that better? Sorry.

16 I want to speak on some education matters. I'm a
17 former county charter review Commissioner.

18 MR. COXE: A little closer.

19 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Incidentally, I'm also a school
20 board candidate. So in case any education reform
21 leaders don't like something I have to say, I'm
22 running in Clay County, District 5. Come on and get
23 me.

24 Anyway, I believe the future opportunities for
25 Florida students may well depend on this Commission

1 having the courage to leave education alone. The
2 Florida legislature has demonstrated sweeping reforms
3 for many years. They don't need any Constitutional
4 help there.

5 In the last few years, they've also demonstrated
6 a willingness to go back and amend past reforms when
7 needed. There's no need to help that in the
8 Constitution.

9 As far as education choice, a recent -- recent
10 ALEC report rated Florida second in the nation as far
11 as school choice. Now, school choice laws are often
12 far sweeping. I believe that the Schools of Hope Bill
13 is now awaiting only for the Governor's signature --
14 Governor's signature. That is a very sweeping piece
15 of law. What if it needs to be amended? If you put
16 it in the Constitution, you tie the legislator's hands
17 and it could be a problem down the road. The
18 legislature's doing a -- I disagree with them
19 sometimes, but they've got it handled there. They are
20 -- despite disagreements, they're doing a competent
21 job of amending when necessary. If you lock it in the
22 Constitution, they lose that ability.

23 Very quickly, let's say they -- when
24 organizations that have the influence and ability to
25 have gone -- have items put on ballot through

1 legislature or the means to do so through petition
2 come to you to have -- have -- have you do it for
3 them, you have to ask, why have they not already done
4 it themselves, if they can.

5 And, finally, I think you know that a lot of
6 people in the education reform movement for profit are
7 pretty much salesmen and some of them are literally
8 paid to come and sell you things. So please utilize
9 due diligence on that.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. COXE: Thank you, sir.

12 Luis Zaldivar? And after that is Tom McCullough,
13 Bruce McGee, and Dennis Fields.

14 MR. ZALDIVAR: Hi. Thank you to the Commission
15 and everybody here. My name is Luis. I am part of
16 the immigrant community here in Jacksonville. So
17 yesterday I was sworn in as part of the Democrat party
18 here in Duval. As such, I am -- I am part of this
19 great many people that has been involved in the
20 process since last year. And the reason why I wanted
21 to speak to you-all today is because I want you to
22 help us reform our party and all the parties here in
23 the United States. And the best way to do it is to
24 have open primaries because it doesn't matter how many
25 friends I talk to, they are going tell me "Well, I am

1 going to have to register as a democrat myself today.
2 What if I don't agree with a candidate you guys are
3 going to push?" And I say, "Well, you need to do it
4 so next year you're going to have a chance to vote."

5 It's really an impediment to all the young people
6 that it has been getting involved in this process in
7 this last year.

8 Because I have another minute, I will also take
9 the chance to ask you to consider the Felon
10 Restoration Act because a lot of people with criminal
11 offenses for small stuff like smoking weed or small
12 stuff like small misdemeanors do not have the chance
13 to vote all through their lives. And that is really
14 our main problem. So I'm not going to use the rest of
15 my time.

16 I would like to thank everyone -- everyone else
17 here.

18 And because I have 30 seconds, I want to say that
19 I'm not an illegal immigrant, but my mom was not a
20 legal immigrant. She worked here illegally for 12
21 years. And it is a big deal when you have a president
22 that says that all illegal immigrants are criminals
23 because -- just because some of us have a chance to be
24 here legally, doesn't mean that you should look down
25 on everybody else.

1 Thank you so much.

2 MR. COXE: Thank you, sir.

3 Tom McCullough? Tom McCullough here?

4 Bruce McGee?

5 And then after, Denny Fields who follows

6 Mr. McGee, we're going to take a five-minute break.

7 MR. MCGEE: Good afternoon. Ladies and
8 gentlemen, I'm here as a representative. I'm here as
9 a representative of the ACLU, the ACLU chapter here in
10 northeast Florida.

11 I'm not going to repeat some of the things that's
12 already been said, take up a bunch of your time. But
13 ACLU is concerned about Commission's -- this
14 Commission's rules and the terminology of what is
15 required as "open records." And it's already been
16 stated to that effect, that we would like to keep them
17 open.

18 The Commission should change its ethics rules so
19 that legislatures or other elected officials cannot
20 take campaign contributions from any person or
21 organization lobbying -- lobbying an issue before the
22 CRC.

23 And, finally, this has do with reproductive
24 rights. Whether you're for or against abortion, the
25 current law states that it is -- per legal -- it's

1 legal in the privacy provision. The ACLU would like
2 to state that an individual's rights are indeed an
3 individual's rights.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. COXE: Thank you, sir.

6 Dennis Fields?

7 MR. FIELDS: Good afternoon. My name's Dennis
8 Fields. I've been in Florida all my life.

9 MR. COXE: Could you move close there? Thank
10 you.

11 MR. FIELDS: I've been a resident of Florida all
12 my life and I'm here to say that I'm disappointed in
13 the Florida Senate. My republican representatives are
14 blocking every pro-gun bill they get their hands on.
15 They are not giving the committees a chance to vote.
16 They're not giving the citizens a chance to see their
17 representatives vote on these initiatives. They're
18 not getting a floor vote to see our representatives
19 fighting against our rights for open carry in Florida.

20 Also, we are prohibited from carrying here on
21 college campuses. I have two daughters that are going
22 to be attending here within the next eight years. I
23 would like them to be able to defend themselves on the
24 way to their cars.

25 I really appreciate your time and I wanted to

1 propose an amendment to the Florida Constitution for
2 the open carry of firearms. No more hiding behind
3 tourist dollars. The tourists come from states that
4 already have open carry.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. COXE: Thank you, sir.

7 We're going to take a five-minute break. Thank
8 you.

9 (Recess taken.)

10 MS. TIMMANN: Okay. Thank you everyone. We're
11 going to start calling the meeting back to order.

12 I will let you know that we still have a large
13 number of you who want the opportunity to speak and
14 we'll make sure that you have that opportunity. So,
15 in turn, we hope you really pay attention to the time.
16 We're going to have to hold very tight on the
17 two-minute time.

18 Also, I will call the first speaker and then I
19 will call the additional three speakers behind them.
20 If you could even go ahead and line up politely in the
21 lines back in the aisles and we can then move more
22 quickly through the process.

23 So, first we have Karen Droege followed by Ann
24 Gipalo, Bruce Wells, and Gale Hall.

25 Ms. Droege?

1 MS. GIPALO: No. I'm sorry. Karen just left.

2 MS. TIMMANN: Okay.

3 MS. GIPALO: They weren't sure when they'd get
4 called. But I'm Ann Gipalo.

5 MS. TIMMANN: Okay. great. Thank you.

6 MS. GIPALO: I'm Ann Gipalo. I live here in
7 Jacksonville. I've been here 23 years. I have three
8 children in the public schools and very proudly a
9 public school parent.

10 My comments are -- I'm also concerned about the
11 Sunshine open debate and everything for your debate,
12 -- your discussions and conversations regarding this.
13 I'd like them to be as open and accessible as
14 possible.

15 The only way I found out about the date and time
16 and location of this meeting was through another
17 website that I follow. There was not PSAs on TV, on
18 radio. I don't subscribe to the newspaper here. So
19 it's -- it is very hard to figure out where you-all
20 are going to be in a timely manner for the average
21 citizen to be here.

22 Second, I'm very concerned about the ethics laws,
23 particularly surrounding the people who serve on the
24 education committees who have personal, financial,
25 business interests in charter schools and are voting

1 on funneling public money to companies that they have
2 an interest in. That is the definition of self-
3 serving in violation of ethics with public money, in
4 my mind. I do not understand how people can serve on
5 a committee where they're making decisions that
6 benefits -- that benefit themselves personally.

7 Second, I am totally against vouchers. We have
8 choice in schools in Duval County. There are Magnets,
9 there are public charters, there are private charters
10 or whatever. We do not need public money going to
11 private schools, whether they are religious or a
12 privately-run business. Dr. Vitti has given us a lot
13 of detail on Tuesday at a general meeting I was at for
14 County Council PTA that the charter schools that do
15 that do not want to come in here --

16 MS. TIMMANN: Ms. Gipalo --

17 MS. GIPALO: -- and compete.

18 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you. Do you have any written
19 comments? Please feel free to leave those as well or
20 submit them through the website.

21 MS. GIPALO: Okay. I will.

22 MS. TIMMANN: And that goes for everyone. Please
23 feel free to do that and that will ensure that that
24 all the Commissioners receive your comments.

25 MS. GIPALO: And, again, about the guns in public

1 schools. The first -- if you pass guns on campuses,
2 you will hear a huge sucking sound, as they say, of
3 parents pulling their kids out of public schools.

4 And I have high school junior --

5 MS. TIMMANN: Okay. Ms. Gipalo --

6 MS. GIPALO: -- choosing --

7 MS. TIMMANN: Ms. Gipalo, we have --

8 MS. GIPALO: -- a school.

9 MS. TIMMANN: -- 50 individuals who --

10 MS. GIPALO: She will not --

11 MS. TIMMANN: -- need to speak.

12 MS. GIPALO: -- go to Florida public colleges if
13 there are guns on campuses.

14 MS. TIMMANN: Bruce Wells? Do we have Bruce
15 Wells?

16 Gale Hall? Are you Gale Hall?

17 MS. HALL: Yes.

18 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

19 MS. HALL: Thank you so much. I think this is
20 wonderful that us Floridians have a chance to speak to
21 you-all. Thank you for your service.

22 I'm very nervous. Sorry.

23 MS. TIMMANN: It's all right.

24 MS. HALL: I guess I'm the only environmentalist
25 in the room. Yay. Okay. I'm not nervous anymore.

1 Thank you.

2 All right. I just want to start by reading
3 Article II of Section 7 of the Florida Constitution as
4 it stands now: "It shall be the policy of the state
5 to conserve and protect its natural resources and
6 scenic beauty. Adequate provisions shall be made by
7 law for the abatement of air and water pollution and
8 of excessive and unnecessary noise and for the
9 conservation and protection of natural resources.
10 Adequate provisions shall be made by law for the
11 conservation and protection of natural resources."

12 Since 1994 voters have approved numerous proposed
13 amendments -- at least eight -- to our Constitution
14 relating to conservation and clean energy. In
15 Florida, protecting conservation lands is conserving
16 water, which is why I urge the Commission to consider
17 proposals that acquire and restore lands necessary to
18 protect our drinking water sources and protect the
19 water quality in our rivers, lakes, and streams.

20 Land conservation creates recreational
21 opportunities for residents and visitors alike fueling
22 our tourism economy, one of our biggest resources.
23 Access to clean water, river, streams, lakes, and
24 springs is the reason so many people choose to live
25 and visit Florida. In Florida, our rivers, lakes, and

1 springs are held by the state in trust for all its
2 citizens. As such, we hope the Commission will
3 bolster protections for our rivers, lakes and streams
4 and recognize that all of our livelihoods depend on
5 access to clean water and our health, I might mention.

6 Florida has --

7 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Ms. Hall.

8 MS. HALL: Oh.

9 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

10 MS. HALL: Okay.

11 MS. TIMMANN: Please submit your additional
12 comments.

13 MS. HALL: Thank you.

14 MS. TIMMANN: We'd all like to see them.

15 MS. HALL: Sure.

16 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

17 Okay. Next up: Clay Henderson. Charlie Cofer,
18 and Theresa Graham.

19 Clay Henderson?

20 MR. HENDERSON: I'm coming.

21 MS. TIMMANN: Oh. Okay. Thank you.

22 MR. HENDERSON: Thank you.

23 Good afternoon. I'm Clay Henderson. I teach
24 environmental law at Stetson University. And --

25 MS. TIMMANN: Can you move a little closer to the

1 mic, please?

2 MR. HENDERSON: Yes.

3 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

4 MR. HENDERSON: How's that? There we go.

5 Clay Henderson. I teach at Stetson University.

6 I am your ghost of Christmas past that served on the
7 CRC 20 years ago. And my great grandfather served on
8 the Constitution Convention following the Civil War.
9 So I applaud your service and I'm going to tell you,
10 you have no idea what you've gotten into or how much
11 -- or how much time it's going to take over the next
12 year of your life.

13 I guess I am -- I enjoyed listening to the lady
14 read that section of the Constitution because I have a
15 pride of authorship of it. I was involved in drafting
16 most of the environmental provisions in Florida's
17 Constitution. They were overwhelmingly approved,
18 ratified by voters at various elections. We had 72
19 percent of the vote on our provision 20 years ago.
20 And in 2014 John Mills, who is now a colleague of mine
21 on the CRC, we drafted Amendment 1, which passed by 75
22 percent of the vote.

23 Floridians place great value on Florida's
24 environment. And -- and so we have a structure within
25 that to do significant things. And yet we have -- are

1 no longer spending any dollars on land conservation.
2 We rank at the top with the numbers of endangered
3 species. We rank at the top of our nation's states
4 with numbers of impaired waters. More needs to be
5 done.

6 I -- I ask you to not tinker with the structure
7 that we have because it has the ability to have us do
8 a good job. And we will be bringing forward a
9 proposal for your consideration.

10 Twenty years ago we proposed the right to a clean
11 and healthy environment. A hundred countries in this
12 planet have that in their -- in their constitutions.
13 We have seven states that have that in their
14 constitutions. Those include blue states, purple
15 states and red states. It is -- should be a
16 fundamental right.

17 What I learned sitting where you are is that the
18 arc of history is about the expansion of rights. And
19 what's important over this next year is for you to be
20 on the right side of history. And I look forward to
21 seeing some of you in the committee process as we go
22 forward.

23 Thank you.

24 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Mr. Henderson.

25 Mr. Cofer? Did I pronounce that correctly?

1 MR. COFER: Yes.

2 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

3 MR. COFER: I'm Charlie Cofer and I'm the public
4 defender for the Fourth Judicial Circuit of Florida.
5 And I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak
6 with you today and I also want to thank each of you
7 for your service on the Commission. It's a -- it's a
8 thankless task.

9 I am here to recommend the repeal of the last two
10 sentences of Article I, Section 12 of the Florida
11 Constitution, which deals with searches and seizures.
12 Now, I doubt many of have, even at this point,
13 committed the Florida Constitution to memory. So
14 these two sentences mandate that the Florida courts
15 interpret the Florida's Constitution's prohibition
16 against unreasonable searches and seizures in
17 conformity with the decisions of the United States
18 Supreme Court interpreting the Fourth Amendment of the
19 U.S. Constitution.

20 There are two reasons why these two sentences
21 should be removed from the State Constitution. First
22 of all, if these two sentences only serve to announce
23 that searches and seizures conducted in Florida must
24 be done in accordance with the United States
25 Constitution, they are surplusage. In other words,

1 they state the obvious.

2 But, second, and more importantly, these two
3 sentences mean that Florida can no longer uphold the
4 fundamental rights of states under their own
5 constitutions to guarantee greater constitutional
6 protections to its citizens than those provided by the
7 federal government. When these provisions were
8 adopted in 1982, the ballot summary for the amendment
9 did not explain the plain affect of the amendment.
10 That is, that a vote in favor of this provision
11 actually limits the Constitutional rights of the
12 state's citizens rather than recognizing the state's
13 rights to grant Constitutional protections to its
14 citizens greater than those contained in the United
15 States Constitution. For that reason, I would ask
16 that you consider recommending the repeal of those two
17 sentences.

18 And I thank you for your time.

19 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Mr. Cofer.

20 Theresa Graham?

21 Okay. Next up we have Enrique Dick Aquino,
22 Carolyn Wolfe, Jackie Bowen. It could be Bower?
23 Bower?

24 MS. BOWEN: Bowen.

25 MS. TIMMANN: Okay. That'll work.

1 MR. AQUINO: Good afternoon. My name is Dick
2 Aquino. First and foremost, I just want to let
3 everyone know that I'm American and an American
4 citizen. I was drafted in the United States Navy in
5 1972 by my mom, who's the commander of Post 10,
6 serving for the American Legion in Clark Air Force
7 Base.

8 Again, I met my wife in 1974 here in Jacksonville
9 and she's got red hair and freckles. And my three
10 children born in the Philippines, born in Guam and
11 born in Japan, all three of them by Constitutional
12 right they can be president of the United States.

13 I'm here today for you to repeal the following
14 sentences: On Article I, Section 2, basic rights,
15 "All natural persons, female and male alike, are equal
16 before the law and have inalienable rights, among this
17 are the Right to enjoy and defend life and liberty, to
18 pursue happiness, to be rewarded for industry, and to
19 acquire, possess, and protect property; except" --
20 please remove the exception -- "except, that the
21 ownership, inheritance, deposition and possession of
22 real property by the aliens ineligible for citizenship
23 may be regulated or prohibited by law. No person
24 shall be deprived of any right because of race,
25 religion, national origin, or physical disability."

1 Again, that exception should be removed in there
2 because in 1913 the Japanese were -- the alien land
3 law, which was enacted in 1926, Florida enacted this
4 law and it's time for it to disappear in our
5 Constitution. If it's still there, that means we are
6 the most racist state in the United States because
7 we're the only one left that have this law in the
8 constitution.

9 Thank you very much.

10 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Mr. Aquino.

11 Carolyn Wolfe? Then well have -- (Simultaneous
12 cross-talk).

13 MS. WOLFE: I'm Carolyn Wolfe from --

14 MS. TIMMANN: Carolyn? Okay.

15 MS. WOLFE: -- St. Augustine, Florida and I'm
16 here to talk about Florida's fair and open primaries.
17 I want tell you thank you-all for doing this.

18 I want tell you that I've had an exceptional
19 overview of the primaries in these United States,
20 having been able to work on the Bernie Sanders
21 campaign. I was in a position to work with voters
22 across the country as they encountered problems
23 casting their votes during the primaries. And,
24 without exception, every state that had closed
25 primaries had the biggest problems. And the biggest

1 problem was that you could not switch your voter
2 registration easily. It prohibits people who have to
3 work long hours or work far away from where
4 their central location is to change their voter
5 registration to be able to get there in order to do
6 it.

7 In St. Johns County alone, we have 41,000 dems,
8 40,000 independents, and 92,000 republicans. You can
9 see that makes it an unfair advantage for the voters
10 of St. Johns County, Florida alone. If they had open
11 primaries, people would be able to vote their choice
12 and we currently do not have that.

13 Furthermore, we have 217,919 population in
14 St. Johns County, only 543,724 voters; that leaves
15 325,805 people that are not voting [sic]. If you
16 truly want voters to be able to vote and participate
17 in government, you must open the primaries so it's
18 available to all these people.

19 Thank you very much.

20 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

21 Jackie Bower [sic], followed by Diego Echeverri,
22 Bobby Joe Fouts, and Ben White.

23 MS. BOWEN: Hi. My name is Jackie Bowen. I'm
24 here representing Florida fair and open primaries. I
25 just want to thank you all for letting me speak.

1 Thank you for your work. It cannot be easy. And
2 thank you for this example of civil discourse in our
3 state.

4 I've lived in St. Augustine for 11 years. I'm a
5 retired dean. I'm a current college fund-raising
6 consultant. I ran a publishing house. But some of
7 the most interesting things I've ever done is I worked
8 on our political system last year. And I found out
9 more about our process of government than I have in
10 any civics course that I have ever took. What I
11 learned is: It seems to me we're captured by a system
12 that prevents millions of people across the country
13 from voting in our primaries, 3.1 million no-party
14 affiliates in Florida alone. That's a quarter of our
15 voters.

16 Additional information: NPAs are the fastest
17 growing segment of our electorate, a pacing growth in
18 both the democratic and republicans parties. 74
19 percent of Florida voters want NPAs included in
20 primary elections. 73 percent of voters, including
21 democrats, republicans, and NPAs would like you-all to
22 put an open primary initiative on the ballot next
23 year.

24 I grew up thinking we were a country -- and I
25 learned this -- in which each person has an equal

1 vote. But now it seems you only have an equal vote if
2 you're a democrat or a republican. Parties seem to
3 have a chokehold on voters in Florida primaries and in
4 many closed primaries throughout the country.

5 In closing, please, please consider putting an
6 open primary initiative on the ballot in 2018.

7 Take a look at our presidential Candidates in the
8 last election. By opening the primaries, maybe we
9 could have better choices.

10 Thank you so much.

11 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

12 Diego Echeverri?

13 MR. ECHEVERRI: Good afternoon, everyone. My
14 name's Diego Echeverri. I work for Concerned Veterans
15 for American. CVA is a veterans' advocacy group that
16 advocates to preserve the freedoms our veterans and
17 military families fought for.

18 I'd like to thank the many veterans in the
19 audience and on the stage and the military family
20 members who are on the stage as well for your service
21 and your involvement in the political process. Thank
22 you.

23 I'd like to give a quick shout out to my
24 colleague Staff Sergeant Karen Kosef (phonetic) who's
25 here. Back there. She's shy, so. Karen, waive,

1 please? Okay. That's Karen.

2 Staff Sergeant Karen Kosef is in the Florida
3 National Guard. She served in Iraq. She served in
4 Kuwait and Guantanamo Bay. Her father's an Army
5 veteran. She has three siblings, each one has worn
6 the uniform. Her brother was Special Forces in the
7 Marine Corp. And her fiance' is a Marine. So Karen's
8 story is one of the reasons I love Jacksonville so
9 much, is that so many veterans who understand the
10 burden, and many family members as well who understand
11 what -- what we've done overseas.

12 Florida's a great state, as you all know. We
13 have 1.6 million veterans and that's only going to
14 grow in these -- in these 20 years that are coming up.
15 We're the third largest military population in the
16 USA.

17 Last week I was pleased to see Governor Scott and
18 Colonel Sutphin of Florida's VA standing alongside
19 CVA's president at the White House for the signing of
20 the extension of the Choice Card program. This is a
21 great first step. Veterans need choice in their
22 health care. We don't have it.

23 When I got out of the Army, I was able to use my
24 benefits, the GI Bill, and choose the university I
25 could go to. I was able to choose the lender I would

1 use my VA home loan with. But I do not have choice in
2 my health care and we need it because the VA's failing
3 veterans.

4 And there are people in the audience talking
5 about how bad health care is. It's really bad for
6 veterans and -- and military families suffer along
7 with our veterans. So please do something about that.

8 Thank you so much.

9 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

10 Bobby Jo Fouts?

11 And, again, she'll be followed by Ben White,
12 Gloria Einstein, and Carla Voisard.

13 MS. FOUTS: Hi. My name's Bobbie Jo Fouts and
14 I'm just here to try to encourage you to please, do
15 not do anything to infringe upon our Second Amendment
16 Rights. One of the things you can look at is that
17 instead of this old cliché that guns are bad, there's
18 many of us who feel that guns are free people's best
19 friends, especially for us women. Before Marion
20 Hammer came about and brought about the Castle
21 Doctrine, some of you might know that she was going to
22 be attacked by six men who announced they were going
23 to do this to her. There were six drunk men, and she
24 was able to pull out a firearm and defend her life.

25 So there is also a saying that God created all

1 men and Colt created them equal. That goes a whole
2 lot more so for us women when we can travel about more
3 comfortably and everything because we don't have to
4 worry about what some Mr. Horrible might do.

5 There's one other thing I'd like to bring up. My
6 husband and I were both line fisherman and
7 fisherwoman. There's all these regulations about size
8 limits of fish. And I understand that because we want
9 to protect the ecology. I want to protect their
10 ecology. But we got lucky one time and we got into a
11 mess of about 90 trout. And in order to obey the law,
12 we had to throw back a whole bunch of them and we only
13 ended up with three. And a lot of them died because
14 trout have tender mouths.

15 And it's not just that. The one's that go out
16 deep sea fishing end up having to throw one back they
17 know a shark is going to get. Please consider weight
18 limits, not just -- you know, we want not to take the
19 breeding-sized fish because we want to preserve the
20 ecology. But for the one's that are not breeding
21 size, how about weight limits instead? That would --

22 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Ms. Fouts.

23 MS. FOUTS: -- preserve our ecology.

24 Thank you.

25 MS. TIMMANN: We really appreciate your comments.

1 Thank you.

2 Ben White?

3 Gloria Einstein?

4 MS. EINSTEIN: Thank you. I'm Gloria Einstein
5 and I'm speaking on behalf of the National Council of
6 Jewish Women in support of Article I, Section 23 and
7 in opposition to any attempt to weaken or limit it.
8 That is -- that gives natural persons the right to be
9 let alone and free from government intrusion into that
10 person's private life. Now, does that sound like it's
11 just about information? It's about people's ability
12 to live freely and make their own decisions.

13 Human nature is that we all want that ability to
14 make our own decisions. We think we're going to do a
15 pretty good job of it and we think we deserve it.
16 Now, we're not so sure about other people. We tend to
17 think they will misuse their freedom and we want to
18 restrict it. This is natural. It's human nature.
19 Standing against that, a provision like what we have
20 now in our Constitution, it is an American value.
21 Independence. Self-determination. But it's also a
22 religious value. It's the value of love thy neighbor
23 as thyself. It means according to other people the
24 respect that we want for ourselves, giving other
25 people the personal freedom that we want for

1 ourselves.

2 Privacy is not a democratic or a republican
3 value. It's not a conservative or a liberal value.
4 People do different things with their privacy and
5 their personal freedom. That's --

6 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Ms. Einstein.

7 MS. EINSTEIN: Thank you.

8 MS. TIMMANN: Carla Voisard followed by Nicholas
9 Harding, Jennifer Wildes, and Rob Mason.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. VOISARD: Good afternoon and thank you for
12 being here. I -- I'm Carla Voisard and I am a member
13 of the Democratic Executive Committee in Nassau
14 County. And I am addressing an issue that affects
15 both democrats and republicans.

16 Our county is 98-plus percent registered, which
17 is wonderful, and almost 80 percent vote in general
18 elections. But how do we get that other two percent?
19 The other two percent are -- some of them are
20 ex-felons. In fact, we have more ex-felons left that
21 can't vote than we have other people who just didn't
22 register. That is -- is -- one of the things we need
23 to do is give them the right to vote. And give us
24 something to do to get them registered.

25 The other issue is vote by mail. Right now it

1 expires every four years. You get one general and one
2 mid-term and it's gone. In our county and in two
3 other counties, they have added a checkbox on the
4 envelope when you mail back your vote by mail. And if
5 you check it, they automatically renew it for another
6 four years. Please make that a part of the
7 Constitution that everybody either gets -- either we
8 don't have renew it as long as you vote or that the
9 auto-renewal is on the envelope for everyone.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

12 Nicholas Harding?

13 Jennifer Wildes?

14 MS. WILDES: Hello. I'm a Nassau County resident
15 and I am here because I was not able to vote for
16 school superintendent in Nassau County because the one
17 candidate had a lady write in her name. The lady did
18 not have to submit any paper -- any financial
19 paperwork. She just -- she did not have to pay a fee
20 because write-in candidates do not have to pay a fee.
21 She just put her name down. She was never
22 interviewed. She was never accountable for her --
23 putting her name on the ballot. And, therefore, I was
24 not able to vote for superintendent in my county. I
25 think this is a travesty and it needs to stop.

1 I will also mention that my husband is a school
2 teacher in Nassau County and we are proud parents of
3 public education for our children. And we are not
4 interested in public dollars going to schools --
5 charter schools that do not have to follow the same
6 regulations, do not have to do the same testing or any
7 of the other things that public education requires.
8 That should not happen in our country.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

11 Rob Mason?

12 MR. MASON: Thank you.

13 When I come back 20 years from now, I'm going to
14 come a lot earlier, believe me.

15 My name is Rob Mason, and I'm an attorney and a
16 child advocate. And the Florida Constitution protects
17 the rights of individuals. And our most vulnerable
18 population consists of children. That's why I would
19 ask this Commission to look closely at Article I,
20 Section 15. I'm asking the Commission to review the
21 provisions about what happens when a child is arrested
22 and then later transferred to adult court. And I
23 believe there's a glaring omission and that there
24 should be a protection that for a child to be
25 prosecuted as an adult, there's either an indictment

1 by a grand jury or a judicial proceeding where the
2 court makes the determination -- a grand jury or a
3 court determination.

4 It's the people or an independent judiciary that
5 should be making such an important life-changing
6 decision. It shouldn't be done by a magic wand by the
7 government that says "Poof. Now you're an adult."
8 And now this child has a new set of rules and a new
9 set of consequences. All of Florida's children
10 deserve due process.

11 Thank you.

12 And I have copies of proposed language.

13 MS. TIMMANN: Great. Thank you.

14 I don't know where he can turn in the copies.
15 You could leave them right here on the stage,
16 Mr. Mason. That'll help. Thank you.

17 Joyce Frink followed by Luann Bennett followed by
18 Janice Billy followed by Eric Friday.

19 Ms. Frink?

20 MS. FRINK: Yes. Thank you.

21 Good afternoon. My name's Joyce Frink and I'm a
22 resident of Fernandina Beach. I have two things I
23 want to address.

24 When people run for office, they're supposed to
25 verify their information, and that includes -- their

1 financial dealings should be open and -- and approved
2 and aware of before they are allowed to become
3 candidates. That did not happen in the last election.

4 My other concern is redistricting. Now, that's
5 coming up -- since this is coming up in a few years.
6 And there was a big contention about the redistricting
7 in the State of Florida. And my -- I contend that
8 there should be some representatives of the local
9 black community. And so often times different
10 districts have smaller numbers to get a representative
11 as opposed to the more urban areas who have one
12 representative that covers a lot more citizens. So I
13 want the congressional districts to be even and equal
14 and fair and not just on a political basis to favor
15 one party or other. It should be one for one.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Ms. Frink.

18 Luann Bennett?

19 MS. BENNETT: I'm Luann Bennett and I was born in
20 Florida and I have lived here my entire 73 years, so
21 you need to listen to me, please.

22 I'm here to support the Everglades and the rest
23 of our wonderful state, that is, those parts that have
24 not been already destroyed, limited and otherwise
25 polluted. Articles 8 -- X, 18, Article X, 17, Article

1 X, 28 all speak to protection of our environment, and,
2 in particular in some cases, the Everglades, with
3 money provided to reimburse for pollution. But
4 they're not a lot of other limits that are not imposed
5 or that are not enforced. One of those, of course, is
6 the purchase of new lands that is not being taken care
7 of by our current legislature or in our past
8 legislatures. If there is a way in which you can
9 strengthen the force of law to get those things
10 Florida wants that Florida citizens, as someone else
11 addressed, have voted for. I need for you to do that.

12 I wish that you would keep in mind as you go
13 through your process that the Florida Everglades, for
14 example, is as much an important and national
15 treasurer as the Grand Canyon is. And the first time
16 that we drill an oil well there, which has been
17 proposed recently, that's the beginning or another
18 beginning of a further end.

19 Our governor continues to encourage growth for
20 houses and businesses and such. And if you look at
21 the Everglades area you will find that little chunks
22 squares out where people have been able to build
23 buildings and increase the decrease of our safety and
24 our health and our ecology.

25 And before my time runs out, I want you to

1 restrict gun ownership as much as you can.

2 I want you to remember that no woman has ever
3 made a decision for an abortion that she did not
4 think --

5 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Ms. Bennett.

6 MS. BENNETT: -- rethink and rethink again.

7 (Simultaneous cross-talk.)

8 MS. TIMMANN: If you have additional comments,
9 could you please leave it with us?

10 MS. BENNETT: And --

11 MS. TIMMANN: We'd appreciate that.

12 MS. BENNETT: -- please get everybody --

13 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

14 MS. BENNETT: -- every pregnant person the same
15 rights as pigs in this state.

16 MS. TIMMANN: Janice Billy?

17 Janice Billy, and she will be followed Eric
18 Friday, Dwan Love -- check that, we had her before,
19 and Jeff Williams.

20 MS. BILLY: Hello. I'm Janice Billy. I'm a
21 native of Florida. I've lived here all my life. My
22 entire family lives here with the exception of one
23 sister in Buffalo. I have children and grandchildren
24 here. So as you perform your duties as the
25 Constitutional Revision Commission, I just wanted to

1 let you know what's important to me.

2 Florida's greatest value is its natural beauty.
3 I know that Florida acknowledges its value in Article
4 II, Section 7 but I don't see evidence that our state
5 is fulfilling its duty.

6 MS. TIMMANN: Stay close to the microphone,
7 please. Thank you.

8 MS. BILLY: -- to conserve and protect the
9 beautiful state. Our resources should not be
10 exploited for the benefit of a few.

11 Also, I feel that we need to maintain the
12 requirement that state funds do not go to religious
13 organizations. We need to strengthen our public
14 schools instead of allowing funding be funneled to
15 charter schools and the voucher programs.

16 We should restore voting rights to those who
17 serve their time and allow them to become citizens,
18 full citizens.

19 And we should maintain our fair and compact
20 voting rights -- voting districts and not allow
21 political parties to guide the process.

22 Thank you.

23 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

24 Eric Friday?

25 MR. FRIDAY: Members of the Commission, I am here

1 as a lobbyist for an organization, Florida Carry. I
2 am their general counsel.

3 We are made up of over 40,000 members and
4 supporters and we are here because we want our rights
5 back. Those Rights have been slowly taken away from
6 us despite being guaranteed in Article I, Section 8 of
7 the Florida Constitution. Those rights have been
8 slowly taken away over time. The first one was taken
9 because here in this city on July 4th, 1892 a group of
10 black citizens decided to stop a lynching with
11 their -- with their arms. And because of that, the
12 Florida legislature began requiring licenses and
13 banning certain types of firearms. That's the history
14 of the regulation of firearms of Florida, and we want
15 our rights back. Specifically, we ask this Commission
16 to include an amendment that requires the state to
17 recognize the right of citizens to open carry as 45
18 other states in this country do, 30 of them without
19 even requiring a conceal carry license to do so.

20 Secondly, we ask that this Commission amend
21 Article I, Section 8 to make clear that any regulation
22 or restriction on the right to bare arms in Florida
23 must be subject to strict scrutiny, not the whim of a
24 few justices on the Florida Supreme Court who don't
25 like the fact that this right is being subjected to

1 less scrutiny than every other right that the Florida
2 Supreme Court's considered.

3 Third, we would ask this Commission to reject any
4 proposal that seeks to expand background checks into
5 so-called universal background checks or any
6 requirement that a waiting period be imposed. And, in
7 fact, we would ask this Commission to revoke the
8 current law that requires waiting periods for
9 Floridians who have -- already have to go through a
10 federal background check in order to purchase a
11 firearm.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Mr. Friday.

14 I believe this next one is a duplicate. Dwan
15 Love?

16 Okay. Jeff Williams?

17 MR. WILLIAMS: Hi. Can you hear me okay? Good.

18 I want to thank you for this opportunity and I
19 want to thank you for your service to our great state.

20 MS. TIMMANN: You might need to raise the mic a
21 little bit more, if you can.

22 MR. WILLIAMS: The story of my life.

23 MS. TIMMANN: If not, bend down. There you go.

24 MR. WILLIAMS: All right. With regard to the
25 thorny and complex issue of gun control --

1 MADAM COURT REPORTER: Please speak into the --

2 MS. TIMMANN: Yes.

3 MADAM COURT REPORTER: -- microphone? I can't
4 hear you.

5 MS. TIMMANN: A little closer.

6 MR. WILLIAMS: I will respectfully request that
7 the Commission consider other measures to addressing
8 this important issue besides adding more gun control
9 measures going forward. This is indeed a real and
10 complicated issue and people are understandably
11 looking for answers and all voices need to be heard.
12 I understand that.

13 However, I respectfully submit that part of this
14 answer should not be and is not to burden or infringe
15 on the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding
16 citizens. Please no new gun control measures going
17 forward.

18 Thank you very much.

19 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

20 Tom Nolan, Ruth Stafford, Jim Schwarz, and then
21 Devin Coleman.

22 Tom Nolan?

23 MR. NOLAN: I'm coming.

24 MS. TIMMANN: Oh. okay. And do remember to
25 stand close to the microphone. We want to make sure

1 that we can preserve all of your important comments.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. NOLAN: How's this?

4 I know several of you. I've known you for a
5 number of years. I've worked with some of you. I
6 want to say thank you very much for serving. I think
7 you have a heavy lift before this is all finished.

8 I've come today to ask you to preserve Article I,
9 Section 23 on the right to privacy. There's been a
10 lot of talk about it. Here's what it says. It simply
11 says: "Every natural person has the right to be let
12 alone from free -- and free from government intrusion
13 into the person's private life except as otherwise
14 provided herein. This section shall not be construed
15 to limit the public's Right to access to public
16 records and meetings as provided by law."

17 I have a lot of faith. I've worked for 30 years
18 as a political consultant. I have a lot of faith in
19 the voters of Florida. And in 1980 they approved that
20 amendment. I think they knew exactly what they were
21 doing. I think that what they wanted to do was stop
22 government intrusion and overzealous political
23 philosophy in our state. So I will ask you to please
24 leave Article I, Section 23 as it is.

25 Since I have 40 seconds, I will tell you also:

1 After 30 years of working in the political process
2 here, I would support open primaries. I think it
3 would be a good way to help even out the polarization
4 that we see by allowing Independents and people who
5 are not of the Republican or Democratic party to vote
6 earlier. Constantly we are looking at how do we get
7 more people to vote? Give them more chances.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Mr. Nolan.

10 Ruth Stafford?

11 MS. STAFFORD: Hello. Thank you so much for what
12 you do. And I would like also to thank those
13 gentleman in the back, the policeman that are here, I
14 thank them particularly because they look after me. I
15 am 75-years-old and I'd like to tell you just a little
16 bit about what I have decided to do with the rest of
17 my life, having traveling around the United States and
18 teaching in 17 different schools.

19 I've decided what is most important in this world
20 is life. And without life we cannot live. As a child
21 I was old enough to see lynch mobs. I was old enough
22 to see what happens when one person thinks that he is
23 better than another person and he decides his life is
24 not important.

25 I respect women but I do not respect a woman's

1 right to kill her child. That is the same thing that
2 we were subjected to when 4,785 black people were
3 lynched. That lynching means that we were not as
4 important as the people who owned the slaves. We own
5 but we don't kill. We don't have a right to seek to
6 kill.

7 I would like also to tell you what I do. I stand
8 at an abortion clinic all day and I offer a free
9 apartment, free education and anything that will
10 prevent a woman from having to kill her baby.
11 Protection from that man who coerced her, that man who
12 says you will kill that baby because I will not pay
13 child support. And she does. That woman who goes
14 around that feels that she must use her body to
15 solicit a marriage, thinking that she's going to hook
16 a man. That's another life that's thrown away out of
17 pure selfishness and one elevating himself above
18 another.

19 I would like also to let you know that any person
20 who becomes pregnant in the state of Florida or
21 wherever, there are facilities that you can go to,
22 places --

23 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Ms. Stafford.

24 MS. STAFFORD: -- that will help you.

25 And thank you so much for this time.

1 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you for your comments.

2 Jim Schwarz? Again followed -- Jim Schwarz?

3 Devin Coleman who will be followed by Charlie Latham,

4 Linda Myers, and Robert -- I can't read your

5 handwriting -- perhaps Demasco?

6 Devin Coleman?

7 MR. COLEMAN: Yes, ma'am.

8 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

9 MR. COLEMAN: Good afternoon, members of the
10 Commission. Thank you for taking this time out to
11 come to Jacksonville and listen to what the People
12 have to say about making our Constitution better.

13 My name is Devin Coleman, an organizer with the
14 state-wide organization named New Florida Majority.
15 We believe in building leaders among those from
16 historically marginalized communities, working with
17 them so they can become fully engaged in a democracy.
18 Today is about the People and about the Commissioners.

19 Will you give those who served their time an
20 opportunity to have their voting rights restored
21 automatically without a petition to the Clemency
22 Board? We ask that these people not be perpetually --
23 perpetually punished for mistakes made in their past.

24 Many have testified and expressed concerns for
25 this issue and Florida is one of a handful of states

1 that have such stringent voter restoration policies.
2 Recently even the Florida Supreme Court weighed in,
3 allowing a ballot measure named the Voter Registration
4 Amendment move forward. This amendment will help 1.5
5 million ex-felons move forward with their lives and
6 become more civically engaged.

7 All of you here have a chance to correct this
8 perpetual punishment mistake carried on by our state
9 by standing up and saying that you believe in the
10 potential redemption of every citizen of Florida by
11 giving the public an opportunity to vote in 2018 on a
12 Voter Restoration Amendment.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Mr. Coleman.

15 And, again, as I call your name, please move
16 towards the aisle so we can ensure that everyone has a
17 chance to be heard today.

18 Charlie Latham?

19 MR. LATHAM: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and
20 Commissioners. My name's Charlie Latham and I'm the
21 mayor of Jacksonville Beach. First off, thank you
22 very much for your willingness to sacrifice your time
23 and effort for this worthy Commission. It's a
24 tremendous burden. We all know it and we are very
25 grateful to you for it.

1 Like my colleague from Ormond Beach, I'm here to
2 talk about Home Rule. There's seven laws -- there are
3 seven bills, rather, that are before the legislature
4 this year that will severely damage our ability to
5 govern locally.

6 Last year we had a little incident called
7 Hurricane Matthew that happened on October 3rd. We
8 prepared as a city to -- to respond appropriately for
9 our citizens and respond quickly. And if House Bill
10 7063 were actually law back then, we would have been
11 penalized for having a reserve greater than ten
12 percent.

13 We work really hard for our citizens. We look
14 them in the eye every day and we explain what we do
15 and what we don't do and why. And, with all due
16 respect and reverence to our colleagues in the state
17 legislature, that's not the same. It's not the same
18 for them.

19 We're going to be debt free in 2020 as a city and
20 I'm really proud of that fact. And, in my opinion,
21 that demonstrates pretty clearly that local government
22 has the ability to manage effectively and -- and to do
23 the right thing for our citizens. So this year, as
24 you put your heads together and talk about amendments
25 to the Constitution and things that'll benefit us as

1 citizens, we'd ask you to look at an amendment that
2 will protect Home Rule and allow us to serve our
3 citizens locally.

4 Thank you very much.

5 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Mayor.

6 Linda Myers will be followed by Robert Demasco,
7 Lisa Williams, Christine Pearre, and Richard Horne.

8 MS. MYERS: Good afternoon, Commission members.
9 My name is Linda Myers. I am the tax collector,
10 elected in and for Putnam County. It is an honor to
11 be with you today and to be a part of this process.
12 Thank you so much for your commitment to the State of
13 Florida with your service here.

14 I am here today to speak of the importance of the
15 Independence of Florida's Constitutional officers.
16 Article VIII, Section 1D of the Constitution of
17 Florida establishes six of those Constitutional
18 offices. Five of them are individuals and one is a
19 collegial body.

20 This section starts by stating four simple words:
21 "There shall be elected ... "

22 I would like to speak on the importance of
23 electing separate and distinct State Constitutional
24 officers. The wisdom of the framers of the Florida
25 Constitution in establishing these six offices

1 distinct elected offices remain sound today as it was
2 in the beginning. Each Constitutional office forms
3 important but distinct functions and is directly
4 accountable to our people at the ballot box. We must
5 protect and strengthen the citizen's right to elect
6 women and men to these offices who are directly
7 accountable to their voters.

8 On behalf of Florida's citizens who elected me as
9 their tax collector, I ask you and urge you to protect
10 the independence of these offices. Florida's tax
11 collectors are here to assist you in any way that you
12 need.

13 And thank you again for serving in this position
14 and the dedication to our great state and to your
15 citizens.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Ms. Myers.

18 Robert Demasco?

19 MR. DEMASCO: Good afternoon. My name is Robert
20 Demasco.

21 As a -- as a concerned citizen I'd like to
22 address the firearms policy as laid out in Article I,
23 Session 8. I would like to see the advancement of
24 Constitutional carry of firearms by law-abiding
25 citizens as well as the discontinued stalling of

1 proposed bills by elected officials.

2 They are 45 other states that embrace open carry
3 in one form or another. And all the negative thoughts
4 that have been brought forward to speak against open
5 carry have just not happened. The Wild West -- The
6 Wild West just never occurred.

7 Florida has enjoyed open carry in the past and
8 when first trying to adopt conceal carry, it was
9 combated with a very similar vocabulary that is
10 actually being used to return it. I would like to see
11 Florida stay on the frontline of firearms -- firearms
12 rights for all lawful citizens. It's very similar to
13 what we have in Georgia.

14 I would like to see fewer places on the list of
15 restricted arms carried by a lawful -- by a lawful
16 people, as it only serves to create zones where
17 lawfully and legally-armed citizens are the only ones
18 who are willing to heed the laws that are in place.
19 The lawless will never heed these laws by nature of
20 their name alone.

21 Also, the burden of proof, as far as defensive
22 carry and the defensive use of firearms should not
23 fall on the victim's shoulders. As citizens, we're
24 suppose to be innocent until proven guilty, not vice
25 versa, simply demonized by a lawful use of a firearm

1 that happened to be involved.

2 I remind you that laws -- that laws do not equate
3 to less crime. It simply serves to make previously
4 law-abiding citizens become unknown criminals due to
5 changes that do nothing to reduce crime itself and
6 sometimes even make no sense.

7 Thank you.

8 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

9 Lisa Williams?

10 MS. WILLIAMS: I'm Lisa Williams and I, too,
11 would like to thank you guys for what you're doing,
12 although I've got to start with a negative. Sorry.

13 I would like to understand why you're going
14 through this process when the state can simply ignore
15 the ballot amendments passed by the voters.

16 And you're probably wondering what I'm referring
17 to. I'm referring to the Water and Land Legacy Act
18 that was approved in 2014, and it was approved by 75
19 percent of the voters. To date, the state has funded
20 hardly anything out of this for this. And this, for
21 everyone else, it's regarding the purchase of
22 conservation lands by the state.

23 As a matter of fact, right now they're discussing
24 it and the House is setting aside zero dollars and the
25 Senate looks like it might have 15 million. That's

1 out of 300 million that has been given to this
2 program.

3 Now Florida's beautiful because of our natural
4 lands, not because of our strip malls. And every day
5 we lose more land and more clean water. For the
6 average voter like me to have faith in this process,
7 the state must abide by what the amendments -- what
8 amendments are approved by the People, whether they
9 like it or not. And I would like to see y'all do
10 something about that because it doesn't make sense to
11 us and then we get disappointed in the process.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Ms. Williams.

14 Christine Pearre followed by Richard Horne,
15 Margaret Lamkin, Joe Hannoush.

16 MS. PEARRE: Hi. My name is Christine Pearre.

17 MS. TIMMANN: Pearre.

18 MS. PEARRE: I would like to thank all of you
19 guys for the coming. I'm super nervous. I'm not a
20 political person. I'm learning a lot lately. So I
21 want to say as a plain-Jane, boring person I -- I love
22 the United States of America. I love Jacksonville,
23 Florida. It makes a wonderful home.

24 I am a Navy brat. I'm very close to my family.
25 I adore my job. My husband and I have been together

1 for almost 20 years. It couldn't get more boring than
2 us. A fun afternoon is when we are working on the
3 house and making things happen.

4 But I have concerns. As an active voter I want
5 open primaries. I want to know that I can pick what
6 candidate represents me, not who a party says should
7 represent me. No party owns my vote. No party owns
8 my voice, and my Constitution and this great country
9 and this great state should protect me for choosing
10 what I want and not force me into a category.

11 So I'm asking you guys to stand up for the
12 citizens. You are the powerful ones. You have the
13 opportunity to present change for all of us to be
14 empowered. And so I'm asking you guys to do that to -
15 - to open it up, to encourage people to have their
16 voices heard and not let any party or any interest
17 group own us or own our country.

18 I would also like to ask you guys to please be
19 open with your process. I'm learning a lot but I need
20 you-all's help. We're are at an all-time low in our
21 faith in our elected officials. So I'm pleading with
22 you to help build that faith by being transparent,
23 work under the Sunshine Law and do your businesses and
24 dealings so everybody can know what's going on. And
25 we can all learn and we can all be active.

1 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

2 MS. PEARRE: And we can all make change.

3 MS. TIMMANN: We appreciate your comments. Thank
4 you.

5 Richard Horne?

6 Margaret Lamkin?

7 MS. LAMKIN: Good evening. Thank you to the
8 Chairman and Commissioners for letting me talk to you
9 about education. I'm big on educating our children.
10 Please consider the education of our children to allow
11 parents the choices.

12 I have been involved with the neighborhood
13 schools and charter schools over the years. I have
14 two daughters who have graduated from public school.
15 Now I have two granddaughters who's in school. I have
16 found that the charter school that I am a PTO member
17 and a parents' liaison, they are wild about learning.
18 That is Somerset Prep Elementary located in Arlington.

19 The kids are happy. They're outgoing. They are
20 just grasping knowledge. Now, when I had my
21 granddaughters in public school, there was none of
22 that. I hear everybody complaining about charter
23 schools, but charter schools is good for our children,
24 also. We must consider all children, not some of the
25 children, but all children should be given the

1 opportunity to get a good education within the state
2 of Florida.

3 And that's what I have to say.

4 And thank you very much.

5 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Ms. Lamkin.

6 Joe Hannoush followed by Marshall Clayton Rowson,
7 Brian Allen, and I believe it's a Ms. Staub. Staub?
8 S-T-A-U-B.

9 MR. HANNOUSH: Thank you-all for being here and
10 listening.

11 A lot of people spoke at this event yesterday in
12 Gainesville and a few here today about gerrymandering
13 of districts.

14 That's important because our state legislative
15 elections are not putting into office a true
16 representation of voter will. The State House is
17 currently 2 to 1 republican to Democrat with no
18 representation of a third-party. This is not a true
19 representation of Florida will.

20 On my ballot this past November I only had a
21 choice in one state House and one state Senate race.
22 That's two seats out of 160 state legislatures that
23 determine all of the laws of all Floridians. Voters
24 in my district and voters in all districts had only
25 one percent of the choice for their own law makers.

1 That law needs to change.

2 Third-parties are always ignored but they do make
3 up about four percent of voters. If third-parties
4 received equal representation in the state
5 legislature, they'd have about six seats. That might
6 not mean much, but that means everything to those
7 third-party voters.

8 Thank you all for listening.

9 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

10 Marshall Clayton Rowson?

11 MR. ROWSON: Thank you, Chairman and
12 Commissioners.

13 A 2010-2011 Representative Carroll from this
14 district, District 13 as well as several other
15 representatives and senators introduced House Joint
16 Resolutions to add in an amendment to our Constitution
17 that would, quote, "Assert the sovereignty of the
18 state and refuse to comply with resolutions
19 unconstitutional federal mandates."

20 And where I -- I acknowledge that these are --
21 these are good -- these are good proposals, they don't
22 go far enough to restore and impose and enforce such
23 resolutions. Our problem is that, generally speaking,
24 we look to DC and the U.S. government to solve our
25 problems when we should see by now that the U.S.

1 Government and DC isn't capable of solving these
2 problems, and, in fact, create more problems for us.

3 Instead we need to be looking to Tallahassee to
4 solve these problems when it comes to issues, whether
5 it's marriage values, determining school curriculum
6 and college admission, to determining immigration and
7 refugee resettlement. We are, in all instances,
8 dictated by a rogue and unaccountable U.S. Supreme
9 Court, or in particularly with the latter, the U.S.
10 partnership with the U.N.

11 Additionally, clauses are in a position to
12 enforce such a resolution on Florida's sovereignty
13 must be made.

14 Lastly, with the ignorance today in regards to
15 constitutional and republican forms of government, an
16 additional clause to protect the Right of Succession
17 should be made. After all, the Union simply was
18 created for the benefit of the states, not the
19 opposite. With a GDP of greater than Saudi Arabia and
20 Switzerland, Florida should quit acting as a
21 subservient to Washington. It's time that we quit
22 giving lip service to nullifying federal mandates that
23 serve at their own power and serve their own
24 authority. And -- and I urge -- I urge you to support
25 an amendment --

1 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

2 MR. ROWSON: -- to protect Florida's sovereignty.

3 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you. If you have additional
4 comments, please submit them. Thank you.

5 MR. ROWSON: Yes, ma'am. Thank you.

6 MS. TIMMANN: Brian Allen?

7 And I believe it's Ms. S-T-A-U-B of Westberry
8 Manor Drive. I just can't read your first name. No?

9 Luis Brac followed by Latanya Peterson follow by
10 Joey Vaughn followed Wen Raiti. And, again, please
11 move towards the aisles.

12 MR. BRAC: Good afternoon to you all. Thank you
13 for your service and thank you for listening.

14 MS. TIMMANN: Please state your name on the
15 record as well.

16 MR. BRAC: Luis Brac.

17 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

18 MR BRAC: I'm a regular folk from Duval County,
19 retiree, and I'm 74-years-old and I'm here to advocate
20 for Florida's fair and open primaries.

21 You see, I -- in my view, democracy is a constant
22 evolving process, always in search for the common and
23 greater good. With that thought in mind, therefore, I
24 believe that having all candidates on a single ballot,
25 and all voters choosing candidates regardless of their

1 party affiliation will bring us a step closer to that
2 goal, the common and greater good. Because we all
3 contribute with our tax dollars to the primary
4 process, we should all, as well, participate in said
5 process.

6 In my view, the constant growing discontent with
7 the performance of both major parties is a
8 contributing factor for the constant growth of
9 Independents and the nonparty affiliation sector.
10 And, unfortunately, increasingly leading to the end of
11 a a democratic government by the minority. I cannot
12 imagine anything better than an inclusive electorate
13 process to prevent that from happening. Leaving out
14 of the process way over three million voters as we
15 know happened in the last election, in my view, is
16 greatly detrimental to our democracy and our state.

17 Thank you for listening. And I hope you
18 thoroughly consider open and fair primaries, a
19 survivable alternative to strive towards the common
20 and greater good.

21 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

22 Latanya Peterson?

23 Joey Vaughn?

24 MR. VAUGHN: Good afternoon, members of the
25 Commission. Thank you so much for your time.

1 My name is Joey Vaughn and I've been a resident
2 and an attorney here in Duval County since 1989. I
3 stand before you first and foremost as a follower of
4 Jesus Christ. But to speak to you today as a private
5 citizen and as an attorney on a specific concern
6 relating to judicial activism, specifically judicial
7 activism as related to the Florida Supreme Court's
8 high-jacking of the People's intent in the passing of
9 the original Section 23 of Article I of the Florida
10 Constitution regarding the Right of Privacy. And I
11 urge this Commission to rectify this situation through
12 its current work in recommending forthcoming
13 amendments to the Florida Constitution to be presented
14 to the People.

15 In summary, we know that Section 23 was
16 originally passed by the voters of Florida to protect
17 us as citizens from governmental intrusion into --
18 invading in our lives relating to privacy from
19 information in documents. It was passed in 1980 by
20 the legislature, put to the citizens and voted on by
21 the citizens of Florida. And it grew out of concerns
22 for issues such stemming from Watergate, et cetera,
23 again, from government intrusion. The issue was
24 concerning government access to our information.
25 Think of cell phones, tablets, et cetera, the minute-

1 by-minute access that government has to our
2 information. That's what it was designed to protect
3 against, although those items were not even placed
4 back then.

5 It's enacted not for the issue of abortion. That
6 issue was never discussed by the '78 CRC that first
7 discussed it or the legislature or even in the
8 discussions. In fact, this is for the privacy of
9 individuals and information.

10 The second sentence of this section says that the
11 -- it shall be construed -- shall not be construed to
12 limit the public's right of access to public records
13 and meetings as provided by law.

14 So the Supreme Court came in and high-jacked the
15 People's intent and I'm asking this Commission to
16 clarify by putting forth an amendment that would allow
17 it to go back to the People and let the People have
18 the final say and to stop judicial activism.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Mr. Vaughn.

21 Wen Raiti followed by Kyle Collins followed by
22 Fred Gottshalk followed by Marcia Cotton.

23 MS. RAITI: Good afternoon. My name's Wen Raiti.
24 And thank you for this opportunity to speak to you
25 directly.

1 I am a proud Florida citizen, an immigrant, an
2 entrepreneur, a mother. When we moved here in
3 Jacksonville in 2006, I learned that my land and
4 property could be seized in Florida because the
5 Constitution of Florida Article I, Section 2 could
6 prohibit me from ownership, inheritance, disposition
7 and possession of real property due to my ethnicity as
8 an Asian American.

9 I could not believe what I learned. This is
10 not what I know about America: equal rights, liberty
11 and justice for all.

12 I'm here on behalf of the Asian community in
13 Florida who'd like to request the Florida Constitution
14 Revision Commission to remove the racial
15 discriminatory words -- message in the alien land law
16 from our constitution Article I, section 2.

17 In 1926 Florida adopted the alien land law into
18 our Constitution. Today Florida is the only state
19 still have a constitution where messages of racial and
20 discriminatory language in their book.

21 I hope that you-all can do right thing and help
22 to make this great state a better place for all
23 citizens of Florida.

24 Thank you for your service.

25 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Ms. Raiti.

1 Kyle Collins?

2 Fred Gottshalk?

3 MR. GOTTSALK: I am Fred Gottshalk, a 22-year
4 military veteran, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force retired.
5 I've heard a lot of subjects brought up here today
6 that are primarily self-indulgent. People wanting you
7 to do this for them and that for them and the other
8 thing.

9 I'm appalled, really, to see how many of the
10 Board has left and how many of the audience has left.
11 It's this apathy that has brought this country to
12 where it is now. People don't think they can do
13 anything about it because those appointed to the Board
14 didn't care enough to stay. Granted, you-all have
15 other jobs. A lot of these people have other jobs,
16 too.

17 Now, as far as the Second Amendment, I would like
18 to quote something here: "A well-regulated militia
19 being necessary to the security of a free state. The
20 right of the People to keep and bare arms shall not be
21 infringed." What is it people don't understand about
22 "shall not be infringed"?

23 Now I'm going to quote here from Joseph Story, a
24 familiar exposition of the Constitution of the United
25 States -- he was a Supreme Court Justice, the youngest

1 ever appointed -- joining the giant of the early
2 court, Chief Justice John Marshall: "The right of the
3 citizens to keep and bare arms has justly been
4 considered as the palladium of the liberties of a
5 republic since it offers a strong moral check against
6 the usurpation and arbitrary powers of rulers."
7 That's you-all. "And it will generally, even if these
8 are successful in the first instance, enable the
9 People to resist and" --

10 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you --

11 MR. GOTTSALK: -- "triumph over them."

12 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

13 MR. GOTTSALK: Thank you.

14 MS. TIMMANN: Marcia Cotton will be followed by
15 Mayor Nancy Shaver follow by Ryan Jones.

16 MS. ROBINSON: Hi. Marcia Cotton had to leave.
17 So my name is Catherine Durkin Robinson. I organize
18 hundreds of thousands of parents in Florida who choose
19 something other than their neighborhood school.
20 Marcia and all of our parents who are here today had
21 to leave. They had children to pick up and homework
22 to supervise, so I'm honored to represent them. And
23 ask you all to consider any amendment that guarantees
24 their right to choose the best school for their kids,
25 no matter their ZIP code.

1 Thanks.

2 MS. TIMMANN: Could you please submit a speaker
3 card, if you didn't do so already, so we can have your
4 name for the record. Thank you.

5 Mayor Nancy Shaver?

6 MS. SHAVER: Good afternoon and thank you for
7 your patience and grace and thank you for listening.
8 I'm here to echo what you've heard from the mayor of
9 Jacksonville Beach and the mayor of Ormond Beach and
10 ask you to really think about adding clarity to the
11 Home Rule, Section 8 -- I'm sorry -- Article VIII,
12 Section 2.

13 You've already gotten, I think, some very good
14 language from Craig Leen in Miami about that. And I
15 think a way of thinking about it, beyond the details,
16 is that the article is really intended to give power
17 to the legislature to pass laws that apply across the
18 state.

19 What has happened and the reason you're hearing
20 from these cities is that we have 410 cities in
21 Florida. 55 percent of our population lives in -- in
22 the cities where the population ranges from 10 to
23 843,000. It's not a one-size-fits-all state, as we
24 all know. And the cities need to have the ability to
25 do what they need to do to run their cities to respond

1 to their citizens. And you've heard examples of that.

2 But what I'd like to tell you is what the cost of
3 having the article as it sits now interpreted in the
4 way that it is. Every session "we" -- this little
5 tiny city of 14,000 people that hosts 3 to 4 million
6 visitors a year -- our attorneys have to track -- you
7 heard -- seven bills, have to educate, have to focus
8 on that kind of thing. Most of them die and they die
9 because they were brought forward for a specific
10 purpose that isn't universal to the state. But that's
11 a cost that that article, the lack of clarity, brings
12 to our cities every year. So I'd like you to -- to
13 look very carefully at the language. I think it's
14 quite simple and clear and will, I think, help all of
15 us. It will help the legislature focus on laws that
16 apply across the state.

17 So thank you for listening. Thank you for being
18 here and good luck.

19 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

20 Ryan Jones who will be followed by Rose Mary
21 Dauronson [sic] perhaps, Douglas Adicins [sic] and
22 Richard Cardell.

23 Ryan Jones?

24 Rose Mary Dauronson?

25 MS. DANFORTH: Danforth?

1 MS. TIMMANN: P.O Box 7424?

2 MS. DANFORTH: Yes.

3 MS. TIMMANN: Jacksonville? Okay.

4 Can you approach the microphone? All right. Go
5 ahead. And please put your name on the record. Thank
6 you.

7 MS. DANFORTH: Okay. My name is Rose Mary
8 Danforth and I'm a Jacksonville resident. I'm an
9 American citizen and I am very active in this
10 community. I love this community and I thank you-all
11 for your part in it.

12 When I became an American citizen, I had to study
13 the Constitution. I've also -- I'm a former teacher
14 so I've also taught history, American history. And I
15 love it. I love the Constitution. I love America and
16 everything it stands for.

17 And it's because of that, our right to, you know,
18 right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness
19 that I see we have definite problems. I consider
20 myself an minority. I'm a Celtic woman. My children
21 are Native American, tribal -- enrolled as tribal
22 members.

23 And I see a disparity among minorities and pure
24 whites specifically in areas of freedom, freedom of
25 speech, freedom of religion and also the right to

1 life. Most of our pro-choice places are located in
2 minority neighborhoods. The percentage of African
3 Americans who reside in this country and those who are
4 clients of abortion places is disproportionate. And
5 I've seen this in the Native American communities.
6 I've lived on reservations. I've seen it in the
7 Hispanic communities. And my country of birth had the
8 same problem of -- basically, it was genocide. Irish
9 or Scottish, we experienced a genocidal attack, but on
10 life within the womb, pre-born, or even born.

11 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you very much. If you have
12 additional comments, please submit them.

13 MS. DANFORTH: Thank you.

14 MS. TIMMANN: Douglas Adicins.

15 MR. ADKINS: Adkins.

16 MS. TIMMANN: Okay. Adkins.

17 MR. ADKINS: Okay. Thank you, Madam Chair. My
18 name's Doug Adkins. I'm the administrator at
19 Dayspring Village in Dayspring Senior Living in
20 Hilliard, Florida and we thank you for coming today.

21 Florida's faced with an exploding challenge of
22 aging population faced with also a growing workforce
23 shortage, coupled with rising acuity due to chronic
24 disease conditions.

25 Did you know in the -- in the next five years,

1 we're going to double the 85-plus population here in
2 the state of Florida? Clearly, the driving force
3 behind our economy is the 60-plus population. The
4 Constitutional Revision Commission is a
5 problem-solving opportunity. Clearly, as we face the
6 next 20 years, we're going to be challenged like we've
7 never been challenged before with what to do with an
8 aging population. Clearly, this is our -- our health
9 care budget as we look forward is one of the most
10 complicated health care budgets in the country.

11 And there are competing priorities. Make no
12 mistake about it. It is a very, very difficult
13 environment when you're dealing with the priorities of
14 what to do with institutional cost, what to do with
15 the home and community base cost and what to do with
16 access to assisted-living facilities.

17 Clearly, AL, assisted-living -- access to
18 assisting-living care is out of -- the truth is, it's
19 out of reach for the average working middle class in
20 this state. That is just the hard truth. The average
21 cost for access to assistant living care right here in
22 Jacksonville is \$3,600 to \$4,200 a day, and so -- not
23 per day, but per month. And so here's what you're
24 going to get in your Medicaid long-term care benefit.
25 Your Medicaid long-term care benefit is going to pay

1 assisted living costs of \$1,150 to \$1,178 per month,
2 if you're lucky. That's if you're not on the long-
3 term care waiting list.

4 And so if you're -- if you're admitted to a
5 hospital and you spend 60 days in a nursing home, that
6 will access and turn on that benefit.

7 So what needs to happen is, you need to put it
8 before the voters. How do you want to solve this
9 problem? There are some reasonable, legitimate ways
10 in which the voters can solve this problem. But
11 providing access to the middle class, that is a
12 constitutional question. Either we do it --

13 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you --

14 MR. ADKINS: -- or we don't.

15 MS. TIMMANN: -- Mr. Adkins.

16 MR. ADKINS: Thank you for your time.

17 MS. TIMMANN: Feel free to submit those ideas
18 that you have. Thank you.

19 MR. ADKINS: We'll do that. Thank you.

20 MS. TIMMANN: Richard Cardell followed by Eunice
21 Barnum, Judy Hankins, Doreszell Cohen.

22 MR. CARDELL: I'm Richard Cardell from
23 Jacksonville, Florida. Welcome to our city.

24 My family has lived in Florida since before
25 statehood. And I've lived most of my life in Florida,

1 some in south Florida and most of my life here in
2 Jacksonville. Usually, I've lived on or near the
3 water.

4 I'm very concerned about the environment. When I
5 was young, I think I was thrilled to see building and
6 roads and new construction and all. Now all I see are
7 strip malls and heavy traffic and it's -- it's just
8 hard to take a drive out in the country anymore where
9 you can enjoy nature. So I am concerned about
10 preserving land, particularly fragile land. And I'm
11 very concerned about clean water. It's not just
12 something to look at. It's something we drink, so I'm
13 very concerned about the water.

14 And I'm concerned about clean energy. We are the
15 Sunshine State and yet we don't promote solar energy
16 and I don't see why not.

17 And again, thank you for listening to us.

18 MS. TIMMANN: Thank You, Mr. Cardell.

19 Eunice Barnum?

20 MS. BARNUM: Good evening. Thank you for being
21 here.

22 I want to begin by saying instead of reforming or
23 revisioning or revising, we need more reading and
24 enforcing what's already written. Our Constitutional
25 rights are being elected by our elected and our

1 appointed and it's without any reparations or
2 compensation for the violations.

3 All you need to do is read your Constitution.
4 The United States Constitution says this Constitution,
5 not that one, not one I thought of and dreamed of and
6 came up with. It's this -- T-H-I-S -- this
7 Constitution, and it is the law of the land. And your
8 State Constitution, every state, including Florida,
9 your State Constitution has to be in pursuant to the
10 United States Constitution. So any law you make, come
11 up with, introduce, it still has to be in pursuant to
12 this constitution or else it's not withstanding. I
13 didn't write it, but I sure have read it.

14 Also, here are our Bill of Rights. It's already
15 spelled out for you. "No state shall make or enforce
16 any law which shall abridge the privileges or
17 immunities of citizens of the United States nor shall
18 any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or
19 property without due process of law."

20 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Ms. Barnum.

21 MS. BARNUM: Thank you. Read your Constitution.

22 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

23 Judy Hankins?

24 MS. HANKINS: Hello. Thank you for coming. I
25 just wanted to --

1 MS. TIMMANN: Can you move closer to the
2 microphone, perhaps?

3 MS. HANKINS: Is this better?

4 MS. TIMMANN: It is. Thank you.

5 MS. HANKINS: Okay.

6 MS. TIMMANN: And state your name.

7 MS. HANKINS: Judy Hankins.

8 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

9 MS. HANKINS: Okay. I would like to ask why
10 Amendment 1, which was approved by 75 percent of
11 Florida voters in 2014, has not been implemented or
12 funded yet. I -- I just wanted to express my concern
13 about that.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

16 Doreszell Cohen followed by Lake Ray.

17 MS. COHEN: Hello. My name is Doreszell Cohen.
18 Thank you-all for being here. And I am standing here
19 in support of Article I, Section 4 and I ask that you
20 consider revising our Constitution such that the right
21 to free press becomes regulated and mandated at a
22 higher level with ethical standards that fight back
23 against the fake news syndrome. Media outlets are
24 free to propagate alternative facts that have caused
25 extreme liberal or right-wing status-quo rulers to

1 suppress the whole truth from We the People. In other
2 words, the free press is not reporting the truth as it
3 exists in our communities, society, and world.

4 Instead, they report alternative facts that, (A) bring
5 their media rating, (B) maintain their control through
6 their various diversions and their sophisticated ways,
7 and (C) they sustain the ignorance of misguided
8 citizens in our very literate society.

9 Again, I thank you for coming. I thank you for
10 all you're doing and I ask that you use your powers to
11 amend our Constitution to help citizens be more
12 informed in the fabrics of democracy.

13 Have a good evening.

14 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you, Ms. Cohen.

15 Lake Ray?

16 MR. RAY: Good afternoon.

17 Commissioners, thank you for coming to
18 Jacksonville. I thank you for the work that you do.
19 I know it's a lot of effort. You're hearing a lot of
20 different things.

21 I'm here today because I want to tell you some
22 things that've been going on. When I served in the
23 legislature over the course of the last eight years,
24 we were looking at the economy. We were looking at
25 things that were going to make a difference. And I

1 see one of our former senators up here that's
2 certainly familiar with some of the things that we
3 were working on.

4 And one of the things that we were looking at was
5 ports. We were looking at ports. We were looking at
6 logistics, and we were looking at ways in which we
7 could broaden the economic drivers. The state of
8 Florida's economy had been built too long on just
9 tourism and development, and it needs to be broadened.
10 And over the course of the last eight years we were
11 working on that. We've spent now over \$1.2 billion as
12 it relates to our poor infrastructure and the
13 logistics to support that. It's time for us now to
14 start looking at how we move to the future and
15 support -- to support that. Those policies developed
16 about 150,000 jobs in the state of Florida. We
17 created over 1 million jobs over the course of the
18 last several years here. And it's time for us now to
19 look at how we can do that.

20 There's something I would like to suggest to you,
21 and I think it's very simple. And that's if you look
22 at the workforce that is in logistics and
23 manufacturing, their combined workforce represents
24 about 20 percent of our workforce. About one in five
25 are in one of those components of the economy here.

1 So it's a huge impact. The problem is, we haven't
2 looked at it from a cabinet position.

3 And I think it's time for us to do like we've
4 done with agriculture. We have a Commissioner of
5 agriculture. If we want to engage in where
6 manufacturing's going, if we want to engage in
7 broadening the economic drivers, it's time for us now
8 to consider having a cabinet position that is
9 dedicated to manufacturing and logistics.

10 And that's my recommendation to you because I
11 think if you look at it, we, as a state, can be on the
12 forefront developing those policies, having somebody
13 who will be there to speak for us and to make to sure
14 that good policies are developed throughout the year,
15 not just during the legislative process.

16 Thank you, Commissioners.

17 MS. TIMMANN: Thank you.

18 Is there any member of the public who submitted a
19 card and has not been heard?

20 With that, on behalf of Chairman Beruff and all
21 of the Commissioners, we'd like to thank Florida State
22 College for hosting all of us and for hosting all of
23 you.

24 Do I hear a motion to adjourn?

25 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Motion to adjourn.

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MS. TIMMANN: So moved.

(This proceedings was adjourned at 2:46 p.m.)

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1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

2

3 STATE OF FLORIDA)

4 COUNTY OF DUVAL)

5

6 I, Naomi McCracken, Court Reporter and Notary
7 Public in and for the State of Florida at Large, do hereby
8 certify that I was authorized to and did report the
9 foregoing proceedings; and that the transcript, pages 1
10 through 156, is a true record of my stenographic notes.

11

12 DATED this 17th day of May 2017.

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Naomi McCracken, Court reporter

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