

From a Group Against Florida Hometown Democracy

We're Floridians for Smarter Growth.

We know the so-called "Hometown Democracy" amendment - a statewide "Vote on Everything" initiative - is a grave threat to Florida's future. The proposed amendment to the Florida Constitution, written by the state's most extreme special interests, is one of the greatest perils to Florida's prosperity and quality-of-life.

Their amendment - requiring voters to approve all local comprehensive land use plan changes - subverts a well-established, open, accessible, and democratic planning process. With the Vote on Everything amendment, many Sunshine State voters - not the representatives they elected - will be expected to decide 200 to 300 intricate land-use planning amendments every year.

The extreme special interests promoting the amendment have failed three times to qualify for the ballot. However, they have paid for nearly all the signatures required to place their amendment on the November 2010 ballot. Floridians for Smarter Growth has been established by our State's business and community leaders to combat this dangerous amendment.

Floridians for Smarter Growth was founded to alert voters to this extreme amendment and the hazards it will bring to every Floridian's daily life. Every citizen, working family, teacher, health care provider, community leader, elected official, and mainstream environmentalist - every Florida voter - needs to know that our unique quality-of-life is at stake. If they succeed in changing our State Constitution:

- **THE DISRUPTION** of local communities and the daily lives of Floridians will be extraordinary. Cities and counties will be required to hold elections for each proposed comprehensive plan change - not just major projects, but even minor technical details. In the last four years alone, this amendment would have required an average of over 10,599 additional local votes per year in Florida. In fact, in 2007 alone in Carrabelle, a small town in Franklin County, voters would have decided 840 separate ballot questions.
 - **THE DISORDER** will further disenfranchise Florida's already-fatigued electorate. Voters will be deluged with highly technical background materials prepared by the local government planning staff. The legalese of proposed comprehensive plan changes, often puzzling for expert engineers and attorneys, will further dampen voter turnout. Lines at voting booths will grow as Floridians attempt the virtual impossibility of voting on hundreds of separate and often confusing ballot questions.
 - **THE COST** will be astronomical. Every city and county in Florida will be burdened with the time and cost of holding additional elections to vote on proposed changes to comprehensive land use plans. Each of these elections will be costly. And with smarter growth stalled, Florida's robust economy will taper off to a recession while property taxes skyrocket to pay the bills.
 - **THE RESULT** will be a system that is far worse, not better. That's why respected environmental leaders refuse to support the amendment. They know this amendment will not put a stop to all development, but will make well-planned, smarter growth impossible - thereby encouraging sprawl that reduces green space and makes effective growth management unachievable.
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