

Fast Facts

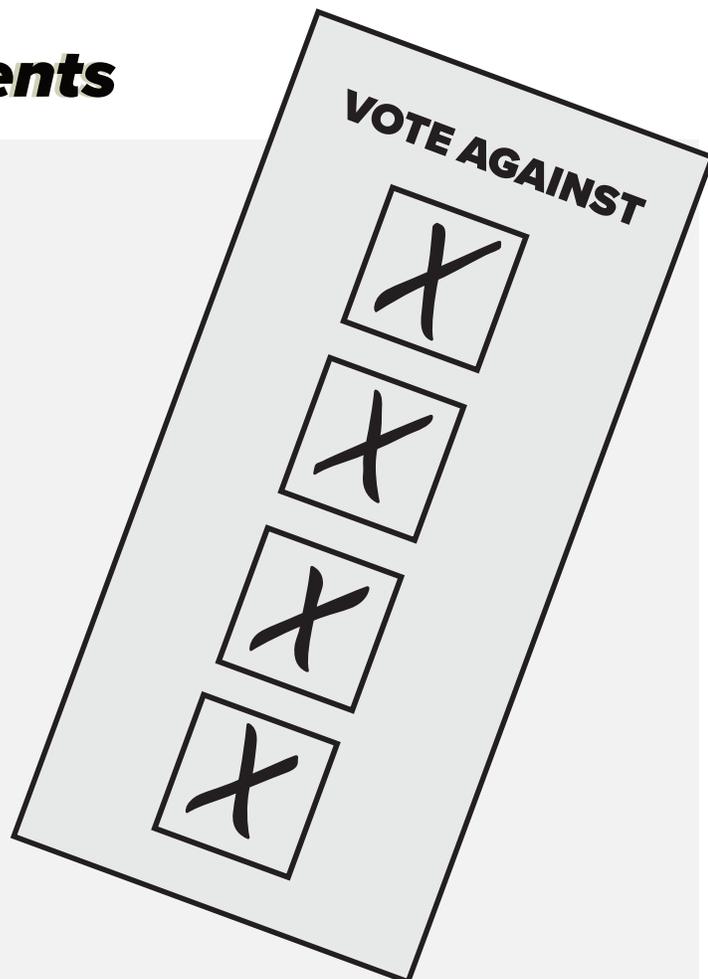


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Proposed 2018 Constitutional Amendments

The N.C. General Assembly has approved six constitutional amendments to appear at the end of the 2018 General Election ballot. Each will include a short caption (“constitutional amendment”) and ballot language set by lawmakers. Voters will be asked to vote ‘FOR’ or ‘AGAINST’ each amendment. All six amendments have drawn criticism for being concocted in secret, vaguely-written, and permanent changes drafted with partisan intent. **Four amendments in particular should raise serious concerns for all voters.**

If approved, all of these amendments would be **permanent changes to the North Carolina Constitution** that could not be changed by the governor or future legislatures and that give current lawmakers a **“blank check” to fill in the details later** on how these dramatic changes are implemented. They are all extreme proposals that would **give more power to the legislative branch** to pick our judges, make voting harder, appoint their friends to run key agencies, and give political donors huge tax breaks. **To learn more about these amendments, visit demnc.co/amendments.**



WE URGE VOTERS TO VOTE AGAINST THESE AMENDMENTS:

What we are calling this constitutional amendment:

“Voter Restriction Amendment”

Constitutional amendment to require voters to provide photo identification before voting in person.

What it would do:

Require N.C. voters to provide “photo ID” in order to vote, beginning in 2019.

3 fast facts to know and share:

1. Voters don’t know what kind of “photo ID” will be included. **Current lawmakers will choose what “photo ID” is valid for N.C. voters after the Nov. election**, without any details about whether there will be free IDs available, what exceptions may be put
- in place, or how voters will be educated about the new ID rule.
2. The last ID law **did not include common forms of ID** like student or employee IDs, and was thrown out in court for using racial data to discriminate against Black voters.
3. **This amendment isn’t mainstream, it’s extreme.** Only one state has a photo ID requirement in its constitution: Mississippi. This amendment is worse.

What we are calling this constitutional amendment: “Legislative Power Grab Amendment”

Constitutional amendment to establish a bipartisan Board of Ethics and Elections to administer ethics and election laws, to clarify the appointment authority of the Legislative and the Judicial Branches, and to prohibit legislators from serving on boards and commissions exercising executive or judicial authority.

What it would do:

Give the N.C. General Assembly the power to appoint certain boards and commissions that are currently appointed by the Governor, including the State Board of Elections.

3 fast facts to know and share:

1. A prior attempt to remake the N.C. Board of Elections was **rejected by the N.C. Supreme Court for violating the state’s constitution**. Now legislators are trying to change the constitution to get their way. Despite the name, this amendment would lead to **more partisan gridlock and ultimately less ballot access for voters**.

2. The fine print of the amendment – that voters will not see on the ballot – says the N.C.G.A. “shall control the powers, duties, responsibilities, appointments and terms of office of any board or commission prescribed by general law.” This would dramatically reduce the governor’s authority, and **place even more power in the hands of the legislature** to control things like utility rates, road building, schools, health care, and environmental protections.
3. Because it would radically alter the historic balance of power between the executive, legislative and judicial branches, **former governors from both major parties oppose this amendment**, including the state’s only living Republican governors.

What we are calling this constitutional amendment: “Court-Packing Amendment”

Constitutional amendment to implement a nonpartisan merit-based system that relies on professional qualifications instead of political influence when nominating Justices and judges to be selected to fill vacancies that occur between judicial elections.

What it would do:

The amendment gives the N.C. General Assembly the power to a) appoint a “merit commission” designed to evaluate judicial nominees submitted by the public; b) select two judicial nominees to submit to the governor for appointment; and c) fill judicial vacancies themselves if the governor does not want to appoint either of their choices.

3 fast facts to know and share:

1. The amendment provides few details on how the so-called “merit commission” would be assembled or who would have a say, **so voters wouldn’t know these critical details of the process before casting their vote**.

2. This proposal would dramatically change the power legislators have to control who sits on our state courts, a **slippery slope that amendment sponsors said could lead to voters losing the ability to elect judges altogether**.
3. If approved, it would **enable lawmakers to engage in partisan “court-packing”** – allowing them to add two seats to the N.C. Supreme Court and fill those high court “vacancies” with justices who agree with an extreme agenda, including partisan voting districts, voting restrictions, and more. Voters wouldn’t have a chance to vote on these new N.C. Supreme Court Justices until 2022.

What we are calling this constitutional amendment: “Income Tax Cap”

Constitutional amendment to reduce the income tax rate in North Carolina to a maximum allowable rate of seven percent (7%).

What it would do:

Permanently bar the N.C. General Assembly from raising the income tax rate above 7%.

3 fast facts to know and share:

1. This would limit the income tax to a level lower than the state’s wealthiest taxpayers paid before 2013. **This proposal is a permanent tax shift to help the rich.**

2. This change would **hinder the state’s ability to fund vital public needs**, like roads and schools.
3. To make up for the lost income tax revenue, lawmakers will be forced to increase taxes elsewhere, including **property and sales taxes**, which more frequently burden **working and lower-income voters**.