



Position Statement on Amendment 3

(Approved by FNPS Board of Directors on 8/20/2026)

The Florida Native Plant Society opposes Amendment 3, aka the *Homestead Tax Exemptions, Property Assessments, and Spending Restrictions Amendment*, because it would severely limit the ability of local governments in Florida to effectively manage growth and protect natural resources. It would further erode the Home Rule authority granted to city and county governments by the Florida Constitution. In effect, the state wants to tell local governments how they can collect and distribute the property tax revenue that funds most of their needs.

Economists estimate the hit to property tax revenues would total \$5 billion in the first year and increase quickly to \$12 billion annually. Reductions of this scale would be catastrophic for local governments and force sweeping cuts to staffing and services while requiring increases in other taxes and fees.

What does Amendment 3 have to do with the conservation of native plants and the habitats that sustain them? You can be certain that protecting parks, springs, floodplains and other green spaces will take a backseat to funding roads, public health, law enforcement and other essential everyday services. Local governments already struggle to keep up with basic land management needs like prescribed burning and invasive plant management in their parks and preserves. Growth management and local land conservation programs would also be slashed at a time when rampant development is gobbling up environmentally valuable land to build new subdivisions, commercial centers and the roads and other infrastructure required to serve them.

Rural counties, where most of our unprotected natural areas are concentrated, would incur disproportionately large hits to their budgets and become even more vulnerable to seizing upon data centers and other potentially lucrative, but destructive, industries to address impending budget shortfalls. Highlands County recently shelved consideration of a local land conservation program in response to the fiscal uncertainty created by the potential passage of Amendment 3.

Budgets for the state's five regional water management districts, responsible for watershed management, public water supply, flood control, protection of water quality, and Everglades restoration, would also be slashed. We need MORE protection of water resources – not LESS!

City and county residents know more about their community's needs and priorities than state government does. If they believe their property taxes are too high, they can petition their local government to reduce them, change where their tax money is spent, or vote out elected officials who aren't responsive to their concerns.

The Taxation and Budget Reform Commission was created in 1988 to "...examine the state budgetary process, the revenue needs and expenditure processes of the state, the appropriateness of the tax structure of the state, and governmental productivity and efficiency." The Commission is scheduled to be convened in 2027, and it is the proper venue for considering changes to the state's tax code, especially one with such sweeping implications.

DO NOT ALLOW TALLAHASSEE to dictate your community's priorities, or how they will be met. Do not allow state government to continue eroding the Home Rule authority granted to local governments by the Florida Constitution. VOTE "NO" ON AMENDMENT 3!

Conserving, preserving and restoring Florida's native plants and their habitats
