

AMENDMENT 4: FLORIDA'S VOTING RESTORATION AMENDMENT



Florida is one of only four states with a lifetime ban on voting. Current policy excludes 1.4 million Floridians from voting because of a past conviction. As Jews who practice *teshuvah* – repentance – for the mistakes we have made, we believe that people with felony convictions who have fully completed their sentences have earned a second chance.

If passed, Amendment 4 will:

- **Restore voting eligibility to people with felony convictions who complete their full sentences**, including probation, parole and restitution.
- **Grant as many as 1.4 million people who cannot vote today the ability to participate in the civic process and strengthen their communities.**
- **Address the difficult process Floridians currently have to go through to restore their eligibility to vote.** Under current law, even after someone has paid their debt to society, the Governor and a three-person Cabinet must personally restore their voting eligibility. A federal judge recently determined that this process is arbitrary and unconstitutional.
- **Reduce the number of formerly incarcerated people who end up back in prison or jail** by giving them more of a stake in their daily lives.
- **Lead to \$365 million in positive economic impact**, including 3,800 new jobs every year and an overall increase of \$151 million in Florida's annual household income.
- **Not restore voting eligibility to those who have been convicted of murder or a sexual felony offense.** These individuals would still need to go through the current process to restore their eligibility to vote.

Amendment 4 – the Voting Restoration Amendment – will extend Second Chances to 1.4 million Floridians with felony convictions who have paid their debts to society. Under current law in Florida, individuals who want to regain their eligibility to vote must go through a costly and arduous process and have their eligibility restored, which can only happen by vote of the Governor and the Cabinet on a case by case basis. A federal judge recently ruled that this process is unconstitutional because there is no guarantee that decisions are made in a standard and objective way. However, the judge's ruling still places power in the hands of politicians who can change the voting restoration process every election cycle.



Florida voters have built a grassroots movement based on the belief that people who have made mistakes should have a second chance after they have paid their debt to society and succeeded in adding Amendment 4 to the ballot. Amendment 4 would fix Florida’s broken process for most people with felony convictions, automatically giving them the eligibility to vote and a chance to give back to their communities.

Our Jewish tradition teaches that through the process of *teshuvah* – repentance – those who have done wrong can earn a second chance and rejoin their community. So must it be for our family members, friends and neighbors throughout Florida who have felony convictions.

You can find more information about Amendment 4 at www.secondchancesfl.org.