



FSBA Resolution Opposing Amendment 8

- Whereas,** The Florida Constitution Revision Commission has proposed an amendment to the Florida Constitution, Amendment 8, that will appear on the November 2018 General Election Ballot; and
- Whereas,** Amendment 8 would amend Article IX, Section 4 and would create a new section in Article XII of the State Constitution which, if approved by voters, would limit school board members to two consecutive four year terms in office, would authorize the establishment of public schools are operated, controlled, and supervised by an entity other than the elected school board, and would require the Legislature to provide for the promotion of civic literacy in public education; and
- Whereas,** Term limits are typically imposed to encourage more competitive races and/or to reduce the power of incumbency; and
- Whereas,** A review of the election results for the last four general election cycles reveals that most school board races (an average of 65%) are competitive, involving 2 or more legitimate, active, and viable candidates; and
- Whereas,** A substantial number of all school board races (an average of 41%) result in the election of a new school board member, showing that few, if any, school board members are shielded by incumbency; and
- Whereas,** Imposing term limits on school board members is not necessary based on objective data that clearly shows that voters have imposed natural term limits on school board members and it has resulted in a healthy balance of both new and experienced perspectives on our school boards; and
- Whereas,** Amendment 8 unfairly imposes term limits on only one group of Constitutional officers from among several similar groups of Constitutional officers and local elected officials; and
- Whereas,** Amendment 8 appears to authorize an entity other than the elected school board to establish a traditional public school, a charter school, a school or hope, and/or other public school choice options; and
- Whereas** Transferring the authority to establish a public school to an individual or entity that is not elected denies taxpayers, families, and communities any means to hold the authorizing entity fiscally and programmatically accountable; and
- Whereas,** Transferring the authority to establish a public school to an an entity other than the school district would permit and encourage the creation of a parallel system of free public schools which threatens the state's ability to comply with the constitutional mandate for a uniform system of free public schools; and

Whereas, Amendment 8 would permit and encourage a process to establish a public school without regard to the need for, desire for, or appropriateness of, the new school which threatens the state's ability to comply with the constitutional mandate for an efficient system of free public schools; and

Whereas, An additional public school authorizing entity is neither necessary nor desirable since Florida is a national leader in public and private school choice options, including more than 3,500 traditional public schools, more than 650 charter schools, five existing private school scholarship programs, and a state policy of open enrollment; and

Whereas, Amendment 8 does not clearly explain the possible implications of authorizing an alternate entity to establish public schools; and

Whereas, The promotion and instruction in civic literacy is already well established in Florida Statutes, incorporated into the Florida Standards, and measured by Florida's statewide, standardized assessment system; and

Whereas, Civic literacy is well entrenched and promoted in Florida and it is not necessary to further enshrine civic literacy in the state constitution; and

Whereas, Amendments to the Florida Constitution should be necessary, fair, desirable, and clearly understandable;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Florida School Boards Association is opposed to Amendment 8 because it is not necessary, is not fair, is not desirable, and is not clearly understandable.