



Clerk of the Circuit Court, Brevard County, Florida

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Scott Ellis, Clerk

November 1, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Carlton
Florida Constitution Revision Commission
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Commissioner Carlton:

I write to echo the sentiments expressed in the October 30 letter from Florida First Amendment Foundation President Barbara Petersen concerning Proposal 22.

Perhaps more than any other agency, a clerk of court deals with information that is often subject to public exemption. This information ranges from the identities of victims of sexual or child abuse to social security numbers. While many exemptions serve a valid purpose, others are overly broad and designed simply as “feel good” legislation, by and far benefitting government employees.

The unintended consequence of placing Proposal 22 on the ballot is that the public’s right to access records would almost assuredly be narrowed, despite the existing language in the Constitution the proposal seeks to amend. While I believe that some reasonable restriction of information is necessary, I am a strong proponent of the public’s right to access their records. If anything, the CRC should be working to make it harder to restrict information from the public’s view, not debating how to make it easier.

I appreciate your committee’s attention to this matter, and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me or e-mail me at scott.ellis@brevardclerk.us.

Sincerely,

Scott Ellis
Clerk of the Circuit Court

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