



# WOCC Positions on Amendments and Questions on the 2024 General Election Ballot

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## **No. 1 Constitutional Amendment: Partisan Election of Members of District School Boards**

**WOCC Position:** **OPPOSE**

### **Position Justification:**

*The proposed amendment could disenfranchise voters who do not align with a political party. The current nonpartisan format of these elections allows for a broader range of candidates and encourage voters to focus on individual qualifications and policies rather than party affiliation. This shift could limit participation from independent voters and those who prefer not to affiliate with a party, potentially skewing representation and reducing the diversity of perspectives on the school board this could have a detrimental impact on school board governance.*

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## **County Charter Amendment #1: Amendment Revising Orange County Charter Initiative Petition Process**

**WOCC Position:** **OPPOSE**

### **Position Justification:**

*The proposed amendment seeks to eliminate thresholds that are reasonable and provide stability and predictability for businesses to plan long-term investments and foster economic growth.*

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## **County Charter Amendment #2: Orange County Charter Amendment Requiring Continued Existence of Affordable Housing Trust Fund**

**WOCC Position:** **SUPPORT**

### **Position Justification:**

*The proposed amendment allows the work of the Housing for All Task Force which, at its final meeting in 2019, delivered a draft 10-year Action Plan outlining high-priority recommendations that focus on the needs of Orange County residents to sustain and accommodate the County's growing population by addressing affordability and supply through removal of regulatory barriers, creating new financial resources, targeting areas of access and opportunity, and engaging the community and industry. The draft action plan and was accepted by the Orange County Board of County Commissioners. Approval of this amendment will allow the action plan be executed and continue to benefit our community.*

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## **County Charter Amendment #3: Write-In Candidate Effect on Timing of Charter Officer Elections**

**WOCC Position:** **SUPPORT**

### **Position Justification:**

*The proposed amendment simplifies the election in these races and avoids any manipulation of election timing to benefit certain candidates. Passage of this amendment will ensure fair election practices, preventing tactics that could unfairly advantage one candidate over another. Additionally, this reform addresses ongoing concerns about election integrity.*

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#### **County Charter Amendment #4: Orange County Charter Amendment Requiring Adoption of a Fiscal Sustainability Analysis Tool**

**WOCC Position:** **OPPOSE**

**Position Justification:**

*The proposed amendment would create redundancy. The information the Amendment is trying to ascertain is currently in our County's Comprehensive Plan and is addressed by County Ordinance. If additional information is needed, the Board of County Commissioners has the ability, at any time, to direct staff to perform an analysis to garner that information.*

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#### **County Charter Amendment #5: Orange County Charter Amendment Establishing Charter Office of County Attorney**

**WOCC Position:** **SUPPORT**

**Position Justification:**

*The proposed amendment introduces a balanced system of accountability, ensuring the County Attorney remains impartial while being accountable to both the Mayor and the Commission. With the office having provided stability for decades, this change mirrors the structure of other stable county offices, like the school board, and strengthens the legal framework of Orange County without any financial impact.*

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#### **County Charter Amendment #6: Orange County Charter Amendment Increasing Number of County Commission Districts**

**WOCC Position:** **SUPPORT**

**Position Justification:**

*The proposed amendment will increase costs to residents; however, reducing the population each County Commissioner serves could allow for residents' concerns to be addressed in a timelier manner and provide the ability to champion additional needs of the community they are elected to represent.*

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#### **County Charter Amendment #7: Charter Amendment Creating Transportation Mobility Advisory Commission**

**WOCC Position:** **Oppose**

**Position Justification:**

*The proposed amendment will introduce an added level of bureaucracy and hinder the progress of infrastructure projects.*

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**County Charter Amendment #8: Supermajority County Commission Vote to Dispose of or Change Use of "County Protected Lands"**

**WOCC Position:** Support

**Position Justification:**

*The proposed amendment aims to protect these public lands and not only preserves their recreational and environmental value but also safeguards Orange County's reputation as an attractive destination for businesses. Maintaining access to well-preserved natural spaces and parks enhances the appeal of the region for industries tied to tourism, hospitality, and eco-friendly initiatives. By preventing the quick sale or repurposing of these lands, this amendment ensures Orange County remains a desirable place for businesses that depend on a vibrant and sustainable community, supporting long-term economic growth and quality of life for residents and visitors alike.*

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**County Charter Amendment #9: Orange County Charter Amendment Establishing Rural Boundary and Rural Area ("Area")**

**WOCC Position:** Oppose

**Position Justification:**

*The proposed amendment undermines our cities' autonomy, shifting power over land use from cities like Town of Windermere, Oakland, Winter Garden and Ocoee to the County, which violates Florida's constitutionally protected principle of home rule.*

*City governments are better equipped to manage development based on their communities' specific needs. The rigid restrictions imposed by the amendment would hinder responsible growth, making it more difficult for West Orange cities to annex unincorporated lands, develop necessary housing, and address the needs of a growing population.*

*Additionally, this amendment would exacerbate the housing shortage in Orange County by restricting the availability of land for development, leading to increased housing costs and intensified pressure on existing infrastructure. It would also discourage annexation, which could increase environmental risks in areas that rely on city utilities for sustainable development. The proposed amendment's restrictive measures would ultimately slow economic growth, harm businesses, and strain already overburdened public services.*

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## **County Charter Amendment #10: Charter Amendment Establishing a Process for Voluntary Municipal Annexations and Land Use in Rural Areas**

**WOCC Position: Oppose**

### **Position Justification:**

*The proposed amendment poses a serious threat to business growth and economic development in the region. By stripping municipalities of their ability to autonomously annex land, the County would centralize land-use control, introducing bureaucratic obstacles that could delay or deny business expansion efforts. This change could create a hostile environment for businesses looking to invest in Orange County, as they would face prolonged approval processes and increased uncertainty about land use decisions. Companies seeking to expand or develop new facilities may be forced to navigate a complex and unpredictable process, jeopardizing timely project completions and undermining their ability to respond to market demands.*

*Furthermore, this amendment could stifle the growth of local economies and infrastructure improvements. Cities like Winter Garden and Ocoee have a strong track record of managing growth to benefit both residents and businesses, but this amendment would severely limit their ability to plan for future development.*

*The County's involvement could result in conflicting regulations, slowing down essential projects, and deterring investment in new commercial developments, retail spaces, and industrial areas. Businesses may also face heightened compliance costs due to overlapping County and municipal regulations, creating additional financial burdens.*

*Ultimately, this amendment risks making Orange County less attractive to both existing businesses and potential investors, leading to reduced job creation, lower property values, and slower economic growth.*

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## **School Sales Tax Referendum: One-half Cent Sales Surtax for School Facilities Construction, Improvement, Land Acquisition, and Technology Implementation**

**WOCC Position: Support**

### **Position Justification:**

*This referendum will allow OCPS to continue raising money for school building projects, with over 50% coming from tourists and non-residents.*

*This referendum will continue the funding source that has helped the district fix or replace 132 schools (with four more to be completed by 2027) and open 65 new ones to meet the needs of Orange County's rapidly growing student population as OCPS has consistently ranked as one of the top 10 largest school districts in the country over the past several years.*

*In addition to helping schools across the district, the sales tax money helped build new schools in some of the county's fastest-growing areas, including East Orange, the Lake Nona area and, most notably, Horizon West, where four new schools were opened between 2021 and 2023.*

| <b>WOCC POSITION ON AMENDMENTS &amp; QUESTIONS</b>                                 |                |
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| <b>Constitutional Amendment 1<br/>Partisan school board elections</b>              | <b>OPPOSE</b>  |
| <b>County Charter Amendment #1<br/>Revising charter initiative process</b>         | <b>OPPOSE</b>  |
| <b>County Charter Amendment #2<br/>Affordable housing trust fund</b>               | <b>SUPPORT</b> |
| <b>County Charter Amendment #3<br/>Closing the write-in loophole</b>               | <b>SUPPORT</b> |
| <b>County Charter Amendment #4<br/>Requiring a fiscal analysis tool</b>            | <b>OPPOSE</b>  |
| <b>County Charter Amendment #5<br/>Establishing office of county attorney</b>      | <b>SUPPORT</b> |
| <b>County Charter Amendment #6<br/>Increasing number of commissioners</b>          | <b>SUPPORT</b> |
| <b>County Charter Amendment #7<br/>Transportation mobility advisory board</b>      | <b>OPPOSE</b>  |
| <b>County Charter Amendment #8<br/>Preserving county protected lands</b>           | <b>SUPPORT</b> |
| <b>County Charter Amendment #9<br/>Shifting development decisions to county</b>    | <b>OPPOSE</b>  |
| <b>County Charter Amendment #10<br/>Shifting power to the county in annexation</b> | <b>OPPOSE</b>  |
| <b>School sales tax referendum</b>   | <b>SUPPORT</b> |

### About the West Orange Chamber of Commerce

Founded in 1972, the West Orange Chamber of Commerce (WOCC) serves as the leading business advocate in Central Florida by advancing community, collaboration, and leadership for over 1,200 member businesses. Learn more on how the West Orange Chamber of Commerce can help grow your business, by visiting [wochamber.com/grow-with-us/](http://wochamber.com/grow-with-us/).



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