



Get Informed!

Amendment One's School Implications

Vote Tuesday, **January 29**

Amendment One

Effects of Amendment One on schools and taxpayers

Amendment One is a proposed amendment to the Florida Constitution that will appear on the Jan. 29 presidential primary ballot. Supporters say the amendment will reduce property taxes and maintain adequate funding for education. Opponents disagree.

Amendment One includes four basic features:

1. It increases the homestead exemption allowed on primary residences from \$25,000 to \$50,000.
2. It allows homesteaded homeowners to transfer up to \$500,000 of their homestead benefit to a new home.
3. It gives businesses a tax exemption on \$25,000 of tangible personal property.
4. It caps annual assessment increases on non-homesteaded property at 10 percent.

To make an informed decision, voters should be aware of the following facts:

- ✘ Funding from school taxes is expected to be reduced by about \$3 billion statewide if Amendment One passes, even though school taxes are exempt from some of its provisions.
- ✘ The average homesteaded home owner in Sarasota County is expected to save only \$138 annually, but unintended consequences may reduce that amount.
- ✘ For schools, this is a tax shift, not a tax reduction. For school funding to be maintained at adequate levels in the face of state reductions, more local funding will be needed. So the school tax rate will need to rise to maintain revenues.

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To make an informed decision, voters should be aware of the following facts:

(continued)

- ✘ State mandates are squeezing school district budgets. The Class Size Amendment passed in 2002 has yet to be funded at the level promised by the state, requiring the district to supplement that program by \$16 million.
- ✘ Schools will suffer from the loss of services as well as revenue. Schools already are trying to make up for services lost when the legislature reduced millage rates in June. They will lose more if the amendment is adopted.
- ✘ The amendment will make a bad situation worse. The proposed amendment will force reductions in school services for already-struggling districts while providing little or no relief for middle-income resident taxpayers.

Recommendations

- ✓ **Get informed.** Amendment One is a very complicated proposal being promoted as a very simple one. Learn more about what it will mean for schools and local governments.
- ✓ To learn about what a coalition of educators, firefighters, law enforcement officers and others have to say about Amendment One, visit www.FloridalsOurHome.org.
- ✓ **Vote January 29!** Don't leave such an important decision about the future of the state's economy to someone else.

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