

## **Amendment # 4 Title: Voting Restoration Amendment**

**Ballot Language:** This amendment restores the voting rights of Floridians with felony convictions after they complete all terms of their sentence including parole or probation. The amendment would not apply to those convicted of murder or sexual offenses, who would continue to be permanently barred from voting unless the Governor and Cabinet vote to restore their voting rights on a case by case basis.<sup>2</sup>

**How the Amendment Reached the Ballot:** Citizen Initiative<sup>1</sup>  
Petition Sponsored by: Floridians for a Fair Democracy, Inc.

### **What your Vote Means:**

**A Yes:** 1.7 million Florida felons who have served their sentences would be given blanket amnesty to vote. The supporters of Amendment 4 have only one objective. Namely, get 1.7 million felons registered and voting for their Progressive Agenda. The supporters of Amendment 4 have been silent about the other civil rights that a felon permanently loses.

**A No:** Continue the present clemency process through the Florida Commission on Offender Review to restore civil rights of a felon. Those Civil Rights include:

- Right to Vote
  - Right to be on a jury
  - Right to hold a public office
  - Right to own or carry a gun
  - Hinders the right to obtain a security clearance
- <https://www.fcor.state.fl.us/clemencyOverview.shtml>

**Pro: Floridians for a Fair Democracy**, the committee sponsoring the initiative, stated, "Americans believe in second chances. We need to make sure that Florida Law does too. Nearly 1.5 million people in Florida are permanently excluded from voting because of a prior felony conviction. These are our family members, friends, and neighbors who have already repaid their debts to society. Now is the time to restore the ability to vote to Floridians who have earned the opportunity to participate in and give back to their communities."<sup>2</sup>

**Con:** The opponents of Amendment 4 also believe in second chances. We want felons to change their lives and become productive citizens. Granting blanket voting amnesty to felons is akin to rewarding someone for bad behavior. Gov. Charlie Crist found that giving unconditional amnesty to felons does not work.

There is a current process for felons in Florida to regain their civil rights. The process is available to all felons and the data shows that the felons who do go through the current Clemency Process become law abiding citizens.

By comparison, under the prior Charlie Crist administration very few conditions were required for felons to regain their Civil Rights. Not surprisingly, within 5 years 30% of those felons who had regained their civil rights under the Crist administration were back in prison.

<https://www.fcor.state.fl.us/docs/reports/Recidivism%20Report%202016%20&%202017%20signed.pdf>  
[http://www.dc.state.fl.us/pub/annual/1617/FDC\\_AR2016-17.pdf](http://www.dc.state.fl.us/pub/annual/1617/FDC_AR2016-17.pdf)

The current process to restore a felons civil rights was implemented by Gov. Rick Scott and it is working. Less than 1% of those felons who regained their civil rights under the Scott administration are back in prison. Blanket voting amnesty for felons is not needed.  
<https://www.fcor.state.fl.us/docs/reports/Recidivism%20Report%202016%20&%202017%20signed.pdf>

### **Supporters:**

ACLU  
League of Women Voters  
Andrew Gillum  
Dem Prog Caucus of FL (Leftist)  
*USA Today's* Florida Today (Leans left)  
And other various leftist political organizations, and most media.

### **Opponents:**

Speaker of the House Rep. Richard Corcoran  
Agricultural Commissioner Adam Putnam  
Floridians For A Sensible Voting Rights Policy

### **No Position:**

Christian Family Coalition (CFC)

### **Summary Comments:**

There is a process in place for felons in Florida to regain their civil rights. The process is available to all felons and the data shows that the felons who do go through the clemency process become law-abiding citizens. Blanket voting amnesty for felons is not needed.

Keep in mind that Republican/Independent/Democrat Charlie Crist was governor in 2009-10 when clemencies were being handed out like candy at Halloween. As of June 2018 30% of those felons granted clemency by Charlie Crist in 2009-10 had committed a felony and were back in prison. In doing this research I have become even more impressed with Gov Rick Scott's management of Florida. The annual reports issued by the Florida Commission on Offender Review is the same quality one would see in a corporate annual report. Scott quickly recognized the problem of recidivism and took immediate steps to correct Charlie Crist's sloppiness.

Of course, those on the Left are angry because they need those 1.7 million felons to take control of Florida. The defeat of Amendment 4 is probably the most important item on the November ballot. If it succeeds we can say bye-bye to Florida conservatism and California leftist politics will be here.

<https://www.fcor.state.fl.us/docs/reports/Recidivism%20Report%202016%20&%202017%20signed.pdf>

### **TPM's Recommendation:**

Vote **NO** on Amendment 4.

### **Sources:**

<sup>1</sup>The James Madison Institute 2018 Florida Amendment Guide

[https://www.jamesmadison.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2018\\_Amendment\\_Guide\\_v08\\_web.pdf](https://www.jamesmadison.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2018_Amendment_Guide_v08_web.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>Ballotpedia:

[https://ballotpedia.org/Florida\\_2018\\_ballot\\_measures](https://ballotpedia.org/Florida_2018_ballot_measures)