

TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

State Capital



HIGHLIGHTS

By Ed Sterling

Proposed constitutional amendments pass

AUSTIN — All nine proposed amendments to the state constitution on the Nov. 5 election ballot passed.

Texas Secretary of State John Steen, the state's chief elections officer, on Nov. 6 commented that the 2013 constitutional amendment election "was our first statewide election with a photo ID requirement in place, and it was smooth, secure and successful."

The photo identification requirement took effect following a U.S. Supreme Court decision in June on a Voting Rights Act case that challenged the state law over its potential negative effects on voter turnout, particularly among Texas' black and Latino voters, older Texans, rural Texans and Texans of lower income.

On Election Day, Steen said unofficial vote totals for Proposition 1 indicate that 1,144,844 voters cast a ballot, a 66 percent increase over the 2011 constitutional amendment election in which 690,052 voters cast a ballot.

Here are brief descriptions of each proposition:

Prop. 1, authorizing the Legislature to provide for the creation of a homestead property tax exemption for the surviving spouse of an armed forces member killed in action.

Prop. 2, repealing the State Medical Education Board and the "obsolete" State Medical Education Fund.

Prop. 3, authorizing a politi-

cal subdivision to extend the number of days of an exemption from ad valorem taxation that are already covered by an ad valorem tax exemption.

Prop. 4, authorizing the Legislature to create an ad valorem tax exemption on the residence homestead of a partially disabled veteran or the surviving spouse of a partially disabled veteran if the residence homestead was donated to the veteran by a charitable organization.

Prop. 5, authorizing the making of reverse mortgage loans for the purchase of homestead property, and to amend lender disclosures and other requirements in connection with such loans.

Prop. 6, providing for the creation of the State Water Implementation Fund and for the fund to be used in assisting in the finance of priority projects in the state water plan to ensure the availability of adequate water resources.

Prop. 7, authorizing a home-rule municipality to provide in its charter the procedure to fill a vacancy on its governing body for which the unexpired term is 12 months or less.

Prop. 8, repealing the article of the constitution relating to the creation of a hospital district in Hidalgo County.

Prop. 9, relating to expanding the types of sanctions that may be assessed against a judge or justice following a formal proceeding instituted by the State Commission on Judicial Conduct.

AG sues over hiring rules

Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott on Nov. 4 announced he had filed a lawsuit challenging guidelines issued by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission that "limit the ability of employers — including the State of Texas and its agencies — from categorically excluding convicted felons from employment," he said.

Abbott said the hiring guidelines the EEOC adopted in 2012

"prohibit Texas and its agencies from categorically excluding convicted felons for certain jobs."

In the lawsuit, Abbott alleges the guidelines are unlawful because they overstep the federal agency's statutory authority "and improperly bully the State and its agencies into jeopardizing the safety of Texans."

Abbott seeks a declaratory judgment that the state and its agencies "are entitled to maintain and enforce state laws and policies that absolutely bar convicted felons — or a certain category of convicted felons — from government employment; a declaration that the EEOC cannot enforce its guidelines against the State of Texas — and an injunction that bars the EEOC from issuing right-to-sue letters to persons seeking to pursue this type of discrimination charge against the State of Texas or any of its agencies; and a judgment holding unlawful and setting aside the EEOC's hiring guidelines."

Unit issues identification

A Texas Department of Public Safety on Nov. 5 announced a mobile disaster unit has been deployed to central Texas to issue replacement Texas driver licenses and replacement Texas identification cards to victims who lost those documents as a result of the severe storms and flooding that recently impacted that area of the state.

Tax revenue increases

State Comptroller Susan Combs on Nov. 6 announced state sales tax revenue in October was \$2.14 billion, up 5.4 percent compared to October 2012.

Combs said she would send cities, counties, transit systems and special purpose taxing districts their November local sales tax allocations totaling \$654.6 million, up 7 percent compared to November 2012.

NOTICE OF SHERIFF SALE**THE STATE OF TEXAS****COUNTY OF CASTRO**

By virtue of Orders of Sale issued out of the Judicial District Court of CASTRO County in the following cases on the 1ST day of NOVEMBER, 2013, and to me, as Sheriff, directed and delivered, I will proceed to sell at 10:00 A.M. on the 3RD DAY OF DECEMBER, 2013, which is the first Tuesday of said month, at the OFFICIAL door of the Courthouse of said CASTRO County, in the City of DIMMITT, Texas, the following described property located in CASTRO County, to-wit:

**Cause No. B9267-1102 HART INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT
VS GONZALES VICTORIA**

Lot Number Three (3) in Block Number Two (2), of the Hacker Subdivision of a 9.017 acre tract out of the Northwest Quarter (NW/4) of Section Number Fifteen (15), Block O-7, E. L. R. R. Ry. Co. Survey, Castro County, Texas

Levied on the 1ST day of NOVEMBER, 2013, as the property of said Defendants to satisfy the judgments rendered in the above styled and numbered causes, plus all taxes, penalties, interest, and attorney fees accrued to the date of sale and all costs recoverable by law in favor of each jurisdiction.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND THIS 1ST DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2013.

Sal Rivera_____
Sheriff, CASTRO County, Texas

By Jerry W. Jansa_____
Deputy