



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT AMENDMENT 4

## FLORIDA'S PRO-ABORTION AMENDMENT

### What is Amendment 4?

Amendment 4 is a proposed amendment to the Florida Constitution that would effectively establish an unlimited right to abortion far beyond when science says the baby can feel pain, and when the child is capable of living outside the womb. Amendment 4 will appear on the November 5, 2024 ballot and require approval from 60% of the electorate to pass.

### What would Amendment 4 do?

#### PUT WOMEN AT RISK

*Amendment 4 would jeopardize existing laws and prohibit new ones that voters on both sides of the abortion issue support, including health and safety laws that protect women.*

#### ALLOW SECOND AND THIRD TRIMESTER ABORTIONS

*Though not defined in the amendment, "viability" is defined in Florida law as the stage of development when the life of a fetus is sustainable outside the womb (Ch. 390.011(15)), generally accepted to be 22-24 weeks of pregnancy, or about 6 months.*

#### CREATE A BROAD "HEALTH" LOOPHOLE

*"Patient's health" is not defined in the amendment, allowing post-viability, extremely late-term abortions for treatable, temporary health concerns. Emotional health would justify an abortion when a child could survive outside the womb.*

#### WEAKEN MEDICAL DOCTOR REQUIREMENT

*"Healthcare providers" – not just physicians – could determine if an abortion is "necessary" to protect the mother's "health." Even some employees of abortion clinics, such as nurses and counselors, could approve late-term abortions.*

#### ELIMINATE PARENTAL CONSENT

*While preserving parental notification in our state constitution (Article X, Section 22), the amendment would invalidate the current law that requires parental consent for a minor to have an abortion (Ch. 390.0114(5)), making abortion the only medical procedure performed on a minor for which parents have no say.*

### Would Amendment 4 force taxpayers to fund abortion?

There is reason to be concerned that the approval of Amendment 4 could result in taxpayer-funded abortions. In 2022, Michigan voters passed a similar constitutional amendment guaranteeing the right to abortion. Subsequently, the same lawyers that wrote Amendment 4 have sued the state of Michigan to overturn a ban on taxpayer-funded abortions.

### Would abortion be illegal in Florida if Amendment 4 does not pass and what exceptions would still exist?

If Amendment 4 does not pass, abortion would still be legal in Florida until a baby's heartbeat can be detected. Current exceptions to the abortion limits would remain in place, including for rape, incest, or human trafficking up to 15 weeks; for fatal fetal abnormality up to the third trimester; and to save the mother's life or avert a serious risk of substantial and irreversible physical impairment of a major bodily function at any point in pregnancy.

### Will miscarriage care or ectopic pregnancy treatment be denied if Amendment 4 fails?

There is a fundamental difference between an elective abortion and the care provided after a miscarriage or for ectopic pregnancies. Amendment 4 will have no effect on the care a pregnant woman receives in an emergency. Women can always receive necessary and timely lifesaving medical treatment, including in Catholic hospitals. No law restricts this care in Florida.

### Doesn't Amendment 4 simply restore Florida back to when *Roe v. Wade* was in effect?

Amendment 4 goes dangerously beyond what was permitted in the *Roe v. Wade* ruling. It would eliminate important health and safety measures that protect women, remove parental consent for any minor seeking an abortion, and allow for abortion through the third trimester of pregnancy.

### Aren't late-term abortions very rare?

Because they are currently not permitted by Florida law, late-term abortions are extremely rare. If Amendment 4 passes, its broad loopholes would allow non-physicians to cite minor, treatable conditions to justify abortions, and there would be many more late-term abortions in Florida.

### How is the Church helping pregnant women in need?

The Catholic Church is committed to helping women in need during and after pregnancies. For decades, Catholic social service agencies, in collaboration with faith-based and secular organizations, have assisted pregnant women in need with material resources and personal accompaniment during pregnancy and after their child is born.

### What is the Church doing to defeat Amendment 4?

Each diocese in Florida is working together, through the Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops, to help Catholics understand the dangers of Amendment 4 to women, their children and their families. The Church supports the Florida Voters Against Extremism coalition to educate voters on how Amendment 4 is harmful for Floridians.

### Where can I learn more?

For more information and to read the text of the proposed amendment, visit [flaccb.org/abortion-amendment](http://flaccb.org/abortion-amendment) or scan:

