

AMENDMENT 9 Prohibits Offshore Oil and Gas Drilling; Prohibits Vaping in Enclosed Indoor Workplaces

Ballot Language: Prohibits drilling for the exploration or extraction of oil and natural gas beneath all state-owned waters between the mean high water line and the state's outermost territorial boundaries. Adds use of vapor generating electronic devices to current prohibition of tobacco smoking in enclosed indoor workplaces with exceptions; permits more restrictive local vapor ordinances.

How The Amendment Reached The Ballot: Constitution Revision Commission

What Your Vote Means: A **Yes** vote on this measure: (1) forbids offshore drilling for oil and natural gas in Florida waters and (2) bans the use of vapor generating electronic devices in indoor workplaces.

A **No** vote on this measure: (1) does not actively forbid offshore drilling and (2) does not add language to the Florida Constitution that prohibits vaping in the workplace.

Pro: Acknowledging the importance of beaches and tourism to our economy, Floridians seeking to protect one of our most marketable resources – our beaches – could be in favor of this portion of the measure. The prohibition on drilling would extend from the coast to the edge of the state's territorial waters. It does not restrict the movement of oil and gas across coastal waters; rather, it solely restricts drilling. This measure attempts to conserve the abundant natural resources found here in Florida. However, environmental preservation is not the only aim of the initiative. Florida heavily relies on tourism, and our coastal waters function as a catalyst to the state economy. This initiative seeks to balance economic and environmental endeavors. In January 2018, the federal government expanded offshore drilling in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. However, the Department of the Interior granted an exemption to Florida. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke pointed to the unique makeup of Florida's geography and economy as a reason for the exemption. In addition to protecting Florida's waters, the amendment also addresses the updates in smoking technology. The current language of the Constitution places a ban on traditional forms of smoking, and this measure would add vaping to the list. The initiative falls in line with the desire to curtail the effects of second-hand smoke.

Con: Those opposed to this measure would make the argument that this is perhaps the most egregious example of the bundling of issues on the ballot. The CRC, which authored the measure, claims that the policy of oil drilling and vaping are connected by a "clean air; clean water" theme. However, this assertion is tenuous at best. Neither those in favor of oil-drilling nor vaping seem pleased with this pairing. Meanwhile, many proponents rightly point to the fact that oil and gas exploration provide positive economic impacts to the state

and help keep our retail electricity rates much lower than most other places. Opponents view vaping as a public health issue and oil drilling as an economic one. This nuanced distinction should prevent the two issues from being on the same initiative. On the issue of the vaping ban, opponents point to the fact that vaping has been proven to be a safer alternative to traditional tobacco products and has been shown to aid in getting smokers to quit. Carrying the smoking ban to vaping would potentially hurt this effort. Finally, regardless of one's view on the actual policy decisions contained in this amendment, opponents rightly point to the fact that these are issues best handled legislatively as opposed to a constitutional measure.