

2016 Florida Ballot Amendments

Yes on 4 in August (60% supermajority needed to pass!)

Ballot Title: SOLAR DEVICES OR RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCE DEVICES; EXEMPTION FROM CERTAIN TAXATION AND ASSESSMENT

Ballot Measure Explained:

Amendment 4 would amend Florida's Constitution to exempt the value of solar panels and other renewable energy equipment from both the tangible personal property tax and the real property tax for a period of 20 years.

The measure would also exempt solar energy devices in commercial and industrial properties. The tax exemptions would begin in 2018 and continue for 20 years. It would reduce the cost of solar up to 5 cents per kilowatt hour.

The measure passed the Florida House and Senate Unanimously in March to be put on ballot. Last day to vote is August 30th.

Actual Ballot Summary:

Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution to authorize the Legislature, by general law, to exempt from ad valorem taxation the assessed value of solar or renewable energy source devices subject to tangible personal property tax, and to authorize the Legislature, by general law, to prohibit consideration of such devices in assessing the value of real property for ad valorem taxation purposes. This amendment takes effect January 1, 2018, and expires on December 31, 2037

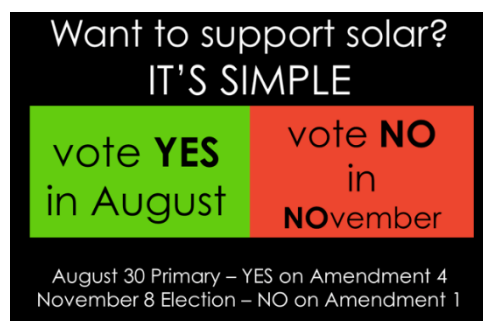
Supporters:

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| • Monroe County | • The Nature Conservancy | • Solar Energy Industries Association |
| • Miami Dade County | • Conservatives for Energy Freedom | • Vote Solar |
| • Broward County | • Florida Retail Federation | • Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association |
| • Palm Beach County | • Christian Coalition | • Southern Alliance for Clean Energy |
| • Tampa Bay Times | • Florida Chamber of Commerce | • Floridians for Solar Choice |
| • Bradenton Herald | • Advanced Energy Economy (AEE) | |
| • Tampa Tribune | | |
| • Tallahassee Democrat | | |

Opposed: None noted.

Read more on BallotPedia:

[https://ballotpedia.org/Florida Tax Exemptions for Renewable Energy Measure, Amendment 4 \(August 2016\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Florida_Tax_Exemptions_for_Renewable_Energy_Measure,_Amendment_4_(August_2016))



No on 1 in November (60% Supermajority needed to pass!)

Ballot Title: Rights of Electricity Consumers Regarding Solar Energy Choice

Ballot Measure Explained: Amendment 1 purports to strengthen the legal rights of homeowners who have rooftop solar panels by giving them the right to use solar on their property. But, the utility-sponsored amendment would be a constitutional endorsement of the idea that rooftop solar users should pay higher utility bills than other customers.

There is already a right to use solar equipment for individual use afforded by the Florida Constitution and existing Florida statutes and regulations. There already is a right to lease solar, but only from an electric utility. Amendment 1 only addresses solar energy on site for the property owners' use.

In Florida, only electric utilities have the right to sell electricity to homeowners; you can buy or lease your own solar panels, but you can't arrange to buy power from a third-party solar contractor. Landlords cannot sell power from solar panels to tenants. Popular solar leasing programs are outlawed. Rooftop solar is limited to those who can afford the upfront expense.

Amendment 1 will actually elevate the existing rights of the government to further regulate solar energy use and establish that regulatory power as a constitutional right in Florida.

The hidden issue here is net metering, a policy that exists in almost every state (including Florida) that requires electric utilities to purchase excess electricity from solar homes. The policy is widely loathed by large power companies because they not only lose a paying customer to solar but also have to pay that customer and take the customer's extra power off their hands. If passed, Amendment 1 would allow utilities to argue that net metering is a "subsidy" for solar and that lawmakers have the authority to prohibit it.

It is important for voters to understand this Amendment. According to the solar-industry-backed Floridians for Solar Choice, 82 percent of the state's voters said they would support changing the law to permit third-party ownership of solar. But a recent poll from the utility-backed Consumers for Smart Solar found that 73 percent of voters support their ballot measure. Last day to vote is November 8th

Actual Ballot Summary:

This amendment establishes a right under Florida's constitution for consumers to own or lease solar equipment installed on their property to generate electricity for their own use. State and local governments shall retain their abilities to protect consumer rights and public health, safety and welfare, and to ensure that consumers who do not choose to install solar are not required to subsidize the costs of backup power and electric grid access to those who do.

Top contributors:

Supporters:

Donor	Amount
Florida Power and Light Company	\$4,145,000
Duke Energy	\$3,987,000
Tampa Electric Company	\$2,121,675
Gulf Power Company	\$1,659,450
60 Plus Association, Inc.	\$1,440,000

PAC	Amount raised	Amount spent
Consumers for Smart Solar	\$16,119,245.00	\$13,703,105.83
Total	\$16,119,245.00	\$13,703,105.83

Opposed:

- Christian Coalition
- Sierra Club
- Orlando Sentinel
- Tampa Bay Times
- Rolling Stones article
- Ocala Star Banner
- Bradenton Herald
- Sun Sentinel
- Mother Jones
- Gainesville Sun
- Miami Herald
- Earthjustice
- Palm Beach Post

Others: https://ballotpedia.org/Florida_2016_ballot_measures