

Florida Amendment 3, Voter Approval of Casino Gambling Initiative (2018)

Florida Amendment 3: Voter Approval of Casino Gambling Initiative

Election date

November 6, 2018

Topic

[Gambling](#)

Status

On the ballot

Type

[Constitutional amendment](#)

Origin

[Citizens](#)

Florida Amendment 3, the **Voter Approval of Casino Gambling Initiative**, is on the [ballot](#) in [Florida](#) as an [initiated constitutional amendment](#) on [November 6, 2018](#).^[1]

A **"yes"** vote supports this amendment to provide voters, through citizen-initiated ballot measures, with the exclusive right to decide whether to authorize casino gambling in Florida.

A **"no"** vote opposes this amendment to provide voters, through citizen-initiated ballot measures, with the exclusive right to decide whether to authorize casino gambling in Florida.

In Florida, a constitutional amendment requires a 60 percent vote of electors to be approved.

Overview

[What would Florida Amendment 3 do?](#)

The measure would provide voters with the "exclusive right to decide whether to authorize casino gambling in the State of Florida." Amendment 3 would make the citizen initiative process "the exclusive method of authorizing casino gambling," meaning the [Florida State Legislature](#) would not be permitted to authorize casino gambling through statute or through referring a [constitutional amendment](#) to the ballot.^[1] In Florida, the number of signatures required for an initiative is equal to 8 percent of the votes cast in the preceding presidential election. Florida also has a signature distribution requirement, which requires that signatures equal to 8 percent of the district-wide vote in at least half (14) of the state's 27 congressional districts must be collected.

The measure would consider card games, casino games, and slot machines to be casino gambling. The measure would not consider pari-mutuel wagering on horse racing, dog racing, or jai alai exhibitions to be casino gambling. The measure would not impact casino gambling on Native American tribal lands established through state-tribe compacts.^[1]

[What is the status of casino gambling in Florida?](#)

As of 2018, card games, casino games, and slot machines were prohibited at non-tribal facilities in all but two counties in Florida. In 2004, voters passed an [initiative, Amendment 4](#), to allow voters in [Miami-Dade](#) and [Broward](#) counties to authorize slot machines at parimutuel facilities, such as horse racing, greyhound racing, and jai alai exhibitions, that existed and were licensed during the two years prior.^[2] The Seminole Tribe of Florida, through the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), negotiated a Class III gaming compact with Republican Gov. Charlie Crist in 2010.^[3] The compact allowed the Seminole Tribe to operate blackjack at five facilities through 2015 and required the tribe to share revenue with the state. In 2015, Gov. Rick Scott (R) formed a new 20-year compact with the Seminole Tribe, which added craps and roulette to the agreement and gave the tribe the exclusive right to blackjack.^[4]

[Who is behind the campaigns for and against Amendment 3](#)

[How current is this campaign finance information?](#)

The [support campaign](#), Voters in Charge, had raised \$17.48 million. The top contributor to the support campaign was [Disney Worldwide Services, Inc.](#), which contributed \$9.66 million. The second largest contributor was the Seminole Tribe of Florida, which contributed \$6.78 million. Sponsors spent \$6.89 per required signature on the petition gathering and verification process.^[5] There was no committee registered to oppose to the initiative.

Text of measure

Ballot title

The ballot title is as follows:^[6]

“ Voter Control of Gambling in Florida^[7] ”

Ballot summary

The ballot summary is as follows:^[6]

“ This amendment ensures that Florida voters shall have the exclusive right to decide whether to authorize casino gambling by requiring that in order for casino gambling to be authorized under Florida law, it must be approved by Florida voters pursuant to Article XI, Section 3 of the Florida Constitution. Affects articles X and XI. Defines casino gambling and clarifies that this amendment does not conflict with federal law regarding state/tribal compacts.^[7] ”

Constitutional changes

See also: [Article X, Florida Constitution](#)

The measure would add a Section 29 to [Article X](#) of the [Florida Constitution](#)

Support

Voters In Charge is leading the campaign in support of the initiative.^[1]

Supporters

- [Disney Worldwide Services, Inc.](#)^[8]
- Seminole Tribe of Florida^[9]

Arguments

John Sowinski, chairman of Voters In Charge, stated:^[10]

“ People will agree or disagree about casino gambling. But regardless of your position, given the stakes involved and the money that the gambling industry puts into campaigns and lobbying, the people of Florida should have the final say on whether or not to legalize casino-style gambling. Our state’s history shows that without this bright line, gambling will continue to spread through big money lobbying and clever lawyering. If the courts fail to do so, our amendment will put Florida voters back in charge of making such decisions.”^[7]

Opposition

Opponents

- **Vote NO on 3** registered to oppose this amendment.^[11]

Arguments

- **Sen. Bill Galvano** (R-21) stated, "It's game over for the Legislature if that (constitutional) amendment gets on the ballot and passes. And at that point, we'll just be spectators in the world of gaming, which will essentially be a monopoly for the Seminole Tribe."^[12]
- **Izzy Havenick**, whose family owns dog racing tracks in Naples and Miami, said, "I think it will have a huge impact on our industry, because as opposed to the Legislature regulating us, we'll need 60 percent of the residents of Florida to regulate us in the future. And, as the most regulated business in the state, that just makes anything we want to do to grow our business in the future more difficult."^[12]

Campaign finance

See also: [Campaign finance requirements for Florida ballot measures](#)

The campaign finance information on this page is according to the [most recent scheduled reports](#), which covered through July 13, 2018. The [deadline](#) for the next scheduled reports is July 27, 2018.

Total campaign contributions:	
Support:	\$17,461,768.94
Opposition:	\$0.00

There was one ballot measure committee, Voters in Charge, registered in support of the measure. The committee had raised \$17.5 million and expended \$7.5 million.^[5]

The top contributor to the support campaign was [Disney Worldwide Services, Inc.](#), which contributed \$9.66 million. The second largest contributor was the Seminole Tribe of Florida, which contributed \$6.78 million.^[5]

There were no committees registered in opposition to the initiative. If you know of a committee in opposition to Amendment 3, email editor@ballotpedia.org.^[5]

Support

Committees in support of Amendment 3				Totals in support	
Supporting committees	Cash contributions	In-kind services	Cash expenditures	Total raised:	\$17,476,065.65
Voters in Charge	\$16,743,930.00	\$732,135.65	\$6,730,913.44	Total spent:	\$7,463,049.09
Total	\$16,743,930.00	\$732,135.65	\$6,730,913.44		

Donors

The following were the top five donors who had contributed to the support committee:^[5]

Donor	Cash	In-kind	Total
Disney Worldwide Services, Inc.	\$9,655,000.00	\$0.00	\$9,655,000.00
Seminole Tribe of Florida	\$6,775,000.00	\$0.00	\$6,775,000.00
No Casinos Inc.	\$276,000.00	\$732,135.65	\$1,008,135.65
Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association PAC	\$30,000.00	\$0.00	\$30,000.00
MHD Committee for Responsive Government	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00

Methodology

Ballotpedia calculates campaign finance based on the political committees registered to support or oppose a measure and independent expenditures, when relevant and available. When a committee is registered to support or oppose multiple measures it is impossible to distinguish between funds used for one measure and funds used for the other.

In calculating campaign finance for supporting and opposing committees, Ballotpedia does not count donations or expenditures from one [ballot measure committee](#) to another since that would amount to counting the same money twice. This method is used to give the most accurate information concerning how much funding was actually provided to and spent by the opposing and supporting campaigns.

Ballotpedia subtracts out committee-to-committee contributions—both cash donations and in-kind contributions. Because of this, it is possible for certain committees to have negative contributions. Negative contributions mean that a committee has provided more contributions to other committees than it has received. If expenditures exceed contributions, it means the committee has accrued unpaid bills, has unpaid or unforgiven loans, or has contributed a certain amount of in-kind services to another committee.

Ballotpedia provides information about all reported in-kind donations. In-kind contributions are also counted toward total expenditures since, with in-kind gifts, the contribution and services or goods are provided simultaneously. Ballotpedia does this to provide the most accurate information about the cash-on-hand of supporting and opposing campaigns.

Polls

See also: [2018 ballot measure polls](#)

The following poll was conducted by Hill Research Consultants during January 2018 to gauge voter support and opposition toward Amendment 3.

[hide]Florida Amendment 3 (2018)						
Poll	Support	Oppose	Undecided	Margin of error	Sample size	
Hill Research Consultants 1/24/2018 - 1/28/2018	76.0%	19.0%	5.0%	+/-2.9	1,235	
<p><i>Note: A "0%" finding means the candidate was not a part of the poll. The polls above may not reflect all polls that have been conducted in this race. Those displayed are a random sampling chosen by Ballotpedia staff. If you would like to nominate another poll for inclusion in the table, send an email to editor@ballotpedia.org.</i></p>						

The following poll was conducted by Cherry Communications and commissioned by the Florida Chamber of Commerce to gauge voter support and opposition toward the amendments on [Florida's 2018 ballot](#). A total of 605 likely voters were polled, including 237 Republicans, 249 Democrats, and 119 others.^[13]

[hide]Support and Opposition for Amendment 3						
Poll	Support	Oppose	Undecided	Margin of error	Sample size	
Florida Chamber of Commerce Poll 5/25/18 - 6/2/18	61%	23%	15%	+/-4.0	605	
<p><i>Note: A "0%" finding means the candidate was not a part of the poll. The polls above may not reflect all polls that have been conducted in this race. Those displayed are a random sampling chosen by Ballotpedia staff. If you would like to nominate another poll for inclusion in the table, send an email to editor@ballotpedia.org.</i></p>						