CONSTITUTION REVISION COMMISSION

2017 - 2018

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
Fairwinds Alumni Center
Ballrooms A & B
12676 Gemini Boulevard, North
Orlando, Florida

March 29, 2017
5:00 - 9:01 p.m.

Reported By: Karen S. Rhine, FPR
THOSE PRESENT:

Chairman Carlos Beruff
Commissioner Lisa Carlton
Commissioner Timothy Cerio
Commissioner Erika Donalds
Commissioner Hank Coxe
Commissioner Don Gaetz
Commissioner Emery Gainey
Commissioner Anna Marie Hernandez Gamez
Commissioner Brecht Heuchan
Commissioner Arthenia Joyner
Commissioner Belinda Keiser
Commissioner Gary Lester
Commissioner Patricia Levesque
Commissioner Marva Johnson
Commissioner Roberto "Bobby" Martinez
Commissioner Rich Newsome
Commissioner Jimmy Patronis
Commissioner William "Bill" Schifino
Commissioner Chris Smith
Commissioner John Stemberger
Commissioner Pam Stewart
Commissioner Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch
Commissioner Carolyn Timman
Commissioner T. Nicole Washington
Commissioner Fred Karlinsky
Commissioner Chris Nocco

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Karen S. Rhine, FPR
MR. KITTINGER: My name is Fred Kittinger with the University of Central Florida on behalf of President John Hitt and our entire team of students, faculty and staff here at the university and it's my pleasure to welcome each of you here to the campus, and especially a very hearty and warm welcome to the members of the commission.

It is very important work that you have ahead of you and we are honored to have you here on campus. President Hitt is sorry he could not join all of you this afternoon. He's in Tallahassee. The Board of Governors are taking up several of our big issues today and tomorrow and, as you also know, it's the height of the legislative session so he is where he needs to be today, but he would love to be here with you today and sends his regards as well as his regrets.

A quick question for some of you on the commission. How many of you is this the first time you've been on UCF's campus? And how many is this the first time in probably like the last
five or ten years?

Well, I was a freshman here in 1977, just before electricity was run on the campus. We had about 8,500 students and at that time if you had told me that one day we would have 64,000 students, that we would be the second or third largest in the country, depending on how you counted, if we would be the number one choice of students as far as applications in the State of Florida, if you'd told me that we would be eleventh in the country for national merit scholars in public universities and if you'd told me that US News & World Report would rank us as the fourteenth most innovative university or college in the United States, well I would have said whatever happy pills you're taking, I want a bucket of those because I never imagined successful growth here at UCF.

We have an adage that when it comes to growth in the size, that it is scale times excellence equals impact and for us that's impact on our students and their future careers. It's impact on the community that we serve through our research and our community service and it's also an impact that we have on the
State of Florida to the talent pipeline that we help provide to the State of Florida and her needs into the future.

Now I'll admit I'm not a constitutional attorney. I was never an elected official and I definitely did not stay at a Holiday Inn last night. So the only advice that I can offer up to our commission is advice that my grandmother gave to me years ago and it's probably very similar to the advice that you received from your grandparents, parents or your mentors through the years and that is this.

If you do the right thing for the right reason and you do it in the right manner, then you will have earned a very good rest. So here's my hope to each of you, both individually as well as collectively on the commission, that in the months ahead through the thousands of hours of research, reading, writing, discussions, deliberations and decisions that you will make, at the end of the day each of you will have earned a very, very good rest.

So on behalf of the University of Central Florida, thank you for answering Florida's call to serve her and again, welcome to the
University of Central Florida. Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you so much. I'd like to welcome everyone to this public hearing. I'm thrilled with the outcome. Already it's a winning thing because we didn't expect this turnout and we love it because this is about your process. It's about the citizens of Florida showing up and making a difference to the document that regulates the State of Florida, the constitution.

I'm sure every commissioner here is equally as excited as I am. My name is Carlos Beruff. I was appointed by Governor Rick Scott and I'm the chairman of what is commonly called CRC which stands for the Constitution Revision Commission.

I'd like to thank our host. The facilities are tremendous. Thank you very much. I'm sorry that we had to close the doors. We're at capacity, which is a wonderful thing. I hope every meeting we go to and attend over the next fourteen months is at capacity.

It's a pleasure to be in Orlando. I came to Orlando for the first time in 1973, so there's been a few changes in that period of
time. This campus is lovely and we will be back in the fall if they let us. This is our first stop. It's a good thing.

I'd like to welcome all our commissioners that made it from different parts of the state. I'd like to start by immediately to my right, Commissioner Carlton, Commissioner Cerio, Commissioner Coxe, Commissioner Gaetz, Commissioner Gainey, Commissioner Gamez, Commissioner Heuchan, Commissioner Joyner, Commissioner Keiser, Commissioner Lester, Commissioner Levesque, Commissioner Johnson, and then to my left Commissioner Martinez, Commissioner Newsome, Commissioner Patronis, Commissioner Schifino, Commissioner Smith, Commissioner Stemberger, Commissioner Stewart, Commissioner Thurlow-Lippisch, Commissioner Timman, Commissioner Washington, Commissioner Karlinsky and Commissioner Nocco. Thank you for being here.

As we start this kickoff campaign it's really about the people who don't participate in the process. It's a unique opportunity for one individual to change the Constitution of Florida without knowing anything about politics, without
being an attorney, just a good idea can make a huge difference.

So we will start by first, I'd like to recognize Mr. Cerio who is going to start by giving us an invocation. Thank you.

MR. CERIO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Heavenly Father, thank you for providing an opportunity for the public to gather to offer comments on our State Constitution. We thank you for our country and our form of government and for the protections they provide.

You gave us two ears and only one mouth for a reason, so I pray that as commissioners we will carefully listen to the citizens of Florida tonight here in Orlando and for the rest of our listening tour. In your holy name I pray, Amen.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Now if you would all stand, Commissioner Patronis will lead us in the Pledge.

(Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: We have a record turnout so far. This room doesn't hold any more people. So we're going to take and limit everyone to three minutes so that we can make sure we hear everyone. The first speaker card is for Anne

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MS. HELLMUTH: Thank you, sir. I appreciate very much all of you being here today. My name is Anne Hellmuth, H-e-l-l, like heaven and hell and I come from Winter Park in Orange County and I'm today speaking on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Orange County.

I would just like to point out that the League is non-partisan. We support neither a party, nor candidates. We are all about the issues and today our emphasis would be on the Rules of Procedure that you'll be putting in place for the coming public meetings that you are going to be holding.

We are concerned about your proposed rule that allows two members to discuss commission business in private. This encourages, we feel, the conduct of serial private meetings and facilitates doing commission business out of the public eye in violation of the spirit of Florida's government and the Sunshine Laws. I was a journalist for many years, so Sunshine Laws are big on my mind, as they are on the League's.
Therefore, you know, we feel that this should be corrected in order to give everybody the confidence in the openness and the transparency of this CRC so that when we do have your decisions and we have amendments to vote on in the coming year, we know that they were done through the best of will on behalf of all the people. I thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you for your comments. Mat Staver. Did I pronounce that correctly? Thank you.

MR. STAVER: Good afternoon. I'm speaking on behalf of a number of constituents that we represent throughout the State of Florida, thousands frankly, on Article I, Section 23.

Representative John Mills was the primary legislative sponsor of that article and it came out of the post-Watergate and the informational concerns with regards to government collecting information on its private citizens.

He says, as the primary sponsor, that it was designed to protect informational privacy. Chief Justice Overton kicked off the 1977-78 CRC making that same observation, that it was about informational privacy, and he wanted to have
that addressed. That was addressed in Article I, Section 23.

In 1987 the Florida Supreme Court said the primary issue driving Article I, Section 23 was the issue of informational privacy. If it was a concern back then, which it certainly was, it's definitely a concern even more so now, not only with the government, but with private collection of information and the distribution of information.

And at the end of that Article I, Section 23, the last sentence to alleviate anyone's concern, but also to address the focus, it says that this shall not be construed to limit the public's right to access public records.

It was to protect private individuals from information being collected and then distributed either by the government or private businesses, but it did not interfere with the public's right to access public records.

But in 1989 the Florida Supreme Court essentially did a complete deviation and in that decision NTW said that it applies to a minor's right to abortion. From that time on this
particular Article I, Section 23 has basically been used for abortion and not its original purpose. It hasn't been used with regards to any information, collection or any distribution of information either by the government or by private individuals, I should say private companies or organizations.

My request to the commission, I don't have any specific language, we can certainly present some, is that this commission address Article I, Section 23 to bring it back to its original meaning and its original purpose and that it does not apply to abortion.

It was never intended to apply. There's no debate or discussion at all in any of the legislative records and I've reviewed and researched every one of those as an attorney and it never had any discussion that would apply to abortion.

We do need protection in this state with regards to informational privacy which we're not getting and because that particular amendment was deviated in a wrong way, it's not going back to its original purpose. So please address that. Thank you very much.
CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you for your comments, Mr. Staver. Michael Johnson.

MR. JOHNSON: Good evening, Chairman and Commissioners. Thank you for having us here today. I'm here -- I've got kind of a written statement that I'm going to read from and then talk openly.

I'm here to ask you to preserve the rights and liberties of women, gays and all creeds and religions of Floridians. I'll also ask that you also protect the rights of free speech to be able to criticize and point out evils within those religions also and not deem it as hate speech.

There is a part of what the legislature has done, they passed a law and I'm asking that that law be put into the constitution and ask the voters of Florida to pass it, and in other states that have already done this it passed overwhelmingly seventy to eighty percent, and that is the law that -- the legislation about banning foreign rules and regulations based on other people's religions from those other third world countries that they want to put on women in our society here.

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Women are being beaten, being abused. Gays are being thrown off roofs and we don't want that kind of culture invading our country. So what I'm asking you to do is to take the legislation that's already out there that was passed by the legislature and put it up to the vote for the Floridians of this state here. We've got to protect our own freedoms, our values within our values.

I was with at the League of Women Voters a couple of weekends ago and I asked the women there what are America's common values anymore. And guess what, fifteen women, not one of them could tell me what our common values were. A lot of people don't even want to salute that flag. They don't want to say the Pledge of Allegiance anymore.

We have to preserve our heritage and our values. It's a great piece of legislation and other states have passed it, other states are putting it into their constitutions. I'm asking and we plead with you guys and women to protect our rights based on our culture.

The women in this room here in some countries that are under Sharia law, they can't
dress the way women are dressed here today. They can't speak. They're not allowed to do anything. They're under submission.

So I'm asking you to -- and I also presented earlier -- I think you got my note. There was excerpts in the Florida legislation that I passed out earlier and also constitutional excerpts in other states that passed the ban of Sharia law. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you, Mr. Johnson. Mitch Emerson. Welcome.

MR. EMERSON: Thank you for having this public meeting. I just wanted to ask, and I'm not sure on the formatting of how this is. Can you hear me? I'm not sure on the formatting. I had a general question. I guess it could be taken as a statement.

Speaker Corcoran and President Negron who appointed about half of you, announced that they want to have their members, they said this publicly, that they want to take up certain controversial issues, things that -- I know in this state I have personally fought for things like fair districts, addressing things like
school vouchers and things like that.

In their statement they made it sound like
the people that they appointed are going to
bring up these issues again. I just wanted to
know of the folks who are appointed by the
legislature, are there private conversations? I
know that was addressed earlier. Are they
telling you to push it in a certain way?

I don't know if you're taking questions
right now. So if not, I'm just going to say I
hope you all remain independent. I hope you
follow the voice of the Floridians who came out
and fought against these things or fought for
these things. And thank you very much for your
time.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you for your
comments. I'm going to take a second and say
that we have an overflow room prepared. As
people finish and want to leave then we will
bring more people in who want to speak. So I
just want to make sure that the audience is
aware there is an overflow room for the people
that can't join us at the moment. Thank you.
Matthew Boggs. Okay. Thank you.

MR. BOGGS: Thank you, Chairman and
Commissioners, for taking the time to visit us. I'm up here, as far as I'm concerned, as an advocate for democracy, rule by the people. I believe that if the Constitution of Florida is to remain useful and relevant, it must be a forward-thinking document. We must create the avenues for democracy to run.

We must expand the sphere of democratic participation by citizens. Their input must be made a higher priority than it has been in the past. It's for these reasons I believe that we should institute referendum processes, recall processes and initiative processes into the Florida State Constitution.

All legislation passed by the Florida Legislature and signed by the governor should be subject to a referendum process. Assuming the adequate number of signatures can be collected, a question of whether the legislation will stand or not will be put to the people of Florida.

The people of Florida will be given a means to create legislation themselves and if an adequate number of signatures are collected a citizens legislation can be added to the next elections ballot and decided on by the people.

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This is in contrast to the current system of constitutional amendments which are relatively unwieldy and are making the Florida Constitution into a patchwork of varying issues addressed.

And probably the one that none of you want hear, but it has to be said, all elected officials serving in the State of Florida or its municipalities should be subject to a process of recall. This recall can only be triggered by a petition from a certain percentage of that official's constituents who voted in the previous state election.

I am up here also as somebody who is against term limits completely. They are simply a no on democracy and I believe that these are the avenues to stopping the progression of term limits in local municipalities. I'm an aspiring official and I'm willing to put myself up for a recall election if I'm going to get elected.

I appreciate the chance to talk to you and thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you very much.
Grayson Lanza. Did I pronounce that right?
Thank you.
MR. LANZA: Hello. Thank you for having me today. Just for context, because I think it's important, I'm a college student here at the University of Central Florida. I'm a proud Knight, but I think that's something to discuss.

A lot of times we hear, especially as college students, about how we don't participate in the political process, how we're lazy or not reliable. I take issue with that particularly because, for example, this was announced with very little public notice, with very little public hearing.

It's on our campus, but coincidentally our SJ elections are actually concurrent with this right now. I'm actually wearing a T-shirt for a candidate.

So it's -- a lot of students have very busy schedules. We work a lot of odd jobs and the lack of announcement and reaching out to our community has made it very difficult to get students to come out to this commission and have their voices heard.

And I wonder why because historically in 1997 and 1998 the commission didn't start this process until the summer, like June, and then
started having questions and things happen in June and it was well announced before.

So again, this is at our campus. We're one of the largest universities in the country and I think it's important we have a voice and consideration and it doesn't seem like that was happening. So thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you very much. We'll be back in the fall, so we'll have plenty of notice for another meeting. Thank you so much. Alexander -- I can't quite read -- is it McClendar?

MR. MOLENAAR: Molenaar.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Molenaar. I saw that. Okay.

MR. MOLENAAR: So in the CRC draft rules there was a change. There was actually -- you allow private meetings between members to discuss commission business and actually every other collegial body except the legislature is required to give notice of any discussion of official business.

Why is this necessary? We're concerned about transparency as students. Why are private meetings being allowed in this particular
commission? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you for your comments. Mr. Martin Perez, Jr.

COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Yes, ma'am.

COMMISSIONER JOYNER: Would you please have each person give us their name themselves in addition to your calling them up?

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Sure. Please announce your name.

MR. PEREZ: Martin Perez.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you.

MR. PEREZ: I'm here representing the college Democrats here at the university and one issue that we have is the representation of students, not only here at UCF, but around the state.

Quick statement or question. What are you guys doing for the student body in the ways where they can represent -- have themselves represented in front of the commission?

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: I didn't quite understand the question.

MR. PEREZ: What I'm trying to ask is how is the student body, not just here at UCF, but
around the State of Florida being represented within the commission and what kind of actions will you guys be taking to represent students?

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: The first thing that this commission is going to do is listen because nobody has a corner on a good idea. Thank you.

Alex Berry. If you'd announce your name when you come up to the front just to make sure I'm pronouncing it right.

MR. BERRY: Alex Berry. And I didn't know about this like a lot of other people. I was working across the street. I've got to go to school tonight, so I've got to leave.

I've been active in my own personal political beliefs for a long time. I don't go around and try and convince other people.

I pulled up some statistics to try to make my point. Voters in Florida used to be Republican and Democrat, one or the other as of thirty years ago. And over the last thirty years twenty-five percent of voters now are independent because they don't like the Republicans and they don't like the Democrats and the trend is going up.

So to me that says that both parties are
failing the voters of Florida. I think the
presidential election is a prime example of
that. As a father, I talk to my children, I'm
ashamed of our presidential election on both
sides. When I talk to my friends and colleagues
I don't hear people saying I like this candidate
or that candidate. I hear I hated that
candidate more and that is just abhorrent to our
political system.

I didn't have a lot a time to prepare so
I'm just kind of going off the cuff.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: You're here.

MR. BERRY: I know that there's going to be
a lot of people in this room in particular
that's going to support one candidate or the
other with very strong convictions. I'm going
to go by the majority of Americans that I talk
to and I see in polls and everything else, if
you believe those of course, that are just
disgusted with the political process in general.

And I know that we as Florida voters can
only do what we can do in Florida, but as a
swing state, one of the most important swing
states in this country, we have a lot of say
about who gets nominated to the primary process.

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So you can't have people swinging to the hard right and left to get their core constituents.

So I would like to see an open primary in Florida so that the primary candidates will go towards what the majority of Americans are, they're moderates. They're willing to compromise unlike our politicians in Washington.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: This is an opportunity for Floridians to speak up because one person can make a difference. Only in the State of Florida of fifty states do we have this process. Thank you for coming forward.

MR. BERRY: I'd also like to say with my twenty-nine seconds there are twenty-two other states that have some type of open primary. I certainly hope that y'all put aside partisan politics and put aside special interests and you look out for the voters in Florida.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Gary Bruhn.

MR. BRUHN: I'm Gary Bruhn, Mayor of the Town of Windermere. I represent, Chairman, Orange County Council of Mayors. That's our twelve mayors here in Orange County. I'm also president elect Florida League of Mayors representing the four hundred and twelve mayors.
across the State of Florida.

First of all, nobody said this, I want to thank you for your time and your commitment. Having served fourteen years I know what this burden is and what it puts on your family. So thank you for your dedication.

I want to talk today about Home Rule. One of the great things about Florida local government is Home Rule. In 1968 the voters approved a constitutional amendment that said local government has the right and the power to do anything that's not denied them.

Every year Tallahassee chips away at us. Take a look at the current bills right now. I have one bill before us that wants to take away our right to regulate any business in our borders. We have another bill that's taking a look and telling us that we have no right to regulate any short-term rentals.

There's another bill that says the telecommunications industry can put any device boxes they want on our right of way, on our public buildings. We cannot regulate it. We cannot charge them for it. So that's what we deal with typically.
What I want to let you know is local government is the one that is closest to the people and we are the ones that have been able to react so very, very often.

In my fourteen years as mayor we've had the internet gambling establishments pop up. It was the local government that passed ordinances. Who knows how much money we may have saved the senior citizens. We had the pill mill situation. Again, local governments passed ordinances.

Each and every time that we pass these local ordinances it took Tallahassee years to do what we were able to do in months. We are the people who go to the home improvement store. We're the mayors and commissioners and council members. We're stopped at the grocery story. They know they have a voice with us. They know we respond. We meet weekly, monthly. They know they have a voice.

So my message is really very simple. When you go and consider the charter revisions, what would your mayor do? What would your local governments do? How is this is going to impact your neighborhood? How is this going to impact

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your community and how is it going to impact your city?

I would not doubt if you could pick up the phone and talk to your local mayor. The bottom line is that at the end of the day all our legislators, all of us have to go back to a local government and we should be very proud that that local government is as responsive as it is and you have a voice in it. Thank you for your time and thank you for your service.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Rosemary Wilson. As Rosemary Wilson comes up I'd like to announce again that we are at overflow. So if you've spoken, but you want to participate in the meeting, but you'd like to give another person an opportunity to speak, we are live streaming into another room. So you can still see and feel the meeting, but let someone else into the room to give them an opportunity to speak. Thank you. Rosemary.

MS. WILSON: Thank you. Again, my name is Rosemary Wilson. I want to thank you first of all for your time and your service. There's no easy task. I recognize the magnitude of the responsibility and of the commitment you have
made to better Florida's future.

I know I'm not as eloquent as Mayor Bruhn, but I'm here to talk about my concerns regarding Home Rule. The Florida Sunshine State has four hundred and twelve cities, towns and villages, each one different from the other. The one thing the cities have in common is a commitment to Home Rule, also known as local control.

Preserving Home Rule is a top priority for the Florida League of Cities, for me personally and it does have an effect on all of our cities. As a local official elected I've seen the importance of local self-government first hand. Our City of Ocoee recently addressed a large, mixed use project within our CRA to create a major economic development within our city.

Legislation to weaken the CRA will take away our ability that's given to us in the state statutes preventing -- which will prevent misuse and abuse of CRA funds. It's a great concern to us at this time.

My understanding of this unique need of our community coupled with our ability to act swiftly allows us to reach a resolution in record time. We leverage local resources,
solicit public comments and ultimately craft a solution that will benefit our residents for years to come. This is Home Rule.

The examples and so many others show us how effective local self-government is. As a member of the Florida League of Cities I'm proud to say that our statewide organization has been a united voice for municipal governments for nearly a century.

As you tackle complex issues, please know that the Florida League of Cities has a comprehensive collection of data and statistics related to municipal government and I know that many of us within our cities will be more than happy to talk to you about Home Rule.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Allison Matos.

MS. MATOS: Hello. My name is Allison Matos. I'm a recent graduate of UCF and I also represent Women's March of Central Florida. And so like everybody else, I thank you all for being here and I echo their concerns that is it was just announced very recently and I'm really impressed by all the turnout.

And I understand that since you are...
listening to us and you'll be back, but in the
draft rules you published you referred to
proposals for revisions to be submitted by the
public, but even though this will be taking you
a long time, it will take us a long time as
well.

So you haven't published anything to give
us a clue on how to submit proposals. So this
actually makes me question whether you do want
us to participate and when will you publish
information on how we can tell you all what
issues we'd like for you to consider? Thanks.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. For those of
you that aren't aware, we have a website, we
have Facebook, we have Twitter and Instagram and
we will take any proposal you have through
those. Those are the simplest ways to do it.

And you can also write, send a letter, or
come to a meeting and turn in a document and we
will make sure it gets properly taken care of.
Thank you. Atalia Santos. I'm going to skip
the middle name because I can't read it.

MS. SANTOS: My name is Natalia Perez
Santos. So I would also like to echo other
people that came before me and to speak a little
bit on the way in which the establishment of the rules was handled.

As you all know, this commission has the unique power on whatever twenty-two of you agree on will be put on the ballot in 2018 for citizens to decide.

So your proposed rules on open meetings and records, quite frankly, don't give us the confidence in the transparency of this commission. That is why groups like the League of Women Voters and the First Amendment Foundation have already taken an active role in expressing their concerns.

Moving forward I would like for you to guys to consider just following the Attorney General's manual on open government because, quite frankly, without this insurance that this commission is open and transparent, we as citizens can't really ensure that our voices are being heard louder than people who may have more influence than us. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Sara Wissig. Did I pronounce that right?

MS. WISSIG: Close.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: That's why we want you to
pronounce it so we get it right.

MS. WISSIG: Hi, my name is Sara Wissig and thank you for having this event here today. I'm a proud UCF alum. I got my Bachelors and my Masters here.

Thank you especially to all of you on this commission who are committed to a fair and equitable Florida for all Floridians. I am gravely concerned, along with others, that that is not the case for everyone on the commission.

I would like to bring attention to the presence of an open bigot on the commission and I'm wondering for what political purpose someone who has spent their entire life and career demonizing lesbian and gay, bisexual and transgender Floridians -- what political purpose does it serve having John Stemberger on this commission?

COMMISSIONER GAETZ: Mr. Chairman, I object. This is not appropriate.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: With all due respect, this is not appropriate. Thank you so much for your comments.

MS. WISSIG: Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Heather Youmans. Is that
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voters. It makes up the state allocated portion of the tobacco settlement money for tobacco prevention education based on CDC best practices. The public health impacts of this program have been significant since its implementation.

We have the lowest youth and adult smoking rates in the nation and the Florida Department of Health has estimated that it has saved the state more than $3.2 billion in healthcare costs.

Both of these provisions in the constitution have resulted in fewer smoking-related deaths and made a positive public health impact. ACS would like to make ourselves available to any of you if you need any information about the impacts of these two provisions of the constitution. And again, we thank you very much for the opportunity to speak.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you for that. Good policy. Dr. Benita Tillman Brown.

DR. BROWN: Good evening. I'm Dr. Benita Tillman Brown, a resident of Sanford, Florida. I'm a graduate of UCF when the name was Florida
Technological University. I'm here to ask that the commission, as you revise the Florida Constitution, please consider two issues that are already in our constitution.

One is Article IX, Education. Section 1 says the education of children is a fundamental right of the people of the State of Florida. It is, therefore, a paramount duty of the state to make adequate provisions for the education of all children that resides within its borders.

And Section 6 says, state school funds, the income derived from the state school funds shall and the principal of the fund may be appropriated, but only to the support and maintenance of free public schools.

I know everyone has a right to attend wherever they want; private school, charter school, parochial school, whatever. That's their right. That's their privilege. The commission needs to make sure that public money for public schools are not decreased in order for someone to go to private school.

My second issue is restoration of rights. Florida Statute 940(05) talks about the restoration of civil rights. Any person who has

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been convicted of a felony may be entitled to
the restoration of the rights of citizenship
enjoyed by him or her before conviction.

Please continue to ensure that our felons,
if they've served their time for non-violent
crimes, please ensure that their rights are
restored and take away all the difficulty and
the burden offenses that are impending them from
having their rights restored. Just please,
Commission, consider that. That is a major
concern. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Mr. John Kemper.

MR. KEMPER: Good afternoon, Commission.
My name is John Kemper. I'm a member of the
Board of Directors for the ACLU of Central
Florida and also a retired IBMer.

I want you to know that your jobs are
extremely important in the fact that you can
actually place a revision on the constitution
directly and I know you'll agree with me that
this is very crucial and it should be in clear
light of the public.

And one other thing I'd like to mention
before I get into the issue that I have is when
you were introducing the commission you omitted
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to introduce Commissioner Donalds.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: I apologize for that. I just read my list.

MR. KEMPER: Okay. The sections of the constitution that I would like you to pay particularly close attention to are Section 4 -- Article IV, Section 4 -- I'm sorry, Article VI, Section 4 that has to do with disqualifications and basically says if you've committed a felony you're disqualified from voting.

Okay. I want you to take a look at that and also along the same lines, Article IV, Section 8 has to do with clemency. So if you lose your right to vote, the only way that you can have it restored is if the governor and two people on his cabinet decide to restore your rights.

Okay. As you probably already know, Florida has some of the most restrictive laws in the country which permanently disenfranchise persons convicted of a felony. Currently over one and a half million Florida citizens are unable to vote because of a prior conviction. There are six million people in the United States that fall into this category and Florida
has twenty-five percent of those six million of
the entire country.

In thirty-eight states and the District of
Columbia most ex-felons automatically gain the
right to vote upon the completion of their
sentence. In 2011 the Florida Board of
Executive Clemency proposed for the governor and
three cabinet members to reverse the 2007 policy
change that automatically restored voting rights
to non-violent offenders upon the completion of
their sentence.

The new policy requires that all ex-felons
wait between five and seven years before even
applying to have their rights restored. These
long waiting periods coupled with a huge backlog
of applications, estimated now to be over
10,600, and the fact that the Clemency Board
only meets four times per year, discourages
ex-felons from applying.

Please consider placing an amendment to the
constitution on the ballot which would bring
Florida's antiquated laws which were enacted, by
the way, in 1860 as a reaction to freed slaves
getting to vote, in line with the majority of
the states in the rest of this country. Thank

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CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you for your comments. I'd like to remind people again that there are others that would like to participate and we are live streaming in another room.

So if some of you could watch from the other room and let new people in, that would be great. Thank you so much. Jan Pierre Rodriguez, please.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: My name is Jan Pierre Rodriguez.

MR. BERUFF: I'm sorry.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: That's all right. Good evening. So I want automatic voter registration. When you turn eighteen you should be automatically registered to vote. When you get your driver's license that's your inactive process.

Article VI, Section 4. So after time served convicted felons should be automatically registered to vote.

Also, for the primaries, Article VI, Section 5, Clause A says that in the primaries we vote on the first Tuesday after the first Monday. Let's make it on a Saturday.
Then lastly, so on the primary process again, so instead of having just somebody get the majority of votes, if somebody doesn't get the majority plus one, we should have a runoff election. The top two contenders in the primary for the presidential candidate should run against each other. That's it. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER DONALDS: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Yes, ma'am.

COMMISSIONER DONALDS: Can I make a suggestion, a point of order just to respect the time of all the individuals who are here to speak, that we discourage the clapping. I know the speakers probably appreciate the encouragement.

The more people that we can get to speak, the more that we can hear from those individuals. I know there are a lot of people waiting. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Dimitre Guenov.

MR. GUENOV: Hello. My name is Dimitre Guenov. I just wanted to say thank you again to the commission for coming out and hearing what all of us have to say. I've been a long-term resident of the State of Florida since 1992,
probably not as long as some of you guys, but I absolutely love this state and I've remained here ever since.

I've seen some really good changes and I've seen some not so good changes, but I think Florida remains a leader in the nation for things like transparency, civil rights, property law and more.

And so I'm here to ask the Constitution Revision Commission to codify some of those things for citizens to come. I'm asking that we are all entitled to certain basic protections such as a basic living wage as opposed to a minimum wage in this state. I believe that the school system should benefit all people regardless of where they come from and I think it's very important that we put in protections for our educational system.

Florida should be able to compete in the global economy. We're one of the largest states in the nation and without a proper education system we won't be able to meet those demands that the new economy poses for us.

I ask that we strengthen the Growth Management Act as opposed to weakening it so
that we have more control over the sprawl here in the State of Florida. Lots of people come into this state and I feel like we're hardly able to keep up with demand.

We've placed lots of strain on our resources through infrastructure that's now deteriorating and decaying because we're unable to properly manage growth. I think the Florida Constitution should be strengthening those growth management provisions as opposed to weakening them.

I know the 2009 recession really set us back, however, in light of all that we are where we should be with or without the Growth Management Act and I really feel like it has helped put a lot of positive things here into the State of Florida.

I took some notes to make sure I cover everything. I also want to make sure that the State Constitution continues to preserve the requirements that the state not fund any churches or religious sects known as the No-Aid Provision.

I live in Altamonte and I've watched a giant skyscraper in my backyard for the majority
of my life sit idly by and I think it's very important and very powerful that the city and the state has not gotten involved in that and I continue to hope that we maintain that separation between what we value as a state and what private individuals choose to do as well.

And I also want to encourage the commission to put in protections for fair voting districts for all of Florida's residents. I think everybody should be entitled to vote in the district that they've been assigned and they shouldn't change every couple of years. So I think it's very important to put all of those protections in.

So again, thank you very much to the commission and thank you for helping us with this process.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Anthony Young.

MR. YOUNG: Good evening. My name is Anthony Young. I'm a colonel in the United States Army, also a councilman from Vero Beach, Indian River County.

First of all, I want to share with you after serving our nation and returning back to
Vero why I ran for government, why I ran for
City Council. I ran because I cared about my
home and I want to assure everyone sitting in
front of me that the most motivated public
servant you're going to find is the man or woman
who is concerned about their home.

Now, if you look at Vero Beach, we're at
ninety-eight years. In two years we'll be on
our centennial. I hope as you look forward to
the vision of Florida that you look towards a
vision that supports the people that are closest
to their community.

Also, separately I want you to take into
account the men and women who have provided you
the ability to do what you do and those are the
veterans. Remember every day that you come to
work, the security, the freedoms that you have
were guaranteed by the blood of those men that
were lost fighting for your rights.

Also, as you look to do your job remember
you have hundreds of thousands of men and women
who come back and bear no sign of their service;
traumatic brain injuries, post-traumatic stress.

So again, as a native of Florida, my
grandfather helped name the county, he was the

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first mayor of Vero Beach, I say thank you for what you've done, your dedication, and it means a great deal to me that the men and the women that are here, the expertise that you have are going to protect the men and the women that have made this state what it is. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Abigail Youngless. Just to make a quick announcement. At 6:00 we're going to take a five-minute break. Okay? If anybody is looking for a break.

MS. YOUNGLESS: My name again is Abigail Youngless. I'm not entirely sure as to how it is that we can manage to work this into the constitution, but I understand that the State of Florida has a lot of potential in regards specifically to solar energy.

Again, I don't know what we can do specifically with the language and verbiage of the constitution. I understand our infrastructure is not nearly enough. It's crumbling in some areas and it could be significantly improved upon and I feel that integrating the rebuilding of our infrastructure and pairing that with things that are
environmentally sound and environmentally friendly and environmentally neutral would be beneficial to us.

Additionally, I would like to echo the sentiments of many of my former -- I don't know what to call them -- in that I feel the restoration of rights for previously-convicted felons is absolutely necessary.

So we currently have over 100,000 individuals serving time in prison this year. Right? Many of these individuals, despite having completed every single little hoop, nick, cranny, hopping over every obstacle that's been put in front of them are not going to have their voices heard by -- through elections.

I feel that these voices are absolutely necessary to hear specifically regarding issues in our prison system. Recidivism rates, inmate and security relations and the for-profit prisons versus -- private prisons versus public prisons. I feel that their voices are absolutely necessary on these issues seeing as we have had a dramatic increase in the amount of inmates that we have in the State of Florida and across the entire United States.
Thank you very much for hearing all of us and tolerating some of our little gumptions we've got going on today.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you for coming.

Debbie Smith.

MS. SMITH: Hello. Thank you for allowing us to come and share our opinions and our ideas with you. My name is Debbie Smith. I'm going to try to get through four points.

I moved to Florida in 1989. The first thing I went to do was register to vote. I went to register to vote and I was told I had to choose. I had to chose Democrat or Republican. And so I said well, I don't want to choose. I want to be no party affiliation. Is that an option?

Sure, you can do that, but you know you can't vote in the primaries. I'm like, what? Where I lived before I could. So that upset me a little bit.

So as someone who refuses to chose sides I feel disenfranchised that I cannot vote in the primaries. So I would really urge you to consider whatever it is you can do to make open primaries available so, like the other
gentleman, we're not forced to choose a side
gen we're not happy with those sides.

The other thing is I am an educator. I did
leave my last position December 31st. I thought
I would give charter schools a try and it lasted
five months. I have experience in public
schools, private schools and now charter
schools.

I know our constitution states that we are
to adequately fund our schools and that is not
happening. I see our public funds getting
redirected to vouchers to charter schools.

Those funds, as a taxpayer, I do not
believe will be used wisely. So I think
diverting money from public schools to watch
them fail -- diverting money to charter schools
to watch public schools fail is a bad way to do
business for our state and our children. I hope
that you can put a stop to that because it's
shameful and it's hurtful and it's wrong.

The other thing I wanted to mention was I
do agree with restoring the voting rights for
non-violent felons. When I was registering
people to vote recently I was surprised how many
people wanted to vote, but said they couldn't.

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They looked like productive citizens to me, but they had made a mistake in the past and they were very upset that they were not allowed to register or they wanted to join the military and maybe made a mistake when they were young and they were told they couldn't serve their country. So that needs to be looked at as well.

And finally, I'm a true believer in separation of church and state and I see too many people's religious beliefs getting worked into the bills that are being submitted. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Wes Hodge.

Thank you.

MR. HODGE: Thank you very much. My name is Wes Hodge. I am the Chairman of the Orange County Democratic Party. I am here today on behalf of three hundred and thirty plus thousand Democrats in Orange County. I want say good evening to all of you and thank you for your service. I appreciate what you all are doing and I know that it's not a fun job.

As Democrats we would like to make the world a better place for not only ourselves, but our children. We want to live in a world that

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is unified and accepting of everyone regardless of their race, religion, sexual orientation, gender or nation of origin.

We believe in openness and fairness, accountability, fair districts and the ability for every citizen to be involved. Today as I look around I see only twenty-six of your thirty-seven members present. This is also being scheduled in the middle of the height of our legislative session.

It shows that there is a lack of consideration, not only for the fellow members of this panel, but for the members of the public at large. This is of great concern to many of us.

This CRC does not seem to think that the participation of all of us in this process is important to them. It almost kind of seems like this is a dog and pony show. When you announced this hearing you gave us just seven days' notice to try to get this thing together. You also gave us no agenda upon which to address issues or how to communicate with you guys. We just had to kind of guess. I don't think that's very democratic or fair.
In the future we hope that when you schedule your public meetings you can give us an agenda and an idea of some things that you would like for us to discuss and give us enough time to get people out and be involved. We also hope that when you do schedule you're mindful that most of us have 9:00 to 5:00 jobs and that you allow us to actually be involved and participate in this process. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. We're going to take a break. We'll reconvene in five minutes. Thank you.

(Recess.)

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: We're going to call three people up in order. So if the three can come up we can get to all the people that want to speak. Blaise Trettis, Paul San Giovanni and Michael Hodapp. Thank you. Blaise, thank you.

MR. TRETTIS: Good evening, Chairman Beruff and Commissioners. Thank you for serving on this important commission. I am Blaise Trettis. I am the elected Republican Public Defender for the 18th Judicial Circuit, Brevard and Seminole Counties, and I am here to make probably what
will be an unusual request about the
constitution and that is not to add to it, but
to delete a portion of the Florida Constitution.

What I am proposing be deleted are the last
two sentences of Article I, Section 12
pertaining to search and seizure. These two
sentences provide that the Florida Courts must
construe search and seizure issues in
conformance with the decisions of the United
States Supreme Court.

This provision was added to the
constitution in 1982. You might ask yourselves
what in the world could be wrong with that.
What I submit is wrong with that, ladies and
genlemen, is that these two sentences of 1982
actually limit Floridians' freedom because it
eliminates federalism in the Florida
Constitution pertaining to search and seizure.

Federalism allows Florida Courts to
construe the State Constitution in a way that
provides greater protection and freedom to its
citizens than does the United States Supreme
Court.

So what this constitutional provision did
is actually limit Floridians' freedom and

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prevents Florida Courts to provide more protection.

I would also submit that this is very important in these days of incredible advancement and technology. We'll probably have soon miniature, insect-sized drones with listening devices.

As these technologies increase I think it's more and more important that the Florida Courts and Floridians be able to enjoy a greater level of protection against search and seizure than that provided by the United States Supreme Court.

I'd also like for you to when considering this proposal to consider the history that in 1982 when this was passed, why was it passed. Back then was the cocaine cowboy days of South Florida. If you remember Al Pacino, Scarface, that came out in 1983. So I think there's a very concerned public. More importantly, the public was not given the effect of what the constitutional amendment in 1982 would have done.

It's reported in Gross v. Firestone, 422 So.2nd, 303, and in that decision you will see

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that the amendment was just listed. It wasn't explained. Compare that to Armstrong v. Harrison, which is at 773 So.2nd where a constitutional provision was stricken by the Supreme Court for the precise reason that the effect of the amendment was not explained on the ballot, the effect being an elimination of federalism, the elimination of Florida Courts being able to construe the Florida Constitution to provide more constitutional protection to Floridians' freedom.

I please ask you to consider this and ask you to propose an amendment striking these last two sentences of Article I, Section 12. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you so much. Mr. Paul San Giovanni and Michael Hodapp. We'd like to accommodate the people that are standing. If those people that are sitting in rows with empty seats would move to the center towards the middle so that we can accommodate more people that would be wonderful. Thank you very much for that effort.

MR. SAN GIOVANNI: Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, my name is Paul San Giovanni.
I've been an attorney in Orlando for thirty years. I am currently a member of the Board of Governors of the Florida Bar. I represent the Ninth Judicial Circuit which is made up of Orange County and Osceola County where this meeting is being held.

I'm currently Chair of the Budget Committee and I also sit on its Executive Committee as well as it's Strategic Planning Committee.

I'm not here to speak substantively to you today, but what I want to do on behalf of the Board of Governors and the Florida Bar is to offer our services to you as an authoritative and an unbiased resource for all of you.

The Florida Bar is made up of a vast array of attorneys in various practice areas. We've also designated certain committees and sections that focus on particular areas of the law and then we have Board certified attorneys who are actually experts in their area.

I notice there's various attorneys on the commission I thank you all for your work, as well as thanking all of you for the work that you are doing today.

Our experts are standing by. They're

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ready, willing and able to assist you in any areas that you need, including providing you with information, providing you with research or being a talking resource for you as you work through very complex areas of the law.

Particularly or for example we've got tax, we've got land use, as well as real estate experts that are standing by to give you a hand.

As you weigh the potential revisions to the constitution, that is the document that outlines the legal responsibilities that the citizens have with our state. We want you to know that the resources of the Florida Bar are vast and that our commitment to assist you in this important work is absolute. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Michael Hodapp. Did I say that right? I can't read the writing. I'm sorry. Please announce your name. Thank you.

MR. HODAPP: All right. First of all, I'd just like to apologize. I have a very bad handwriting. My name is Michael Hodapp. I come up here with a simple request. I'm twenty years old. The last time you all met I was probably in the crib.
I just want to say that this is a really, really terrific opportunity for Floridians and given it happens so rarely I'd like to see some increased information available, particularly to students.

I'm an accounting major. I don't specialize in the constitution. Trying to learn what to bring up to you all was quite a challenge. I've asked a good amount of people and it's just something that's very hard.

So I would strongly encourage that more information is published, we get earlier notification and really just try and work with students because this is going to affect us for the long run.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you very much. Paul Heroux, Traci Deen and Jacob Galvin. Thank you.

MR. HEROUX: Chairman Beruff, by the way, congratulations for pronouncing my name Heroux. I have an X on the end of my name and generally people panic.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: I got one right.

MR. HEROUX: Chairman Beruff, congratulations for pronouncing my name
correctly. I have to tell people the X is silent like the B in plumbing as my brother used to say. What we have here is, if you don't mind, I normally like to speak, but I've reached the age where curiosity is more important than vanity, so I'm just going to read this.

I would like Florida to amend its constitution to allow some form of statutory initiative. Twenty-one states have such initiatives all over the country from California to Maine and from New Mexico to North Dakota.

The avenue of amendment by State Constitution is a frustrating way for people to have their voices heard, especially as is often the case, as we all know, when it could be better addressed in a statutory format.

Each of us has our favorite I'm sure. Mine happens to be the one that had to do with pig gestation and so on like that. Was it a good statute? Heck yeah. Rotten amendment because a constitution does it a different way.

The situation is one where we've seen those amendments go through and unfortunately legislators can slow down even a winning amendment by how they interpret the situation or
how they go about implementing legislation to put it through or whether they even put that implementation through at all.

But the deafness of Tallahassee is a force that you will probably see die several times on your route and my whipping arm is tired so I won't go there.

The initiative method with statute allows people, as Mr. Boggs brought up earlier, to bring a piece of legislation to Tallahassee by vote. It can then be accepted, but if it is amended or changed it must be on the ballot so that the people can decide. Will it cure everything? No. But it makes it one less way to hide from the will of the people.

This is something that thrills me, by the way, because as long as I have a second here, the people who are here considering the time of year and the situation that we're up against, I think you'll be seeing this throughout the state because there is an awakening of people with regard to what their rights are and making sure that they are not treated as privileges.

I should mention one of my other names is X31904 because I did fifty-one months in the
Department of Corrections. Have my rights been restored yet? No. I can speak at this microphone, but I cannot raise my hand or make a check on a box. I lost that because of something I did.

People are going to show up and they're going to show up in droves because they know if they don't they're going to lose their rights and they join me for what they didn't do. Thank you.

MR. BERUFF: Ms. Deen. Thank you very much.

MS. DEEN: Hi. Good afternoon, Commissioners. Thank you for hosting this meeting here in Orlando and really thank you for your service to our great state.

MR. BERUFF: Your name?

MS. DEEN: My name is Traci Deen and I am here to speak to you about protecting Florida's heritage. I speak to you today as an attorney. I have the great privilege of serving as the Director of the Center for Earth Jurisprudence which is an environmental legal center at Barry Law School, but I also speak to you today as a young woman. I'm a millennial and I hope that
you won't hold that against me. There are many of us here in this room and really I think that we represent the future of Florida.

But most importantly I speak to you as a sixth generation Floridian. I speak to you as a Floridian. I care a lot about this state and I know that you do too. So I thank you again for your service.

Today I am going to ask that you protect that with which we should hold most dear and that's the natural resources of this state. Now, we each have an incredible opportunity to protect the legacy Florida to ensure that clean water and clean air is an enumerated right in our Florida Constitution.

This issue, the protection of Florida's future, is as bipartisan as they come. Right? We all are entirely and utterly reliant on clean air to breathe and fresh water to drink and healthy soil to grow food in.

Frankly, our economy is reliant on a healthy Florida as well. We have a multi-billion-dollar eco tourism industry in this state that sustains many Floridian families. We are inextricably connected to the

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health of nature whether we choose to acknowledge that or not.

Our character today will be judged by the Floridians of tomorrow. We have the discipline and we have the capability of doing what's right for our children and our children's children for the Floridians of today and the Floridians of tomorrow.

Our heritage depends on us setting the standard today through this process. In order to protect the rights of Floridians to be free from possible contamination of both the water and the air that we breathe and to know that they're protected from these dangers by our constitution.

Now, the reward is a vibrant, thriving Florida with all Floridians' whose legacy is protected. So we will be introducing an amendment for your consideration shortly and I do hope that you'll consider protecting the rights of all Floridians to a healthful environment. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Jacob Galvin. The next three speakers will be Shannon Joyce, Kayla Infantino and Joe Pennisi.
MS. JOYCE: My issue was addressed. I'll defer to the next person.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: And you are?

MS. JOYCE: Shannon Joyce.


MS. INFANTINO: I'm Kayla.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you, Kayla. Remember, come up close to the mike so they can hear you. Thank you.

MS. INFANTINO: Hi. Thank you all for being here and hearing our concerns. My name is Kayla Infantino. I'm a student here at UCF. Recently there have been numerous bills brought to different states that aim to restrict access to safe and legal abortions under the guise of protecting women and families.

One example of this bill is House Bill 19 which allows patients to sue their doctors up to ten years after they had their procedure. This causes insurance to go up considerably, as well as discourages abortion providers from entering their field, thus making it harder for those who
need abortions to access them.

In reality, abortion will happen whether it's legal or not and preventing access to it will only cause people to undergo unsafe procedures. As a women, as a student and as a native Floridian, I urge you to protect reproductive rights by ensuring access to safe and legal abortions. Thank you.

MR. PENNISI: Good evening, Chairman Beruff, Commissioners. Thank you very much for your service and for the opportunity to speak to you here this evening. My name is Joe Pennisi and I'm the executive director of the Florida Policy Institute.

The Institute is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit organization that's dedicated to promoting widespread prosperity through timely, objective analysis of state policies as they impact economic opportunity.

My comments this evening will be brief. I really want to speak to you a little bit about the process. As you begin this incredibly important task that you've embarked on, I want to simply stress the importance of inclusion and transparency in your process.
As the commission meets only once every twenty years, maximizing participation from the public, disseminating information on meetings and locations broadly and in a timely manner is of the utmost importance.

This should be a top priority to the CRC if the goal here is genuinely to listen to the voice of Floridians as the commission goes about its work. I strongly urge members moving forward to provide concise information on the commission's structure, its rules, its procedures, instructions on how to testify and adequate notice on meeting dates and locations to maximize healthy participation.

I also urge the commission to provide clarity as to how citizens cannot only make their own proposals, but comment on the proposals that are generated by the commission itself.

And one final note is that I hope in going forward that you will make sure that all of the venues that you choose will accommodate everyone who wants to come in and speak and testify.

And in that regard I have a very quick suggestion for you. There is a lovely arena
reason across the street that has an incredible
capacity and I hope that when you return in the
fall you fill the place. Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: We'd love to see that.

Bryn Taylor.

MR. TAYLOR: Hello. My name is Bryn. I am
also a student at UCF like many of the other
people who have come up here. So I wanted to
talk about right to work.

So Florida is a right-to-work state, as
many of you know. For anyone who doesn't know
what right to work is, it basically means that
people are not required to pay dues to the union
in their workplace if their workplace does have
a union.

This is wrong because it weakens a union's
power by attacking their funding and basically
that's really bad because unions are the only
thing that protects workers from the employing
class and their employers.

So I would like a constitutional amendment
that gets rid of right to work and empowers
unions and their rights to continue to
collectively bargain and protect workers in
Florida. Thank you.
CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. The next three speakers are Stephen Beale, Kathleen Currie and Todd Catella.

MR. BEALE: Hello. My name is Stephen Beale. I'd just like to say first of all thank you very much for this opportunity. I've never had the opportunity to experience something like this since I may not have been born the last time this happened.

On that note I would like to request that you move to increase the frequency with which these happen. Because if someone who is perhaps forty years old now misses this chance, doesn't realize that it's happening until it's too late, they could ostensibly not be around for the next time that it happens. Simple turns of fate, unfortunate things.

I would like to see the frequency increased to perhaps ten years or something less than twenty in order that people may be able to experience these more often.

I would also like to request that the statutory initiatives be put into the constitution because I have seen things come up in the past that are being made into
constitutional amendments that perhaps the
constitution wasn't the best place to put these,
however, it seemed like the only option for that
policy to take that route.

I think opening up a different route would
make a more and more sensible way of enacting
policy that fits better and isn't necessarily
put into the constitution itself.

Also I would like to request that move be
made to restore the right to vote to previously
convicted, non-violent felons who have already
served their time in order that we can try and
reintegrate them to society more fully and
rehabilitate them. Thank you very much for your
time.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Kathleen
Currie, Todd Catella and Jill Heroux.

MS. CURRIE: Good evening. My name is
Kathleen Currie and I'm a member of the League
of Women Voters and I would like to thank you
all for taking the opportunity to -- the
privilege to be on this commission and this is a
very important job, especially since it happens
every twenty years and fortunately I'm still
around to be able to participate as well.
I was raised in a home where it was a very strong political party, but we were raised to make our own decisions and to follow those and to follow whatever was the most important and the most moral and sensible decision, whether it be in your own life or in whatever you were involved in.

So I would like to urge all of you to make sure that that's what you do as well. As Anne Hellmuth mentioned at the beginning of the hearing, the League is very concerned about several of the comments and the written information that we've heard so far about the commission in reference to records being accessible versus those being open.

We want to urge you to please remember the Sunshine Laws, which is to me -- that's like gold, that's what politics should be about. I realize it's not. I recognize and understand that. As a political junky I'm fascinated by it, but I'm also very frustrated and at times right angered by it.

I think since this commission only meets every twenty years, this is your opportunity to make this commission shine and to be here to
listen to the public, to make sure that the
hearings are advertised far enough in advance so
that people can and will attend and that they
understand how important the things that they
want to say are heard and that you're not here
with your own prior agenda that was advised to
you by someone else. Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Mr. Catella.

Mrs. Heroux.

MR. CATELLA: Hello there. Todd Catella.

I live in Orlando, have since 1966. And first
off I do want to thank each and every one of the
commission members for your time and everything
that you're going to be doing not just today,
but in the future in all the workshops that
you're going to be working in, every
consideration, every issue that you're going to
be looking at, every thought and idea.

Some of these workshops are going to
probably have some public comment opportunities
in there as well. Hopefully you'll be doing
that.

I was able to participate in the Orlando --
excuse me, the Orange County CRC four-year
review and it was a first time for me to do that
and it was very helpful, very informative in
terms of the process.

Hopefully each and every one of you as
members will do everything that you can possibly
do to make sure you're fulfilling your
commitments to your responsibilities to this
committee.

Do your job. Fulfill your responsibility.
Don't slack on the task. There are things that
you're going to want to look at. There are
things that you're going to want to consider.

One of the things I did find in that
session in Orange County was some of the members
didn't fulfill their responsibilities to the
same level that they could have. When there are
meetings called, when there are workshops
called, there are members missing.

When there are things to be done, you
didn't have a quorum. Now, I know this is a
time constraint for you and it's going to be a
process and there's going to be political
pressure, there's going to be public pressure,
there's going to be pressure from all different
areas to do the things that you need to do, but
one of the things I'm asking you to do is do
your job. All right?

Take up the issues that are before you, the thoughts, the ideas, the concepts, the things that need to be addressed to make the constitution of the State Florida better and make it better.

If there are things that shouldn't be there, take it out or make the amendment to get us to choose to take it out. If there are ways for the Supreme Court of the State of Florida to be more under control to the people and not legislate from their position, do that.

You know, I see too many times where we pass something sixty, seventy percent and all of a sudden a judge does something, the Supreme Court of the State of Florida does something. That shouldn't happen.

The people have spoken on an amendment that took a lot of time to do and we should continue the process of making sure that goes into action and if it needs to be appealed, then a different amendment and a different process.

There's a lot of work that goes into putting something on a ballot for people to consider. Everything that you're doing now is
going to end up for consideration and imagine all this time, imagine all this effort that one day and one judge and one session can blow it all. Protect that. Protect your rights as commission members and others in the future.

And I will say I defend religious liberty and I'd ask you to consider that too. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Mrs. Heroux. Wanda Ramos, you'll be next. Elizabeth Smock after that. Thank you.

MS. HEROUX: Hi. My name is Jill Heroux and I'm a native Orlandoan [sic], born here in '52 and so I've seen a lot of change. I'm also a former public school teacher, taught here briefly, taught up in Georgia, a little away from the state for a little while.

Obviously, I went through the public school education through ninth grade and then went to Baltimore, went to a high school there where I was one of the top ten people in the school in my senior year as far as grade point average.

So I competed very, very highly in a school where they had a seventy-five percent matriculation rate to graduate into college. So
we educated our children back in the '50s and the '60s when I went here and we're not educating them now.

Now, I'm a former school teacher. I am now a licensed mental health counselor by the State of Florida. I served thirty-two and a half years with the Orange County government working in the family services decision and I'm nervous.

I believe very strongly -- I was hired in 1982. I believe very strongly in government and the Sunshine and ethics. The appearance of a conflict of interest is a conflict of interest and that's what I was taught as a government employee.

If it looked wrong, smelled wrong, even if you didn't do wrong, it was wrong. So you watched what you did and I'm not seeing that in the State of Florida right now.

There's a lot of unethical behavior. There is a move to legally block documents. We have to have people fighting for the right to see things that the government and the Sunshine says that we have to have.

If that's something that the constitution amendment review committee can address, we need

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to, because if we don't have government and
Sunshine, then we have no way to hold our public
officials accountable and that is important to
me as a voter.

Another thing is I'm a strong believer in
separation of church and state. I am a
Christian. I have Jewish friends. I have Hindu
friends. I have Buddhist friends. I have
Muslim friends and friends who have no religious
affiliation.

I believe very strongly in the separation
of church and state from the standpoint that
religious institutions should not get my public
money because who says where it's going to go.
Is it going to go to Christians? Are you going
to have Christians fighting if it goes to a
Muslim? Why?

I strongly support public education. I am
very strongly concerned that we are under
funding our public teachers. I'm having friends
leave the public school system because they are
not allowed to do their job because they're
being legislated.

I have students I work with, programs that
were state-funded programs that children were
failing in the school. Ninth grade children who are 16 or 17 years of age who are never going to graduate because they started failing in the third grade. It's seventy days of testing. We need to work better at that.

And then the last thing is I'm obviously my husband's wife and he is a felon. He's white and we have the resources to be able to invite him back into the community and so we didn't have a reintegration problem.

There is no recidivism at this point, but I've worked with families where their families cannot even rent. They cannot get a job. I've served children who have mental health problems and their parents cannot get them services because they are felons. They have no civil rights and yet they have served their sentence.

And that is very, very important and it disproportionately affects people of color. Those laws are 1858 laws that are Jim Crow laws. We need to come into the future and as that one gentleman said, a quarter of our people cannot vote. That is absolutely wrong.

They are still citizens of this country and they deserve the right to vote. They also

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deserve the right to hold licenses and rent and get a job.

CHAIRMAN BERUFEY: Thank you. Ms. Ramos.
Ms. Smock. Michael Weinbaum.

MS. RAMOS: Hello. I am Wanda Ramos. I am a proud Puerto Rican. I am a U.S. citizen. The reason why I'm stating that is because I'm sick and tired of all the employers I have in Florida ask me for a green card.

So I wanted to make it count in this public hearing as a statement. So please if there's something you can do about that I would greatly appreciate it. Thank you.

I have been a resident of Florida since December 1999 and I am very happy that we moved here. I have lived in other states, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and I have had great opportunities over there, but we came here in 1999 and this is where my son grew up.

The schools of Florida are the schools that my son went to. He was an ideal student and went on to attend Valencia College and looking to a great future here.

I am a homeowner and I have done great things in Florida, but I have grown disappointed

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of Florida in certain ways. I have seen how the educational system is not getting the funding that is needed and the funding for public education here has been diverted to private entities and to charter schools and that is not right.

It's not right because if we have issues within the educational system, the public system, we need to fix them, not taking the funding out to put it somewhere else and then not fix the problem. I think that we need to look at that issue in Florida.

We have many kids coming in here that are now having a big portion of Puerto Ricans moving here because of the economic issues there. I'm also seeing that even if we are in charge of a younger family member, we are still not considering the residency status for them to be able to pay in-state tuition.

So if I have a family member that I am legally taking care of and he's a minor, even though he has been here for more than a year, he's still not considered a resident to be able to apply to an in-state tuition student for a college. I wish that you would consider that.

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I'm also concerned about women's reproductive rights and I want to protect them. I want to ask all of you to consider to protect women's reproductive rights.

I think that there should be a separation of church and state and although I am a Christian, I think that when we are asking our elected officials to consider certain actions in regards to our government entities and organizations, I think that if you're going to talk about women's reproductive issues, then include women in the conversation. So thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: We have a lot of people that want to speak. Let's try to mind -- I can't see the clock behind me. There's two clocks. So I'd appreciate it if you'd try to mind the clocks.

We almost have everybody accommodated in the room. If there's any seats in the middle, if you could shift again so some of the people that are standing can be accommodated. Then I think we'll have everybody in the room that's wanted to be here all evening. Thank you.

MS. SMOCK: Thank you all very much. My
name is Elizabeth Smock. I'll try to keep this really short so we can get more people in. I know Mr. Heroux with an X mentioned this, but no one's really -- when we talk about our constitution here in the State of Florida I feel like we need to strengthen it.

We have too many amendments that -- we've had one person talk about Supreme Court justices being able to just blow them out of the water. It's not just the Supreme Court. Sometimes our legislators as well.

I know amendments can be interpreted in different ways, but for example, Amendment 1 has been in the news lately as the funding that was voted on by a majority of Florida citizens to try to add to the environmental protection, the lands needed to protect our environment here in the state, and those funds are being diverted.

There may be good reasons for that, but if the amendment is for land purchase and it was voted on, then there needs to be something besides just the legislative body being able to turn that around and not use it in that way.

Again, if the amendment doesn't seem to make sense, make it public, let people discuss.
it, let people rewrite it. I'm not sure how all of that works. I'm not the commission. You are. Let's strengthen those so that if there is an amendment that has been voted into the constitution that it is acted on in a proper manner. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Michael Weinbaum, Saba Akram-Scales, Frank Vassel.

MR. WEINBAUM: Thank you again for setting up this meeting. My name Michael Weinbaum. I just wanted to echo some other people who said it would be nice to have this more than once every twenty years. That's a pretty slam dunk constitution amendment, very easy to write. Just pick a number of years less than twenty.

The next commission it would be nice if it was appointed not just by the people who appointed this commission, namely the governor, the president of the senate, the speaker of the house and the chief justice, but if other public officials, even non-politicians, for instance, the Florida Bar Association is already recognized in our constitution to perform a few functions. Perhaps they could be empowered to appoint some people, get a little more
diversity.

As a personal note, before anyone questions my personal motivations, I'm actually a registered Republican. I think most of the members of this commission are. Is anyone not affiliated with a party on this commission?

MR. BERUFF: It's not a question and answer.

MR. WEINBAUM: Okay. I'm going to go ahead and assume no, being that most of you were appointed by the senate president, house speaker or the governor, which is fine. They are all Republicans so it's unlikely they appointed non-Republicans.

I recognize Ms. Joyner from a previous public television viewing. I know she's a registered Democrat appointed by a Supreme Court Justice. He may have appointed some non-partisans. I don't know.

The point is you guys are not, at this point, representative of Florida and you could be. You could be. One simple way to do that is to get more people empowered to appoint this committee. A bigger and more important way would be to implement -- to change our primary
election rules.

Our constitution was last revised on this subject in 1998 and was sort of fixed what was proposed and I took advantage of this.

My Florida House District over in Winter Garden, no Republicans decided to run. I'm a registered Republican, so before 1998 I would have had no primary vote at all and then the Democrat would have be unopposed.

I got to choose. My favorite Democrat is a registered Republican. However -- and you might not know this. Some of you may not be from this area. The race for the Ninth Circuit prosecutor, no Republican decided to run again because the Democratic incumbent was very popular.

However, a Democrat challenger not only showed up, but paid somebody to be a non-partisan write-in which is under Article VI of our constitution, Section 5; if there are other candidates the primary becomes closed again.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: You need wrap it up.

MR. WEINBAUM: I did not get a chance to vote for state attorney and many other people
did not. And I have a proposed revision to said section in this envelope.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Next speaker. Saba Akram-Scales. Did I -- how badly did I do that?

MS. AKRAM-SCALES: Thank you for your time. I wanted to bring attention to Florida's restore voting rights for certain former inmates who have satisfied the conditions of their statements.

There are thirty-eight states that automatically restore rights. I wish Florida would become one of those states because there's no purpose in sending somebody to prison without allowing them to integrate back into the society, then we have not served the purpose of what the justice system is supposed to be.

If you don't integrate people back into society -- and voting is a basic U.S. citizen right. So I wish the commission would consider this heavily that they restore their rights automatically.

MR. VASSEL: My name is Frank Vassel. Good evening, Members. I'd like to say that your job is a very difficult one and I pray that you will do well.

MR. BERUFF: Could you say your name again, Frank?

MR. VASSEL: Frank Vassel. Your duties are a difficult one. Just from the presence of the public here this evening and the conflicting views, you already see what's popular and what is not.

Your job is not so much to go with what is popular or what will bring benefit to the people of Florida and bring to society in a good way. What is popular doesn't always mean it is correct or best.

So your job is going to be difficult because you may be going against the majority in some cases. So be courageous, ladies and gentlemen. Your reliance on the natural laws of order may be one way to help decide in the amendments to the Florida Constitution.

There are laws that are there that are observable and that have been proven to make society well. Those are the laws you need to
rely on. Respect of the opinions of the people is important, but in the end what is best for the people is your job.

If it fails, if you go with the majority or with the majority and it fails, you're going to be blamed. I'm really speaking about myself. I'm going to speak unofficially and I make it very clear, unofficially on behalf of the PTA.

There is one thing I'm going to say with respect to education. Your job as you look at the constitution, please let the language remain regarding education that it should be uniform and equitable.

That one statement I make to you and I make it unofficially because I am not an official of the PTA. So if they reject this statement this evening, I am holding that to my claim only.

But I say it again, please let that language remain regarding public education in the Constitution of Florida, that it be uniform and equitable. My colleague spoke earlier regarding education. It should be for all children, for the betterment of the children, for all children no matter who they are.

When you make those amendments based on the

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requests of the people, again, look at the benefit it will bring. If it does not bring a benefit, do not make it so. If it brings a benefit, despite opposition, make it so. Thank you again for your time.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Joshua Caleb Brown [sic]. We're going to be taking another break at 7:00 p.m. for five minutes in case anyone wants to prepare.

MR. BARTON: Hello. My name is Joshua Caleb Barton. We've had some pretty good speakers. Let's see how I can top that, right? Okay. So in the 1980s there was an amendment that was passed. The CRC at that time proposed and Florida people agreed on voting that protection -- voting for the amendment that protected our informational privacy. They decided it was important and it was a needed improvement. This amendment is Section I, Article 23 [sic], which limited improper use of our information by the government and other entities.

This was a shining structure of protection in a growing technological age. We needed it back in the 1980s. Imagine how much we need
this now. It has been changed. The structure of protection torn down by judges interpreting this amendment to simply protect abortion and not our informational privacy.

Now, I call for an amendment that fixes this so there's no doubt that Article 23 [sic] was concerning what it was originally intended. This is not anti-abortion because both Democrats and Republicans agreed this amendment was always made with a specific purpose.

We need informational privacy. At least seventeen states require government web based sites or State Courts to establish privacy policies and procedures or to incorporate readable privacy policies and procedures on their websites. Florida is not one of these states.

Sadly, Article 23 [sic] is not being used as intended. So that is what I would like to present. And also, with that being said, I'd like to touch on something that was also said earlier and that judges should not be able to overrule the people.

This process, our vote cannot be undermined by a single judge saying I don't agree with the
people.

With that being said, going to another issue and I dare mentioned earlier to have an agenda of issues. Currently we're given free speech to talk about whatever issues are close to our heart. I think it should stay that way. An agenda would only limit what sort of issues we as the people could come and bring before you, the committee. I thank you for the way that things are right now.

The last is one of our mayors actually came up and spoke about and that's local government. I like that idea. Why? Because it brings due power where it should be and that's closer to the people.

These local people work around us. They shop in our stores. Their kids are in our schools. They sit beside us when we're at events and games.

Home Rule is important. The proper amount of power should be -- the proper amount of power of the people should be where the people have greatest access. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. One more speaker and we'll take a break. Demensio
Barton.

MR. BARTON: Hey, guys. Thank you. You've heard it a lot of times and I just want to let you know I appreciate what you're doing. A lot of times the people who are serving are the least appreciated, you know.

You represent us, but you represent also someone who's actually been assigned to make choices that matter, make choices that count. You're handling something where a lot of different opinions and a lot of different subjects are coming up.

So when I'm bringing this up to you, I'll let you know what I'm looking at. I'm saying, man, due process is great. It's wonderful what we have going on here. I'm listening to all these words because all we have is a battle of words. Everybody is just coming and we have all these words coming from every direction.

I'm looking at you to protect those words. I've listened to you and I've listened to the discourse of everybody whether I agree with it or not, in the end it's going to end up as a rule, it's going to end up as an ability for the State of Florida to choose as a state whether or
not they will or will not agree to make it into a mandate for us to serve under.

When I'm looking I see things like our definitions. How is it that we have things where our vocabulary is changing and we have bad and bad used to mean bad, but now bad can mean good. And good used to mean good, but now good can mean it's all right.

That may be all right for our public internet discourses, our tweeting, our Facebook, but that cannot be within our judiciary. When we have words that have been set, they must be maintained.

I ask you to hold our judges accountable. We must have it set so that whatever discourse has been taken care of in our public venue and whatever has been agreed upon, it is final.

An example of that is the Article I, Section 23. How can we have public discourse and public remedy without accountability? We must hold those in power accountable just as we ourselves have to come from our busy days, our different lives and we be held accountable to our rights.

We have been given an opportunity in the
United States to have a voice. The voices cannot be silenced. Thank you and you have a good day.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: We will take a five-minute break and reconvene in five minutes. Thank you.

(Recess.)

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Ladies and gentlemen, we want to hear everyone and we also want to be very clear that we'll have another meeting in Orlando in the fall. We wanted to start and get the ball rolling. We'll have another meeting in Orlando.

We have sixty-five speaker cards left. So we would like to, with your approval, reduce the time to two minutes, please, so that we can hear everybody.

I understand that's not popular for some, but it's fair for everyone and that's what this is about. So the next speaker is Jeff Yonce, Martin Van Luven, Alex Storer, Danny Roman. Jeff Yonce.

MR. YONCE: Thank you for allowing me to appear before this commission. My name is Jeff Yonce and I'm one of those old codgers that you
hear about that lives in The Villages, but we do vote. Old codgers do vote.

My recommendation for the constitutional amendment would say in order for any candidate to be eligible to run for the Office of President of the United States, such candidate must furnish his or her federal income tax returns for the five most recent tax years in order to qualify for office.

Now, what I want to make crystal clear to each of you commissioners, this amendment is not about being a Republican or a Democrat or an Independent or a member of the Green Party. Rather it's about the right of the electorate to have pertinent financial information for any candidate running for the Office of President so that we, the electorate, can make a decision on the qualifications of that candidate.

I'm sure that each of you recognizes the right of the electorate to have all the necessary information so that we can make this decision and we can make it with all the necessary information.

I believe that you also recognize the overwhelming public support for this amendment.

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I'm asking that you listen to the will of the electorate and place this amendment on the ballot.

Several other states have already enacted similar legislation. We realize that if you do not recommend this go on the ballot, we can still follow through with a citizens initiative and we can get over 700,000 signatures and it would be placed on the ballot and it would be approved by more than the threshold of sixty percent.

We're asking you to do the right thing. Listen to the voters. Put it on the ballot.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Martin Luven.

MR. VAN LUVEN: Thank you very much and thank you for all serving. Let's see, I've lived in Florida since 1978. I'm a combat veteran and, by the way, I was on the Republican Executive Committee of Broward County for about ten years and I recognize that everybody on this panel likes the Sunshine Laws very much.

I love disclosure. I want Florida to be first and what I want them to be first in is to add to the constitution in order for any candidate to be eligible to run for the Office
of President of the United States such a
candidate must furnish his or her federal income
tax returns for the five most recent years for
public review in order to qualify to be listed
on any Florida ballot.

That's it. And, oh yes, and if I go over
and see Mr. Lester at his office with fifty
friends he's supposed to serve coffee and
donuts.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Commissioner, you're in
trouble now. Alex Storer, Danny Roman, Lawrence
Worley Tyree.

MR. STORER: Hello. My name is Alex
Storer. Thank you all for being here. I'm
currently a student here at UCF, so I appreciate
that this is being held on our campus.

So I think a lot of the political rhetoric
that we hear and a lot of the wording that's in
the Florida Constitution focuses on the idea of
freedom. Obviously, freedom is good, but I
think we have too much focus on hypothetical,
individual freedoms that don't function very
well with the economic realities of life as a
Floridian.

So I believe this was addressed by another

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speaker, but this brings me to the topic of the right to work portion which I believe is under Section 1 or -- it's under the Declaration of Rights, the rights portion.

And while this does protect the hypothetical individual right for someone to not have to be in a union in a union workplace, I think the collective rights of the workers are more important in that situation. After all, we are a social species.

We have public institutions like the government and like the constitution in order to protect us and I think it's important that strong labor unions are one of those institutions to help protect workers and fight for them. I believe that's all I have. Thank you.


MR. TYREE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, commissioners. My name is Larry Tyree and I'm here representing no one except myself. I should tell you that my topic is the State Board of Community Colleges and my perspective is one
who worked in eleven community colleges, six states. I served as president of nine of them. Five of those presidencies were interim. I guess I'm the only person to have served as president of the three of the community colleges in Florida; in Panama City, in Gainesville and in Key West.

For the benefit of the tens of thousands of students who attend these twenty-eight state colleges, some are still called community colleges, but most are called state colleges. One is even called the State College of Florida.

For the benefit of these tens of thousands of students who attend these institutions, I think it's imperative that we have our own governing board at the state level.

The public schools have a governing board, State Board of Education. The universities have a governing board at the state level in addition to their institutional boards and right now the community colleges or state colleges are a part of the governing system of the State Board of Education.

And, as you can imagine, with the enormity of the issues and the complexity of the issues,
often times these state colleges are overlooked
or the last to be heard or considered or
advocated for.

So I just ask you to consider the
possibility of adding the option to the people
of Florida of memorializing and creating a state
board of community colleges. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN TYREE: Thank you, Mr. Tyree. Pam
Dirschka. Tony Buscemi.

MS. DIRSCHKA: Hi. I'm Pam Dirschka and
I'm from Titusville, Florida. I'm a precinct
committee woman here, but I am representing
myself this afternoon.

I'm going to cut out a bunch. I was really
glad to hear the woman that spoke about the
environment earlier. It's under assault at both
the state and the federal level.

I've lived in Florida since 1980, most of
that up in the Panhandle. In 2013 we moved to
Titusville. I used to have a windsurfing
business up on Pensacola Beach, but now I'm not
even comfortable to go out in the water in the
Indian River Lagoon.

So I think that's something that we need to
pay a lot of attention to. It's encouraging

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that there's been an effort in the state level now to eliminate or not allow fracking. Florida is so fragile that we really need to watch our waters. It's really critical to all Floridians that it be restored to an active eco system and not what we have there now.

I'm going to share my time with my husband who sent me a message to say that the Public Service Commission must be changed from legislature/governor selection, to an election by the citizens or some mix of the two. The PSC was complaining recently that only large, wealthy homeowners were installing solar.

I would agree with that complaint and note that the PSC created the rules that prevented lower income people from options that might allow them to participate and that is third-party power agreements.

Solar had largely been opposed by the PSC except for when the legislature ordered them to offer rebates. Thank you.

MR. BERUFF: Thank you. Tony, please pronounce your name for us.

MR. BUSCEMI: Good evening Chairman and Commissioners. My name is Tony Buscemi from
Winter Park. I want to thank the prior speaker for talking a bit about solar.

I am the head of an Orlando Chapter of the Citizens Climate Lobby. We are a non-profit, bipartisan group throughout Florida. I'm the head of the Orlando Chapter. We have chapters from top to bottom throughout Florida.

What we're trying to do is the impossible. We're trying to bring Democrats, Republicans, Independents together to do something about climate change and we're making pretty good ground actually.

I first got involved in it for my children. I have a seven-year-old daughter and a thirteen-year-old son and I've always been worried what I'm going to be leaving behind for them.

The more I got involved in the group I realized that the problem is actually much more immediate than I'd realized. It's not just going to affect them down the road, but it's going to affect me during my lifetime and everyone during their lifetime.

Florida is uniquely susceptible to problems related to climate change, whether it be sea
level rise, extreme weather, salt water intrusion. We're actually in a pretty severe drought right now here in Orlando and a lot of you have districts on the East Coast and that would have been devastated by Hurricane Matthew last summer.

So what we're finding is that we're getting a lot more bipartisan support from Florida residents. My proposal would be for a constitutional amendment that would require a certain percentage of utility power generation be generated by renewable sources.

Twenty-nine states have already done that, including Texas and North Carolina where Duke Energy, the largest utility in the country is based. Illinois has one.

MR. BERUFF: You need to wrap up.

MR. BUSCEMI: So I would hope that you would consider that and thank you very much for your time.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Angela. I only have one name on the card. There she is. Angela, Cesar Esplanado I think and Rebecca Wilkinson.

MS. McHUGH (ph.): Hi. My name is Angela
McHugh. I'm here as a student at UCF, but I'm specifically here in front of you today as a representative of the Orlando Chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America and one of our biggest things that we're worried about specifically with Florida is wage inequality.

Florida is one of the top five in the country for wage inequality. One of the highest grossing areas in terms of job growth is for part-time minimum wage and minimum wage isn't really livable right now as it stands.

So please, please consider that when you're implementing this in terms of -- I'm sorry, I'm not much of a public speaker -- in terms of wages and what you can actually live off of.

As a student who lived off of minimum wage, I can tell you I literally couldn't even afford my rent, nonetheless food or basic other requirements of living.

So please just consider that, especially here in Central Florida where most of our jobs are tourist based. They are mostly minimum wage and that doesn't help a lot of our citizens in terms of career growth. So thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Cesar? Is

MR. BAKER: I'm Lyman Baker and I'll just resign my time so other people can have more time.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you so much.

Rebecca Wilkinson.

MS. WILKINSON: Same.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Jan Harp, David Brunell, Randal Agostini I think.

MS. HARP: Hi. My name is Janese Harp. I'm not sure what can be done about these things, but the two things that are most important to me are in regards to families and homeowners insurance.

I'm dealing with issues with both right now. For families, specifically parenting plans and parent timesharing; to make changes to the parenting plan. Right now the changes need to be a significant change in circumstance. There's nothing that really says what that circumstance needs to be to be considered significant.

So it would be more beneficial if a change was determined to be significant or not early in
the petitioning process to save resources and
time. Right now the final judgments that we're
getting really aren't final.

A parent can decide they don't like the
terms of the plan on a whim and we're back in
court. So it would be nice if the final
judgments could be final.

For homeowners insurance, specifically in
regards to bad faith. There are some companies
that seem to consider having a third party
review a claim, your claim is being assessed and
that's all that they're responsible to do.

In my case I had significant water damage
in 2013. My son was seven months old when it
happened. He's going to be four years old next
week and I still don't have a payout from my
insurance company for $75,000 in damage.

So for some kind of guideline change to be
enacted to have these insurance companies
properly process the claims, that would be very
beneficial and it's really important to me.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Please
announce your name when you come forward.

MR. AGOSTINI: My name is Randal Agostini.
Thank you for coming this evening. Thank you for your service and your responsibility attached to your service.

Article I, Section 3 known as the Blaine Amendment restricts any religious organization from receiving direct or indirect state financial aid, essentially creating a state monopoly to process our children.

When the Blaine Amendment was imposed on our schooling system it was vastly different. Though the amendment was specifically directed to the Catholic Church, schools at that time provided a Christian education with the belief that all souls are capable of achieving salvation.

It is well known that public schools no longer allow prayer and Christian beliefs are actually ridiculed, intellectual and physical acts that are hostile and discriminatory to the free exercise of religion, which in itself is contradictory to what is stipulated in our Bill of Rights.

Furthermore, there is no such commodity as state funds. For education in Florida school expenses are paid by citizen taxation. The
principle of using taxation for the common good relinquishes all meaning when use of such funds are purposely denied citizens on the basis of their religion.

Since salvation is the most important achievement for me and my progeny and since a Christian education is fundamental to this achievement, I am asking that you remove this discriminatory and antiquated provision.


MS. PORTEOUS: Hi. Thank you for being here. I'm Kim Porteous. I'm very grateful -- actually no, I'm privileged to be a resident of Orlando, Florida and the United States. I know a lot of people who don't have that such privilege.

I also am a woman. I noticed that right off you guys are choosing so much about our future and you're mostly guys. Women make up fifty-one percent of Florida, forty percent of you.

I'm also a victim of rape. I was raped by a white man and one in five women are raped in America and probably more than that.
And it's not only that, it's offensive that we're not addressing that issue. Instead we're attacking women's rights. Planned Parenthood absolutely needs to be available, accessible. Women need to have reproductive freedom.

We need to deal with our men issue raping women, not what women do with their uteruses. That should be off the table. It's insulting that it even comes up.

It's been decision made and it should be against all people and women and men should not even address it at all. Women's rights have to be protected. That's what you're supposed to do, protect all of us.

Women need equal pay. Minimum wage is not livable. We need a livable wage. We can't expect our people to raise their families without a livable wage. We need health insurance. We need universal health insurance.

We also need prison reform. Since Governor Scott has taken office four hundred and ninety-four inmates have died from either murder, homicide, suicide, pending investigations. This is too much. Private prisons must be stopped. We must have prison
reform. I want everyone to watch -- you better watch the 13th if you think that you serve anyone in America.

And voters' rights need to be absolutely restored. African Americans have been attacked left, right and center for decades and generations and we need to have the right to vote restored.

There are more African Americans in prisons than there are representing in our country. We have got to deal with our prison issue and we need to give the voters rights back.

Gun laws. We need reasonable gun laws. We also need --

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Lynn Peterson, Zaineb and Carla Garcia.

MS. PETERSON: My name is Lynn Peterson and you've been thanked many times for being here, but I would like to thank the crowd.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you.

MS. PETERSON: I'm a member of the West Volusia Audubon Society and a retired teacher here in Florida and I learned of this meeting just a few days ago which gave us fairly short notice to gather our thoughts and respond to
I decided to come here because I read about some red flags raised recently in Florida about our Sunshine Laws here.

And I would like to ask you to make sure that no further erosions of these Sunshine Laws occur so that we as constituents can trust that we can access information if we want it and we're getting the information about those things that go on in our state.

I'm also here to ask you or to state to you that Florida needs strong constitutional laws for our water, air and lands that are unequivocally necessary for life.

And I know you've heard this and I'm going to say it again, not one single person can live without drinkable water and breathable air. If you don't help us protect that, we're in terrible trouble. Actually I think we are.

I worked very hard on Amendment 1. I worked nearly every weekend for almost a year to gather almost a million signatures required and then our state legislators terribly perverted the use of that money.

I would like you to strengthen that so that...
those perversions cannot occur and it can be used in the way it's supposed to be used.

My last statement is we need to concentrate our state money into public schools so that everybody gets the same kind of education regardless of anything.


MR. BOGGS: I'm Harry Scott Boggs. Don't start the time yet. Procedurally speaking, again, the cards that were signed and delivered, did you say at the beginning that this is going to be on the Department of State website -- I mean on the governor's website?

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: It's all being televised and we'll have it on our own CRC website.

MR. BOGGS: On the CRC website.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Yes. Go ahead.

MR. BOGGS: Thank you. The cards that were signed and delivered, they're not being shuffled or anything.
CHAIRMAN BERUFF: No, they're in the order that we received them.

MR. BOGGS: Chronologically. Okay. I just wondered. Now that we have a chuckle, this is not going to be something to chuckle about much because it's -- I guess I can just put it in the form of a resolution.

Resolve that the CRC determine that a constitutional amendment be proposed for the State of Florida to severely limit Physicians' Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment, POLST, or it can be resaid that you move that legal immunity for physicians or healthcare workers invoking POLST be severely restricted.

This week in Hawaii on Monday that state -- a lot of states are going through a cluster boxing match with a lot of confusion. Hawaii, Nevada and Maine all are going to try to, through their legislatures, invoke physician-assisted suicide.

It failed two days ago in Hawaii. It's still pending in the other two states. I don't know where to begin describing the threat that POLST and physician-assisted suicide can invoke on society. It's just too much to talk about.
Just think of a single person that you've known who's vulnerable in your life, anytime in your life who might be a victim of things like physician-assisted suicide or POLST.

Lastly, the only thing is websites to look into this, disabledrightseducationanddefensefund.org or the name of this one is going to throw you off, notdeadyet.org in Rochester, New York. Check it out. Thanks for your time.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Who's next? Jeffrey Smith. Who's coming up?

MR. CAPRIO: Frank Caprio. You got it close. Frank Caprio like Leonardo Di. First of all, ladies and gentlemen, one thing I'd like to ask you when you're pursuing this business is keep things into perspective.

We have a Federal Constitution that's been around for almost two hundred and thirty years. We've only had twenty-seven amendments to that constitution, ten of those being immediately after its ratification which was the Bill of Rights.

All I'm trying to say is be judicious in what you propose. It would be better to propose
nothing than to propose something bad. Just keep that in mind.

A couple of other things that I've heard. Recall, ballot initiatives, referendums, they're not in line with our constitutional republic. They move us closer to a democracy which history has proved is a failing system.

Government is not here to redistribute wealth, to give from the people who make it to give to the people who need it. Government is not here to pick winners or losers in business.

There is one reason that we tolerate government here in the country and that's to protect our rights. To secure these rights governments are instituted among men. That's was written in a very famous document I hope you've all read.

If there is one change that you would like to make and people talk about Home Rule, the ultimate Home Rule is Florida being a sovereign entity in this republic. We're moving away from that paradigm and as we do we see the results.

I would love a statement to say something simply like the sovereignty of Florida is absolute and that it is our duty to protect the

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rights of the citizens that live in this state from anybody who wants to violate them whether it's domestic or foreign.

I see my time is running down. Real quick. Washington, D.C. is one of the biggest violators of our rights. Thomas Jefferson and James Madison both agreed that there's a term called nullification where the states reject unconstitutional acts by the Federal Government and they protect their citizens. I would hope that you would think about that. I'll definitely send you something.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Jeffrey Smith.

MR. SMITH: Yes. My name is Jeffrey Smith. I am the elected Clerk of the Circuit Court in Indian River County, Florida. I'm here on behalf of the Clerks of Court in the entire State of Florida to offer our services to you during this process, to thank you for your service.

I'm a graduate of two universities at the same time, UCF and FTU. So that tells you how old I am. Thank you.

MR. BERUFF: Thank you. We have Arnold
Diehl, John Ti -- I can't read the writing.
John, T-i-t-k-a-r-i-c-h, something think.
Please go ahead.

MR. DIEHL: Thank you. I'm Arnold Diehl.
Twenty years ago people just like me asked the CRC to add language drafted by a committee known as Floridians for Medical Rights to the amendments proposed by that commission.

Around the state commissioners heard from sick people who were already using cannibis. They were people who believed that they should have the right to continue their cannibis use under the protection of the law.

The commissioners agreed that this issue was of grave concern, but in the eleventh hour concluded that it did not rise to the level of constitution protections. They believed that the legislature should create expectations for patients to use cannibis plant in their own health concerns as supplemental treatment.

It took eighteen years and a threatened constitutional amendment before the legislature would even pick up the issue. For the last three years the THC program and the legislature allowing the terminally ill to access the

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program has failed to meet the needs of the
people who are already using cannibis or those
who were promised relief under the existing
Florida Statutes.

Despite expensive studies on the use
cannibis federal laws prohibit cannibis use and
continue to be a stumbling block for the Florida
lawmakers. We understand the lawmakers swear to
take an oath to uphold the Florida Constitution
and the laws of the United States.

After the passage of Amendment 2, the Ninth
and Tenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution
protect Florida from federal intervention under
our marijuana program. However, the legislature
seems content to give sick people extractions
and preparations for the plan.

Since support of the idea of the cannibis
plan and all uses have been beneficial to humans
we think the people are years ahead of the
lawmakers and the legalization. The incremental
steps towards cannibis reform or waiting on
federal government for guidance is not
acceptable.

Therefore, we are asking the commission to
put the rights of adults to cannibis to Division

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of Election Serial Number 15-20 on the 2018 ballot. We must bring as many people as possible under the rule of law and its protection so that no person is left outside the rule of law.

We ensure that no one is going to jail for the cannibis plant. We ensure no one is forced to the mental health treatment, no other reason than the possession of the plant.

We want a valid public safety concerns. Legalization saves taxpayers money on petty possession crimes. The legislature craft rules --

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: You need to wrap up.

MR. DIEHL: -- cannibis industry under Sunshine where the public's health is concerned. I just want you to know one last thing because I should have had three minutes.

The proposed amendment that we provided you today has received signatures from over 10,000 people around the state. We have supporters in forty-nine counties who have signed the petition. Over the coming months you will hear from them.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you.
MR. TITKANICH: Good even, Mr. Chairman. My name is John Titkanich and I'm the city manager for the City of Cocoa. First I'd like to thank each of you for your service to our state and for the immense responsibility that you have upon you in helping to shape Florida's future.

The State of Florida is not homogeneous. We are a state of more than twenty million and by 2020 our anticipated growth will be twenty-two million.

Currently more than half of our residents live in incorporated areas. If the current legislative session has demonstrated one clear intent it is to substitute its wisdom for that of local communities and the more than three thousand elected local officials to self-determine their future and adopt community standards important to the residents of counties, cities and towns.

Home Rule, in spite of it's incorporation in the State Constitution in 1968, is for all intents and purposes under attack. Local governments address the needs and provide the necessary services our collective constituents
expect from government daily in the trenches.

Legislature has been filed that will return us to the days prior to voter-approved Home Rule. Should this pass in either this session or a future session, the legislative process will be mired with untold bills by local government seeking parental authority to act on behalf of the citizens they serve who are petitioning them to address a certain matter.

I would like to believe this body use the government closest to the people best serves the interests of we the people and arguably to make government more accountable to the people they serve year round.

Elected officials are in the community, they're meeting folks on a daily basis twice a month at council meetings. Unfortunately it appears the wisdom of the legislature is that they know best for our community.

Skipping to the end I respectfully encourage the commission to fully review and clarify the principles of Home Rule and our State Constitution, revisit and propose revisions to strengthen Article VIII, Sections 1 and 2 of our State Constitution to ensure that
Home Rule is a fundamental principle embedded in our constitution, a standard that cannot be merely preempted by the legislature absent deliberate consideration to the impacts of local governments and the constituents they serve and should be --

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. We've got it.

Cleve Josephs, Deborah Green, Suz Remus.

MR. JOSEPHS: My name is Cleve Josephs. My main issue here is open primaries and restoration of voter rights. I'm a naturalized U.S. citizen. Every time there's an election I go out and I vote.

It's just very frustrating when you look at the turnout for the elections, like the last gubernatorial election. I think thirty percent of Floridians that were eligible to vote turned up. So theoretically fifteen percent of eligible Floridians elected our governor.

You know, someone spoke earlier about the competition of this commission. Ninety percent of you are political appointees, forty percent by the governor, fifty percent by the legislature.

So I'm also wondering did I drive half way
across town in hot traffic for an academic exercise. Are you guys listening to what we have to say, but you're going to go behind doors and do what you want to do?

The governor has done several things that have attacked voter rights. Voter rights seems to be a big topic here. So I would ask that there be some transparency on the website, you put out some sort of a rubric.

How are you guys and ladies going to decide what you propose as constitutional amendments?

Are you going to keep some sort of a tally as to what topics are being brought up? There needs to be some transparency, because again, ninety percent of you are political appointees.

Again, I drove across town for this and I just feel like I wasted my time unless there is some transparency.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you for your time. I'd like to opine on that. Everything that we produce will be on our website. So there's no -- you'll be available to pick and choose whatever document you want to review.

Everything that's sent into the public will be on the website. We will be completely
transparent in the policy and you can opine on the documents as you read them. Thank you. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Deborah Green, retired community college professor. Thank you, Commissioners, all of you. The constitution is an expression of our shared values and a value that was identified as very important as the belief in the importance of conservation land and our parks. That was demonstrated by the 2014 seventy-five percent voting for Amendment 1.

The fact that it has not gone as we anticipated I think is because the procedure of nominating lands under the Florida Forever program which was started in the '60s, it's all very worked out. Ranking of lands by endangered species, recreation value, water resources; all these things.

The fact that it was almost forgotten by the legislature, perhaps because of term limits, they don't have enough historical memory of the process since it hasn't been emphasized for quite a while, but in any case, perhaps it should be removed from the legislature and just
the process that worked to get all of these
millions of acres of lands into the public hands
for water purposes, aquifer recharge, flood
control, as well as recreation and wildlife
habitat, that perhaps that same procedure should
be codified in the constitution and just this
money that's been designated just follow that
procedure rather than having to go through the
legislature who perhaps is not familiar with the
process.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Suz Remus,
Derek Ryan, Mark Schmidt.

MS. REMUS: Hi there. I'm Suz Remus and
I'm a recent graduate of psychology and I will
be actually walking here at UCF in June.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Congratulations.

MS. REMOS: So I'm really excited about
what I have to bring to you. Right now we have
two bills in the Senate and the House and it has
to do with psychological child abuse.

And it states that -- let me look down
here. Our bill states that it's relating to the
child abuse laws in 39.01 and 39.201. The two
main parts it discusses what is harm for a
child.
We're amending those child abuse laws to include child psychological abuse. It states that paragraph M, the subsequent 30 of 39.01 and it reads, 39.01 definition; when used in this chapter unless context otherwise requires, harm to a child's health or welfare can occur when any person inflicts mental injury as defined in Subsection 42 on the child through the use of manipulation or psychological abuse including, but not limited to parental alienation, which we are amending to say pathogenic parenting, which creates a significant developmental pathology.

This is the first criteria for a child to have this -- to be diagnosed for child psychological abuse. So parental alienation which creates a significant developmental psychology, personality disorder pathology or delusional psychiatric pathology as diagnosed by a mental health professional licensed under Chapter 490 or Chapter 491.

What it moves on to is it says for purpose of mandatory reporting requirements this section on child abuse includes harm or mental injury as these terms are defined.

The Board of Psychology within the
Department of Health shall revise the requirements for renewal of a license to practice psychology pursuant to 490.007, Florida Statutes to require continuing education regarding child psychological abuse, including but not limited to abuse by manipulation and parental alienation.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: You going to have to wrap up.

MS. REMOS: I will wrap up.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: With more complicated matters like that, if you write the narrative and turn it in to us, we have teams of people that will be working with us and attorneys that can get through this and then respond in accordance with your comments.

MS. REMOS: Great. I did have my act together, but I would say that this underpins all of society. There's going to be a lot of people changing because this is family and we're going to find out that every citizen has to be made accountable for this law.

MR. BERUFF: Thank you very much. Derek Ryan, Mark Schmidter, Doug Hedd, H-e-d-d. James Guldi. Who's speaking?
MR. RYAN: My name is Derek Ryan. I am a recovering Republican and very proud Libertarian. I am actually the chairman of the Libertarian party of Orange County and I appreciate you guys coming here very much.

I'm a big fan of small government, a former ideal with the Republican party. So I'm certainly a fan in that regard.

I'm here to tell you that as the chairman of the Libertarian party of Orange County I believe in small government. I believe in the abolition of crony capitalism which is the unholy marriage of government and incorporations.

I believe in an absolute free market with minimal regulation that empowers the small business owners and job creators of the state and promotes free competition to drive the costs of goods and services down.

I believe we should deschedule cannibis immediately and promote the production of industrial hemp. Florida should absolutely lead the United States in the goods that can be created from a plant called hemp. You can't even smoke it. You cannot get high. Please do
some research, guys.

I grew up in Apopka, Florida where we used to have orange groves spreading all across Western Orange County. You used to be able to own small businesses in Apopka. You could have a few acres and have a nursery and have a small business and profit and provide for your family.

That's gone away for many reasons, cold, freezes, et cetera, et cetera. Hemp can do that again. When hemp comes to Florida let's not make it so that five or six ag companies in the state -- my dad just retired from one of those five that will be medicinal cannabis growers. I have a little insight on it.

Let's make it free. Let's make people where if you have a small piece of land you can grow hemp and you can sell it to brokers and introduce goods into the market and you can have a small business and grow your family and be successful.

I'm kind of a passionate kind of guy. I believe governments should stop trying to solve things that the free market can solve much better such as education, healthcare, insurance, wages; basically everything will be better if
government will get out of the way and let the
free market do it.

On behalf of the Libertarians in Orange
County, Florida I ask that you do not promote
any constitutional amendment unless they reduce
the size of government and empower the
individual rights to life, liberty and the
pursuit of happiness, promote a healthy and free
market and get out of the way of small business
owners and promote free competition.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Next speaker
please.

MR. SCHMIDTER: My name is Mark Schmidter.
I've been here forty years. I'm one of the
people of Florida. I'm a resident of Orange
County. I've raised two sons and buried three
dogs.

Basically what I'm here for is a notice of
fraud for the lack of authority from we the
people. The only way a valid constitution can
be written or revised is by the people or the
delegates selected by the people for that
purpose. You are not any of those delegates
selected.

I put this piece of paper on there so
you've got a copy of it. Article I, Section 1 of the Constitution of the State of Florida, all political powers inherent in the people, not in the revise commission, even though I did read your flyer here that it was supposedly licensed twenty years ago, but it's unconstitutional.

Article I, Section 5. The people have the right to peaceably assemble and instruct the representatives and to petition redress of grievances. We the people hereby declare the Florida Constitution Revision Commission is unlawful, lacks any authority from we the people and you're impersonating public servants. Even though I like all you guys, basically you're illegal.

Article I, Section 1 makes it clear that all political powers inherent in the people and only the people can choose the delegates. The people did not choose you people. I gotta let you know that.

Okay. And delegates to make or revise the constitution, then and only then can the revision process take place. The fact that each of you on the revision commission are acting outside the delegated authority of we the people.
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makes you impersonating a civil servant and you're also acting in the color of law which is a felony.

Neither the current governor nor the Florida Legislation has the delegated authority from the people, us, to appoint you to an unlawful revision code. Thank you very much. Mark Schmidter, Administrative Investigator for the Florida People's Statewide Grand Jury.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Next speaker. Thank you.

MR. HEDD: My name is Doug Hedd. I sort of disagree with the last testimony. I think Mr. Pennisi's remarks earlier about the process, you have to pay a lot of attention to it to require legitimacy.

I have been much involved over the years in Orange County's charter review process and I think that it has given me some sense of some solutions for some of the problems you might face.

One is I think you ought to get a bunch of academics together to assist you in just writing up an entirely academic twenty-five-page or thirty-page history of this process and how the constitution has been revised, how such
commissions as yours have been created.

I think that such history would inform the public. They would have a better understanding of the scope of your services and the scope of what you can provide us.

I'd also suggest that as ideas come forward that your deliberating process has got to be open and transparent, not just the hearing process, but as you are deliberating over the ideas that are coming to you today, each of them should either be sponsored or should find a sponsor amongst your members and then should be delegated to some kind of committee structure where you can flush it out and really review it in a fair and adequate process.

I think that open process for deliberations is really the thing the citizens are looking for. They're not looking for demonstrations in their capacity to stand at microphones. They're looking for demonstrations of the idea that you're really listening to them, really considering their ideas and really flushing them out. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you.

MR. GULDI: I am James Guldi, a Florida
native and I also -- I'm a non-attorney member of one of the 18th Circuit grievance committees in Brevard County. That's related to the topic that I'm addressing here, judicial term limits.

We've heard a lot about this recently in the media and in the legislature and I want to just stand here and say that I'm opposed to the imposition of term limits on judges, especially at the Supreme Court and at the Court of Appeals level.

We already have a democratic process that provides for retention or non-retention and there's rarely any action on the non-retention front.

Those serving in a judicial capacity make a significant commitment and the attorneys on the commission I'm sure are familiar. If a judge is going to serve, he or she is going to commit a significant portion of his or her career and to step aside from the practice of law for many years and then to have the prospect of going back and starting over again is something that I think is too much to ask of someone who's already going to be sacrificing considerable time and effort. That's the limit of what I
want to say. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you very much.

Diane Jones, Debbie Soto and Shariee Hollingsworth.

MS. JONES: Hello, everybody. My name is Diane Jones. I'm from Sanford, Florida. I work for Organize Florida via the Racial Justice Committee. I'm not very knowledgeable about the constitution, but these are the issues that are dear to me and I wish you would write an initiative and place it on the ballot so Florida can vote on it.

They are Ban the Box. One, Two, Three Strikes You're Out law. A lot of people are in prison for non-violent crimes. They've been there a long time and I wish that Florida could vote them out.

Second chances, third, fourth, fifth, sixth chances for returning citizens. I don't think anybody has the right to constantly pry in your past for a whole lifetime. There should be a time limit on that.

School or prison pipelines. I don't know what we can do about it, but I wish there was something on the ballot so that we could vote on
it, so that we could do something about it that way.

Privatization of prisons is just another form of slavery. That's all I have to say. That's all I know, but I wish I could vote on these issues instead of somebody deciding that they should be and I have no power to change it.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Debbie Soto and Shariee Hollingsworth.

MS. SOTO: Good evening. My name is Debbie Soto. I'm the president of the Board of Directors of Organize Florida. I'm a proud product of Miami Dade and Broward County Schools.

So I would like to ask you to stop taking the funds away from education. This is the future of not only our state, but our country and we should be investing more into education so that we are better prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities of a global economy.

Do not invest in religious groups funding because there is the separation of church and state. Those much needed citizen funds should benefit all citizens, not a select few. Invest
those dollars where they're needed most and that is in education.

As a first generation child of immigrant families, I'm very proud of that, Florida heavily relies upon its tourism and agricultural industry which are heavily employed with immigrant workers.

As such we should be on the forefront and take a stand and make sure that we take measures to change the constitution to finally and once and for all address immigration reform in a just and humane manner, understanding that these are people and not numbers.

What Mr. Trump is proposing is cruel and inhumane and we in Florida should not take his side on that. This country was founded and built by immigrants, so let's not belittle those lives and let's not forget that the Declaration of Independence is pro immigrant. Who are we to change the words our forefathers worked so diligently to draft and enforce?

Lastly I'd like to say please do not take away a woman's rights. Our bodies are our choices. The government does not control our bodies and if you are going to try to control

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our bodies, have some women say, because what I see here is a bunch of men trying to tell us women how to handle our bodies. Thank you.

MR. BERUFF: Shariee Hollingsworth.

Please come forward. Thank you.

MS. MARTIN: Good evening, Mr. Chairman.

Melissa Martin. I'm from Cocoa. I was born and raised in Orlando. I retired from the Marine Corps as a staff judge advocate a couple of years ago. I moved my family to Cocoa for many reasons, but I'll just cut to the chase.

My heart is with the multiple oaths of office I took. So for the U.S. Constitution, the Florida Constitution, the people, the passion; I can talk about it and write it up later.

So three ideas for your consideration. First, ranked choice voting. If you could just write that down for me so I don't have to waste time talking about it. I believe it is something that we can definitely look into and see if it's in the best interest of the people. Some people believe so.

Second thing. A hundred dollar credit for
taxpayers to provide their candidates of choice during elections. That is also something I will follow up on and provide the necessary section amendments, et cetera, for your consideration.

That in a sense is helping to provide more power and voice of the people by way of money equals speech to the candidates of their choice so candidates and public officials, once they take office, they will be beholden again to the people and not just their few campaign donors that really, truly pay their way to office.

So the third one is the most important of course and it's about accountability. I believe that the people have a right to expect loyalty from their public officials and I think that right is inherent in the oath of office. I believe by general law I think that the commission should consider writing something into our Declaration of Rights perhaps, Amendment 28 of the constitution, Article I. I will talk more about that later. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you.

MR. DUTTON: My name is Anthony Dutton and I reside in Melbourne in Brevard County.

Unfortunately none of the members of the
commission are from that part of the state.

I am also a former director of the Florida League of Women Voters and I'm currently a director and first vice president of the Space Coast League of Women Voters.

So I would like to just address a few procedural matters rather than substantive matters today. I'd like to ask that you hold public hearings around the state so we can comment after the commission has decided which issues it wants to give serious attention to. These people, as you can see, care about those issues.

Would you very soon publish information about how we ordinary Floridians can tell the commission what issues we want to bring forward and to bring forward on our own and exactly how we would do it procedurally.

And finally I strongly encourage you to require commission members to attend the hearings unless they have some emergency that requires them not to be here. I know it's a burden, but you all asked to be part of that burden.

Secondly, please try not to permit
attendance by telephone. You really can't pay
attention on the phone for three or four hours
and you don't know who else is on the phone.

And lastly, please give ample notice. I
know this meeting was called in a hurry to get
it started, but please give ample notice of
meetings to both members and the public so that
the most number of people can participate.
That's my comments for now. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Scott Cromar
and Stephanie -- I can't pronounce -- that's
you? Okay.

MR. CROMAR: My name is Scott Cromar. I
want to tell you all about an experience I had
little while ago. I was collecting signatures
to restore voting rights to people who had
served their time, felons who had served their
time.

I think this is a really important issue.
As I was talking to people, I talked to people
who were Republicans, who were Democrats, people
of all colors, people of all backgrounds, of all
ages and these people signed my petition, not my
petition, the petition to restore people's
rights.
The question I ask is have you ever done something stupid in your life? I know I can't ask you guys to raise hands. Maybe you smoked pot. Maybe you served on an illegal commission. I don't know.

One single stupid decision should not define your entire life. The current system shows no mercy. It shows no humanity. It is un-American. The American way is that we allow people to vote. We allow people to have a say in their society.

If we want people who have served their time to reintegrate into society and become full-fledged members of society again, we have to give them a voice and a way to have a say in it. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you very much.

Stephanie.

MS. LIVIGNI: My name is Stephanie Livigni. Thank you for the attempt. I'm a graduate student here at UCF in interdisciplinary studies with a focus in mental health and justice and advocacy which is what I've come to talk to you about today.

Florida is at the bottom of the list when
it comes to the mental health services funding per citizen. Mental illness and addiction is something that affects everyone, whether it is a personal struggle or that of a family member or a loved one.

I see no mention of mental health care in the current constitution, so I'd urge you all to include it in the language regarding healthcare to be specific about including mental healthcare as well in order to practice and stigma.

In addition to that I would also urge the committee to revise the definition of marriage in Article I, Section 27 to recognize same sex marriage as the Supreme Court has done and to ensure that sexual orientation and gender identity are protected classes in Article I, Section 2.

The LGBT community in Orlando would really appreciate that. Thank you all for your time and your attention.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you very much.

Sara Grimes. Diamond -- and I can't pronounce it. Devalle. Irwin -- yes, ma'am. Please go ahead.

MS. GRIMES: Hi. I'm Sara Grimes. I would
like to ask you to please revisit our
constitution and the laws that deal with auto
insurance. I feel that there's is a great need
to revisit this and revise the current laws that
we do have on the books.

First of all we have personal injury
protection and, as you all know, that has a
$10,000 limit for medical care. This was set
almost thirty years ago and our costs have risen
dramatically in that time, so that $10,000
covers virtually nothing if you have an auto
accident. Just one trip to the hospital and
that coverage is gone.

We're stuck here with our UIM policy that
is marketed to the citizens to take over and
cover our medical needs if you're in an auto
accident with an uninsured driver or an
underinsured driver.

And I've found that this is extremely
lacking and it's processing by the insurance
company that claims process is virtually
non-existent because the insurance companies
really don't want to pay out on those policies.

I have information that in Texas the
insurance companies get a billion dollars a year

Karen S. Rhine, FPR
from people paying in for the uninsured motorist coverage.

I don't know what it is in here in Florida, but I'm going to guess it's a similar amount. So that is a lot of money that is not going out in claims.

The claim process is just very convoluted and once you've had an accident, you go to the hospital, then you need further care.

I have tried for me myself. My auto has a big X on the back that says hit me. So when I had tried to get further care, I've called like the Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic, various doctors and everything. They will not see you if they know that it's auto related.

This is a travesty because we'll all be involved in an auto accident sometime and medical care is very important for our recovery, for our society for being productive members.

Once you're denied the medical care you're really kind of locked out of our society. I'm sorry.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: I think your issue is worthwhile, but you need to write this to us and just send us an e-mail through our website which
gives you more freedom and more time to address it.

MS. GRIMES: Okay.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you.

MS. GRIMES: Okay. Also, can I just bring up two other issues? The Medicaid expansion --

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: There are other people that want to be heard.

MS. GRIMES: -- the Medicaid expansion in the state and the ADA disability laws need to be revised.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Diamond.

MS. DELVALLE: Hi. My name is Diamond Delvalle. I just want to thank everybody for coming today and everyone as well. I first want to talk about something because I brought it up to my senators and I really haven't had a response for several months.

In the 2016 election Hispanics in Florida were unregistered to vote because of their origin, their Latino or Hispanic name origins. I wanted to talk to you guys about that issue, bring awareness to it and what are we going to do for the next coming elections with the unregistering of Hispanic voter citizens as well
in America.

Also, I'd like to talk about public schools because I do teach in public schools. I don't want to defund them. I want to continue funding them. We need to really focus on learning disabilities, students who have learning disabilities and behavioral issues. They don't really have any funding or any educational guidance to help them develop as citizens.

Also, police reform as well. I notice that we're hiring new police officers. I would like for police reform to include education covering intense deescalation tactics, as well as diversity of religions and culture.

I believe that police officers should very well learn human anatomy, as well as mental health and disabilities as well. There should be influence of that.

Also, for small businesses I notice Florida is really big for corporations and really big on people with a lot of money. I am a small business owner. If you guys can focus on small businesses and how we can also grow as well and make a difference. I think that's it.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: You did great. Very
good. Thank you.

MS. DELVALLE: Oh, and also no oil pipelines in Florida. Thank you. One second. I'm organizing a community unity event in Sanford, free food, free bounce houses to everybody. On Facebook Community Unity Sanford.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Irwin.

MR. EISENSTEIN: Irwin Eisenstein.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you, Irwin.

MR. EISENSTEIN: The first issue I want to raise is one of legal aid because Florida is one of four states in the country that doesn't have public funding for legal aid.

Sixty to eighty percent of all Floridians can't afford lawyers. About twenty years ago in a case called Serena Dunn versus Florida Bar they came to an agreement related to having other than lawyers assist because right now the UPL practice is enforced by the Bar, the same people who can't afford to do the legal process.

Instead of following that approach, I think I've seen Kentucky that has online divorces that can be done by the individuals rather than a lawyer. There are a lot of other forms that could be put online.
By the way, I have a Masters in data processing and a J.D. from Barry and I've passed two Bars, but I've been disqualified probably for suing judges which relates to qualified immunity.

Some people said why don't we make judges accountable. You can't. It's qualified immunity. The only way that can change is if there's a legislative initiative.

The idea of Rules of Professional Conduct, again, another issue. Very rarely enforced by the Bar, only one or two things. I can point out five or ten of them that they're not following. They're supposed to self-report. It very rarely happens.

Bail reform. Right now if someone is in jail on a non-violent crime, they can be held in jail for forty, fifty, sixty days sometimes. We pay for it as citizens. You have to speed up that process and if they're no flight risk, it's a violation of the eighth amendment.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Matt Anderson, Desmond Meade, Christopher Radcliffe, Dave Finnigan. I'm sorry. Marge Anderson.

MS. ANDERSON: Marti. I have something I
want to say. I'm just going to go ahead. Hi. I'm Marti Anderson and I volunteer for Southeastern Guide Dogs for the Blind, Pet Alliance, Pets by Judy, Golden Retriever Rescue, Lab Rescue and I'm here to speak on behalf of the animals who cannot speak for themselves.

According to the Orlando Sentinel, there were more than forty-eight thousand dogs and cats that were euthanized in the past two years in Central Florida alone.

Across the state last year more than two hundred thousand shelter animals were euthanized or died before they had a chance to be adopted.

Pet stores sell puppies. I'm going to skip that part. At these mills puppies are separated from their mothers at a young age and exposed to unsanitary conditions, shipped off to be sold at six to eight weeks which is bad for their development.

It causes behavior problems and it's kind of a vicious cycle. They end up back in the shelters and many of them are euthanized.

One of the hidden costs to those who purchase the puppies are that they also purchase genetic and hereditary problems that these dogs
get. It's heart conditions, cancer, eye problems, all kinds of things, so your vet bills go up.

When puppy mill operators are investigated or raided because of puppy cruelty, it can cost up to hundreds of thousands of dollars and also to rehabilitate rescue groups that come in and try to rehabilitate these animals it can cost millions of dollars.

The United States -- it is estimated by the Humane Society of the United States that millions of dollars are spent each year on solving the problem.

MR. BERUFF: Marti, if you could wrap up.

MS. ANDERSON: Anyway so I'm sorry. The thing is that you guys have a chance to do something about it by putting something on the ballot that says let's diminish the number of puppy mills.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you.

MR. MEADE: Good evening. My name is Desmond Meade and I'm here to do two things. Number one, to dispel a couple of misconceptions as it relates to felon disenfranchisement and number two, is to make you, the commission, an
offer that you can't refuse.

Number one, disenfranchise is over 1.68 million people, right, Floridians. Now, when you look at that number and we understand that this issue, this impacts African Americans.

The reality is that African Americans only account for a third of the citizens that are being disenfranchised in the State of Florida.

So that means that there are over a million people in this state that cannot vote because of a prior felony conviction that don't look like me. Guess who they look like, Mr. Chair. They look more like you. And so that's number one.

Number two is the State of Florida convicts over 170,000 Floridians each year for felony offenses and of those over 170,000 less than twenty-five percent of them even are sentenced to prison.

So that means we have over seventy-five percent of people who cannot vote that didn't spend a day in prison. They're out here in our communities. They're in our families. They're in our congregations and even in some cases in our pulpits.

This is an issue that can do three things.
Number one, it can increase public safety. The parole commission study showed that it reduces recidivism. Number two, it can increase contributions to the tax base and save Florida taxpayers over a billion dollars annually. And number three, it is the right thing to do.

I leave with this because I think it's the most important of all. That when Jesus was on the cross and the criminal asked him to be saved, Jesus didn't tell him he had to wait five or seven years. He said this day he shall enter into paradise. So restoring a person's rights after they've served their time is the moral thing to do.

And the offer that you cannot refuse is that the citizens of Florida have already done the work for you. All you need to do is adopt their initiative that's already been to the Florida Supreme Court and will be getting clearance any day now where we have collected petitions in every single congressional district in the State of Florida and we did so without one penny.

They all volunteered and so we ask this commission to consider just adopting what the
citizens of Florida have already said that they want. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you.

MR. FINNIGAN: I'm Dave Finnigan. A lot of people have spoken about environmental things. I want to give you a bullet point list of things that need to get done.

First, Article 2, Section 7 of the constitution says that it's the policy of the state to preserve and protect natural resources and scenic beauty. It's already in there. All I want you to do is add a little bit.

So I'm going to run through a bullet point list. First, let's put a price on carbon with dividends for each citizen. Second, institute goals for renewable energy aiming at fifty percent by 2040 and ninety percent by 2100.

Third, remove restrictions on citizens and community organizations producing their own energy. Fourth, halt development of open lands. We should be building up, not out.

Fifth, create energy efficiency building codes. We don't have them here. We should. Sixth, create an alternative transportation network that does not use fossil fuels. Look up
Transit X. It will work.

Seventh, remove state preemption for organizations at the local level, counties and cities for removing poisons like pesticides and herbicides from the environment. The state has preempted that right.

Eighth, put sea level rise into the school curriculum at every level. Ninth, and last and most important, is create a commission on sea level rise for Florida.

We are in an incredible threat right now. We are the most threatened state and we've done very little. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Melissa Martin and then we have Jennifer Clark. By the way, we're past our 8:00, but we're going to keep going. Okay, folks, just keep coming up. Jennifer Clark, Brendan Derrig, Scott Cox. Yes, ma'am. You are?

MR. CLARK: My name is Jennifer Clark. I'm a resident of Melbourne in Brevard County. I'm here as a citizen to address issues of voting access and enfranchisement.

Primarily amongst of these that I haven't heard so far mentioned is gerrymandering. I
know that Florida has recently addressed the
issue of its heavily and embarrassingly
gerrymander districts, but I do not feel that it
has gone far enough.

I ask that we enshrine in the constitution
the guarantee of free and fair elections by the
permanent prohibition of selective district
creation by political party and establish an
independent commission or council to create the
districts moving forward, especially as we see
continued population growth with nine of the top
twenty-five growth areas in the nation being
located here in Florida.

This and additional measures are vital to
maintaining the promise that our government
remains, as was said in the past, of the people,
by the people and for the people and, by the
way, corporations are not people.

In addition to that initiative, which I
feel is very important, the other issues that
would go towards voter enfranchisement, as has
been mentioned a few other times here today,
automatic voter registration, the end of closed
primaries, which someone just recently pointed
out, would be solved by the right to choice
voting system which was recently adopted by the State of Maine. I encourage everyone to look that up.

We need to expand options for valid voter ID as a driver's license or the typical kind of concept of voter ID is not always easily obtainable by all citizens and, therefore, represents a form of voter suppression.

We need the reinstatement of voting rights as many people have spoken about. Campaign finance reform, anti-corruption measurements and again, the Home Rule not overriding the local districts. And I thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you.

MR. DERRIG: Thank you. My name is Brendan Derrig. So the Chairman has said several times tonight that the purpose of this commission is to provide a voice for those who don't normally participate.

So I'd like to speak on behalf of the largest group that doesn't participate. As it has been said many times tonight, about ten percent of Floridians cannot vote because they are former felons, despite the fact that less than twenty-five percent of those convicted of a
felony don't spend a single day in jail.

Now, the effect of these policies is that over the last eight years about two thousand of the over a million former felons in Florida have received clemency and have been enfranchised to vote and since 2010 the just applications for restoration have dropped ninety-five percent.

Now, this is effectively a policy which casts out one-tenth of Floridians out of our society. It's not coincidence that it disproportionately affects the poor and people of color.

We are in one of the largest democracies on earth. So I implore you, there is nothing more undemocratic or more un-American than the disenfranchisement of our citizens. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Scott Cox.

Raquel Lozano.

MR. COX: My name is Scott Cox and I thank you all for being here, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners. The issue I'd like the commission to reconsider is the age laws in the constitution. It's Article III, Section 15 of the constitution. That's legislature in terms of qualifications of legislators.
And basically the first sentence from that is each legislator shall be at least twenty-one years of age and I'd like to see that lowered to eighteen years of age.

I believe when that was written into the Florida Constitution that was before 1971 which is when the voting age was lowered to eighteen and I believe that should be changed.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Got it. Thank you.

MS. LOZANO: Hello, everyone. My name is Raquel Lozano and I am here to discuss about the voting process. I am for an inclusive voting process for no person should be excluded from the process which includes felons, the elderly, minorities and anyone that is not affiliated with the Democratic or Republican party.

Florida has seven parties to choose from and the number of no-party affiliation is growing drastically. So I hope that you all consider that and go for an open primary instead of a closed one so that way we can include more people.

I'm also here to represent my mom who is technically my grandmother who adopted me at a young age. She is seventy-two years old and has
been here for thirty years. Specifically we're from Orange County, but we live in Belle Isle. And while my mom is a proud American, she is originally from Mexico.

She constantly faces challenges in regards to the voting process. First, there are few Spanish news stations and they offer limited information about state and local government and there are about four million people that are Hispanic and about half are eligible to vote, but they only make up eighteen percent of the eligible voters in Florida. So to me that's kind of whack.

Anyways, and while the mail-in ballots allow me to assist her in voting, what about other elderly people that do not have someone that they can rely on to either explain the voting process or to explain what's on the ballot?

And while I appreciate that you included the Spanish translation, keep in mind that the elderly don't exactly have the best eyesight, so maybe something can be done about that to appeal to the elderly group.

And whether or not they have obtained basic
information, information regarding the voting process and government should be easily attainable to all. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you so much. Milka Lucas-Dominguez.

MS. LUCAS-DOMINGUEZ: My name is Milka Lucas-Dominguez. I'm twenty-six years old and I'm studying to be a social worker. It is an honor to be here.

I actually learned of this opportunity yesterday and even though it's a process done every twenty years, it would be appreciated if more coverage is done for the public because of its importance.

I would like to state the constitution needs an update, especially on enforcing healthcare coverage for all Floridians and hopefully pave the way for other states to follow suit, including the women's rights that make decisions on abortion.

My mother was a rape victim who was impregnated and then had miscarriage due to complications with cancer. She survived, but this is not the case for many others.

An idea for better healthcare would be
implementing a pay-in system like we do for Social Security and unemployment. I beg that this story helps consider my main concern.

Also, I'd like to add that we continue funding public schools and non-profit organizations such as Planned Parenthood.

Please revise reinstating voting rights to those who have committed felonies and served their time, especially if they have to pay state taxes.

Unfortunately, not everyone is privileged and the State Constitution must reflect the needs of all Floridians. Thanks to this past election I have made it a point to not only show up, but to also speak up and pay attention to what's going on at home right here in the State of Florida.

I'm proud to be here and thank you again for listening to me and for allowing me to exercise my right to democracy.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Lydia Pisano, Anthony Rogers-Wright, Jim Howe.

MS. PISANO: Good evening. My name is Lydia Pisano. I'm the mayor of the City of Belle Isle and I want to congratulate all of you
on your appointment and thank you for your
service.

One of the biggest things is defending Home
Rule. There are a lot of issues, as Mayor Bruhn
mentioned way earlier, that if it went before
the legislature right now that are truly going
to impact our communities and our residents, one
of them being the Vacation Home Bill.

Imagine us having to explain to our
residents why their neighbors next door are
moving in and out every other day. So things
like that we really need to preserve Home Rule.

It's huge and when we have to explain
unfunded mandates that we did not budget for in
the previous year and now all of a sudden we
have to cut out something else to compensate for
where we're lacking.

The other thing, municipal elections, I
think that should be under the jurisdiction of
the municipalities. Something that we have an
issue with now that just started in the past
year, sovereign waters.

As you know, the states control the
waterways. We have a lot of lakes in Belle
Isle. It's a municipality in South Orlando and
we have control of Lake Conway. The state waterways, even though we have our own police department, we can't enforce anything in the waters unless they're driving recklessly.

There's going to be a huge accident with water skiers which we have right now going on and our police department are not allowed to pull them over for speeding in the lakes unless they're reckless. So something needs to be done with that where we can control some of the waterways.

Something else in our Lake Conway area is duck hunting. Let me make it clear. I'm not trying to take away anybody's hunting rights or gun rights, but the issue is imagine waking up in your backyard on your lakefront property to the sounds of gunfire. It's happened in multiple locations and also it's unsafe.

We're a highly-populated area. So if you can please look at the sovereign waters and when you write the amendments if you can please make them clear so people can understand them.

The biggest issue we get is people don't vote on the amendments because they do not understand what the intent is. One of your

Karen S. Rhine, FPR
fellow commissioners who is not here today, Mr. Frank Kruppenbacher, he is our city attorney and he has been our interim city manager in the past. So he's well aware of a lot of these issues. He'd be a great resource or please reach out to your elected officials. Thank you.


MR. HOWE: Thank you. I'm Jim Howe. I'm here on behalf of Local 3108 of the Communications Workers of America and on behalf of my local I would like to encourage this commission to view the changes proposed to the State Constitution from the point of view of we the people, that is the people of Florida, with special attention and emphasis given to working people, the overwhelming majority of the people in the state, minorities, blacks, Latinos, gays, other minorities, Asians, students and the retired. We the people should take precedence and this constitution should represent our interests and our views.

In particular, on behalf of my local, I would like to encourage this commission to enact legislation that will do away with the so-called
right to work, which encourages lower wages and poor working conditions and undermines the democratic rights of workers on the job when they have voted for a union and been denied the participation of all the membership that reap the benefits from that local from the contract and from, you know, the better working conditions.

If you don't have democracy in the workplace and all the members that are gaining the benefits are not in the union, then the rights of the majority are undermined.

Furthermore, we would like to encourage a $15.00 an hour minimum wage with automatic annual increases for the cost of living.

In addition, speaking for myself from this point forward, I would also urge the commission to enact constitutional guarantees for clean water, clean air. Many of the issues that were brought up by other speakers, women's rights, the rights to abortion, healthcare, democracy --

MR. BERUFF: You need to wrap up.

MR. HOWE: -- all of this if you look at this from the standpoint of the majority and enact their wishes and not the interests of
special interests, that should be seen as your task. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you, Mr. Howe. Anthony Rogers-Wright, Trevor Tezel, Gary Stein, Charles Behrens I think. Yes, sir.

MR. TEZEL: I'm Trevor Tezel. I'm originally from Cocoa Beach, Florida and now I'm a second year law student at the University of Florida.

I'm just here today to add my voice to the growing chorus it seems like supporting automatic restoration of rights for ex-felons. It's a very common sense thing and like some other speakers I want to focus on some of the arguments against it.

So when the U.S. first achieved independence six percent of people could vote and slowly every categorical exclusion was eliminated; race, gender, wealth, illiteracy. Felony status is the only one that's still there.

That was the justification for it. It was the idea of it not distorting the voter pool, which is the same justification of how we've disenfranchised other classes of people in our
history. So it's the same logic that still
applies here today.

   Someone mentioned recidivism rights
earlier. One study showed twenty-seven percent
for those who didn't have their rights restored
and twelve percent for those who did. Another
person mentioned that less than a quarter
actually spend time in prison.

   It's not only that. This is one of the
most unique aspects of the criminal justice
system as I've been noticing through law school.
It's the only punishment that isn't meted out in
the courtroom by the judge along with other
punishments and other losses of liberty which I
think is a very kind of perplexing issue and
gets to the whole point of this in the first
place.

   Somebody was bringing up the clemency
process which is a joke in this state at this
point. It's at the whim of whoever the governor
is. We saw it the last year of Charlie Crist.
We had 50,000.

   It dropped by eighty percent in the first
year of Rick Scott and then another ninety
percent to bring us to four hundred in his
second year in office. That is in no way creating consistency in our laws and giving anybody an idea to be put on notice on when they will be able to get their rights restored.

Polls have shown over eighty percent of people support ex-felons getting their right back to vote and the U.S. has been cited even by the U.N. Committee on Human Rights for its felony disenfranchisement laws.

We don't need to follow international law, but why not follow it if it's a stupid law that we're violating? Thank you.


MR. STEIN: My name is Gary Stein and I'm a proud resident of Pasco County and I'm also a proud father of my daughters who are products of Florida public schools and also one who is a graduate of UCF in marketing.

My degree is a Masters in public health from Johns Hopkins. I spent two decades in the Center for Disease Control and also worked as a program manager as head of the Tobacco Control Program for the Department of Health here in Florida.
Now currently I have written a book which is soon to be released called the Great Green Hope which is about medical cannibis.

As you know, the electorate just approved by seventy-one percent the bill to include greater access to medical cannibis for those with debilitating conditions which includes my wife and my daughters.

I came here from Tallahassee. I did drive here all the way from Tallahassee today. There's a lot of confusion as to create legislation due to the rules of this very important amendment.

I think the biggest problem they have is basically a problem in its paradigm. The paradigm is basically a problem of the lexicon itself.

See, there's these two words. There's marijuana and there's cannibis. If you do a search of those two words and look at all the bills that have been filed, you'll see two separate lists with only a little bit of overlap and yet the bills are actually -- no matter what topic they are, they don't seem to coalesce with exactly which one they're talking about.

Karen S. Rhine, FPR
There's a lot of confusion as to what exactly we're even talking about.

There's a very simple solution. We need to get rid of one of those words and that word needs to be marijuana and I'll explain why.

The word marijuana itself is not a proper term. It's a slang term that arose in Mexico in the late 1800s in part because they could not pronounce the Chinese word who introduced them to the plant which they called Ma Huang Hua which sounded like marijuana so they used that word when they were smoking it as an inebriant.

In U.S. law the 1906 Pure Food and Drug Act listed cannibis as a medicine. That was its first actual appearance in U.S. law. In 1937 when they created the law called the Marijuana Tax Act --

MR. BERUFF: You need to wrap up. There's people waiting behind you. Please.

MR. STEIN: This has already been submitted to you. I'm just going to paraphrase it very quickly.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: No, I'm sorry. We really have to move on here. It's two and a half minutes and there's people behind you. I
apologize.

We'll take the document. You're welcome to come back in October when we come back to Orlando and depending on the size of the crowd either we'll allow six more hours for testimony, but we will let you continue your discussion, but not this evening. Thank you.

MR. STEIN: I just want to make one quick point and then I'll walk away. That is that the whole concept of using the word marijuana instead of cannibis for that law was for a racially-biased program which was against African Americans, against --

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Cannibis. Please let's let this next gentleman speak. Thank you.

MR. BEHRENS: My name is Charles Behrens. I'm from Orlando. I'll try to be brief because many people have already spoken about climate change. I'd like to keep this to three points.

Put a tax on carbon, give subsidies for renewables, especially solar and offshore wind power, and given that animal agriculture is the biggest source of greenhouse gasses I'd like to see placement of heavy taxes on the Florida livestock industry.

MS. ROGERS: Hi. Thank you for being here. Thank you for this opportunity, this is somewhat terrifying opportunity. My name is Jody Rogers. I'm an Orlando resident, a small business owner, more like a micro business owner.

I wanted to urge you to when you're considering things, specifically so many people have spoken about the environment, I'd like to see some really even extreme regulations with environment.

Florida is fragile. Florida is special and we need extra protections. In addition to the obvious benefits of clean air and clean water and clean soil, our tourism depends on it. If we wreck or environment we wreck our economy. So beyond the obvious I would hope that we get some extreme measures with that.

We've heard from a couple of people talking about separation of church and state and some
Christians specifically saying that they were behind stronger protections for separation of church and state. I'm not a Christian, but I want those protections too.

And last, all Florida citizens deserve equal rights. This means women's rights over their body and this means our LGBT community. I hope that we'll have enshrined recognition for equal rights on all of those topics. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Matt Barringer, Fannie Benites and Joshua Valentin. And we're getting down to the end.

MR. BARRINGER: Greetings to the council. My name is Matt Barringer. I'm a resident of Titusville. I also have the privilege as serving as the vice mayor there. I'm here on behalf of our city, as well as a few statements for myself.

First, I'm a disabled veteran, graduate of UCF, public school teacher. I have multiple businesses. I do that so I can teach.

My time, like yours, is valuable so thank you for your time. I hope just to take a minute of yours.

I've come to talk to you about Home Rule

Karen S. Rhine, FPR
and here's why. When the constitution was adopted for the State of Florida the population was about 40,000 people. The population of Titusville right now is about 45,000 people.

So we're trying to do with a very limited knowledge scope of power what the entire state tried to do. Most recently we've seen and experienced what has happened to Home Rule and this is the problem.

It's that if you're trying to look at a revision that we could possibly make specific to our constitution, I think it's fairly simple. It goes something like this.

In short, the state has granted powers. I'm very comfortable with that and we're chartered by the state, but the use of those preemptive powers is beyond I think the scope and intent of the most recent adoption which is the 1973 that expanded Home Rule power.

In the 1960s it was a small window that municipalities had to operate within. Beyond that a revision was made to expand those so that municipalities could do what they needed to do in order to run the government within the local community.
All I'm asking for you to do is look at the scope and the parameters of that and specifically that the state not be able to impede on those powers. I'll leave that -- it's probably about one or two words that need changed. I'll leave that for you all to figure out. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you. Fannie Benites, Joshua Valentin, Rebecca Bando.

MR. VALENTIN: Hello. I'm Joshua Valentin. I'm working with a local organization. I don't want to name them because I don't represent them. They're non-partisan.

We're putting a petition forward to say that no person may appear on the ballot for reelection to the office of mayor, commissioner or district commissioner of the City of Orlando, Florida if by the end of the current term of office the person who will have served in that office for eight consecutive years.

If anybody wants to learn more about that, you can just go right over there. Maybe that's something you guys could look at going forward on the state level.

Also, I've noticed -- I kind of came here
with a list of things I wanted to bring forward
to you guys, but listening to what everybody
else is saying I realize that there are too many
differences of opinions.

For example, some people are talking about
climate change. These scientists on climate
change isn't finalized yet. There are many
scientists that are saying one thing and many
that are saying another.

I don't think that you guys should tax an
individual for breathing carbon. That would be
like taxing for breathing oxygen. You shouldn't
do that. There should be no carbon tax.

Also, I think that in listening to what
everybody's differing opinions are, I don't
think that you guys should put forth any
amendments at all.

I was listening to what the guy was saying
about you guys being an illegal organization. I
don't know if that's true. I've never heard
that, but I just think that the more government
gets involved in our daily lives, the more
corrupt things become.

Like Orange County Public Schools is the
tenth largest district in the nation. We have
203,000 students and we have a budget of $4 billion. So if you do the math that would be $19,000 per student and only $7,000 actually goes to the student.

So I think maybe a more efficient way to invest that money in our students would be to give the parents that $19,000 credit and let them have school choice instead of having this huge bureaucracy of Orange County Public Schools which isn't as efficient as it needs to be.

I'm not saying that's what we should do. What I'm saying is when you have huge bureaucracies a lot of this tax money doesn't get used efficiently and it would be more efficient if we let the people serve themselves. That's all I have to say. Thank you.


MS. TORRES: Yes. Good evening. My name is Carmen Torres. Thank you for having this commission, this public meeting rather.

And I heard someone say earlier that you will come back in the fall. So I hope that we
can have another more open and better organized meeting.

I was standing outside for maybe -- I got here like 5:05 and they told us that we couldn't come in, that it was full and then it wasn't until maybe a half hour later that they opened up the overflow for us. And so here it is, you are past your time as a result. Right?

MR. BERUFF: We're going to stay here until we're finished.

MS. TORRES: Thank you so much. I really appreciate that. So having said that, will you establish a rule that no proposal will be adopted without public comment, period, please?

I also wanted to talk about I am a former member of the NYPD and I retired from the Corrections Department here in Orange County. I've been a resident for the past twenty-four years in Orange County, transplant from New York.

And I get and appreciate people's fears, but recently due to the ban that POTUS passed, that's still stalled, there's been a lot of talk possibly passing draconian laws that will further vilify the immigrant community such as
making a first-degree crime a third-degree felony for someone who is undocumented and I find that is so unconstitutional.

My ask of the commission is please do not consider such suggestions that can further aggrieve and suppress the rights of productive citizens to vote in the future. This is another suppression. The law is the law is the law and it should be the same for everyone. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you and thank you for your service. Kristin Clapper. Mr. or Ms. Kuperman, Aubrey Kuperman. Did I say that right?

MS. KUPERMAN: You did. So a few things. Number one, I worked five years in food service front of house. So I recognize the face that you have. It's the same face I used to have when people tried to come in after we closed. So I'm going to make this as quick as I can.

I won't even talk about minimum wage. My big thing here is, and I might have missed this because I was also stuck outside since I arrived a little late, and I work on campus so it's my own fault, but what I really wanted to touch on is juvenile justice.
We are one of the only states left and we do prosecute more children in this state than any other state in the nation. That's despicable. That's embarrassing. It's time to put it into the constitution, put an end to it and get it fixed. That's it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Camara Williams, Esquire.

MR. WILLIAMS: Good evening. It's actually Camara Williams. I'm a proud member of the Florida Bar and I see our president sitting here, Bill Schifino, as well as a member of the Leadership Academy Class IV.

It's already been stated numerous times regarding the restoration of rights of felons. As a former criminal defense attorney one thing I want to make notice is that ninety percent of all cases actually end up on a plea. Ten percent more of the cases go to trial.

For a number of reasons a lot of people plea out because, you know, they deem it economically available to them and they can't afford a trial. They can't afford to go forward and see what are the chances of me actually getting convicted of a crime.

So what happens is you have ninety percent
of the people actually have cases they actually end up subject for the rest of their lives because of what are sometimes economic problems.

So what I want the committee to consider is that when restoration of rights -- recidivism is actually a high problem regarding our felons. So one of the things we can do to actually incorporate putting them back into society is actually consider their rights being restored as a civilian, as a full rights civilian for voting in our country.

One of the things you see is that a lot of these citizens when they come back into society they don't feel like they have the ability to actually participate in the democracy which is a crying shame.

What happens is when you don't feel a part of the society, you actually go back into what you know in your previous life and you go back -- and recidivism and you go back into crime and you don't feel a part of the society.

So one thing the committee really has to consider is what are we looking for in our citizens if you actually believe in equitable justice in regards to being sent back to

Karen S. Rhine, FPR
rehabilitation. It's already been stated a
number of times. I just thank you guys for your
time and have a good evening.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Thank you very much.

Lourdes. There you are. Lourdes Quevedo. If I
do it in my Spanish I do it pretty well.

MS. QUEVEDO: Thank you for staying here.
I'm really nervous. I did not plan on speaking
today. I came with my friend Suz sitting over
there. She spoke earlier about psychological
child abuse and I felt compelled to put that a
little bit in context of when it happens. It
happens in family court and divorce.

I'm in year seven of this nightmare. I
have a gifted child who was honor roll, played
baseball, was picked up by Duke, did math,
science and robotics and within the past three
years he's been diagnosed with PTSD, conversion
disorder, anxiety, depression, put on Valium,
Effexor, Prozac as a result of this process.

This is the way that we're tackling this
problem by passing these bills so that we can
identify this issue early on in the process
instead of waiting seven years for a child's
life to be destroyed.
But I want to address judicial accountability and efficiencies. While the courts are not the ones perpetrating this horrible act, the process in the courts is enabling it.

Whether we don't have enough judges, the judges are not educated on it, in the end the well-being of a child is being determined by which parent has the most money and who can go on and keep this process going the longest.

So who's speaking up for the kids? Because my child is about to be held back now a second time and it just keeps getting delayed and postponed and there's no end to the number of motions that can be filed. They get selected for hearing sometimes. Sometimes they don't.

And so I want to beg that judicial accountability be addressed because I would like to believe that you think children are important. So thank you for hearing me.

CHAIRMAN BERUFF: Yes, they are. Thank you very much. I have no more speaker cards. Is there somebody that I left out? Thank you all for coming this evening and talking to us. We will see you in the fall.
We'll give you more notice and feel free to go to our website and start communicating with us sooner than later. Our next meeting is in Miami a week from tomorrow and on Friday in Boca Raton. So go to our website if you want specifics. Thank you very much. I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

COMMISSIONER GAETZ: So moved.

(Proceedings concluded at 9:01 p.m.)
CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF FLORIDA]

ss:

COUNTY OF SEMINOLE]

I, KAREN S. RHINE, FPR, hereby certify that I was authorized to and did report the foregoing proceedings and that the transcript is a true and complete record of my notes and recordings.

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

DATED this 12th day of April, 2017.

KAREN S. RHINE, FPR

(Electronic Signature)

Karen S. Rhine, FPR