

AMENDMENT 1

Ballot initiative #1, the so-called “Citizenship Requirement to Vote in Florida Elections,” is cloaked in xenophobia and false patriotism. Rather than strengthen our democracy or protect our elections, it subverts and endangers the right of *every* citizen to vote.

Currently, our constitution states that “every” U.S. citizen who meets age, residency, and registration criteria is qualified to vote. Ballot initiative #1 replaces “every” with “only,” such that it would read, “only a” U.S. citizen who meets age, residency, and registration criteria is qualified to vote.

OPPOSE BALLOT INITIATIVE #1

The amendment purports to limit voting to *only* U.S. citizens. However, federal and state law are already clear voting rights are strictly for U.S. citizens, and there are no movements to expand voting rights to noncitizens in Florida. Instead, there have been persistent efforts to suppress voter registration and voting. One primary route of voter suppression involves requiring increasingly costly and burdensome verification requirements, which could be enabled or justified by the passage of this amendment.

ACLU of Florida policy (*F-403 - Policies to Prevent and Address Violations of Non-Citizens’ Civil Rights & Civil Liberties*), notes that “the fundamental principles of due process and equal protection expressed in the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights are not limited to citizens. They apply to every person in this country.” In furtherance of this

policy, we have consistently opposed unnecessary voter ID laws that require forms of identification that would encourage discrimination against non-citizens, newly established citizens, and/or those who lack funds to afford the identification. This ballot measure seems aimed at one goal - to create the pretext for further identification and harassment of immigrant populations under the guise of voter protection.

IMPLICATIONS OF BALLOT INITIATIVE #1

Our democracy hinges on every citizen’s right to vote. Therefore, any political push to adopt xenophobic exclusionary language regarding suffrage, especially when it is already clear who does and who does not qualify, poses an imminent threat of voter suppression for even those individuals who are eligible.

The ACLU of Florida urges you to vote NO on Ballot Initiative #1.