

**FREE
FLORIDA.
FREE THE
NATION.**
ACLU Florida



**SOCIAL MEDIA
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
SCHOLARSHIP**

ACLU
Florida

THE SCHOLARSHIP

The ACLU of Florida (ACLU FL) is thrilled to announce four \$5,000 scholarships for college and high school students. The scholarships are open to all graduating Florida high school seniors and graduates of Florida high schools currently enrolled in an accredited vocational school, community college, college, or university. The scholarships seek to engage the state's up-and-coming civil rights and civil liberties activists.

Students are invited to respond to the video prompt below, to conduct their own research, showcase the stakes and importance of our freedoms, and inspire other young Floridians to learn more about Amendment 4.

To apply, students will create a video and post it to either their public TikTok or Instagram profile citing the ACLU FL's work to protect reproductive freedom and democracy in the state. Once you have done so, upload and submit the links using this [form](#).

Winners will be chosen based on follower reach, views, and user engagement of the video. Videos must speak to the importance of reproductive freedom, the need to limit government interference in private medical decisions and/or the importance of citizen-led ballot initiatives being fair and free from government intervention. Winners will be notified by December 9. No paid staff, board member, or family member of a board or staff member of the ACLU of Florida can apply.

Videos must be educational. Inaccurate content, misinformation, and candidate or party endorsements are disqualifying.

SCHOLARSHIPS

\$5,000

APPLICATION DEADLINE

November 6

PLATFORMS

Instagram Reels and TikTok

THE PROMPT

Amendment 4, the citizen-led ballot initiative to limit government interference with abortion, would protect access to abortion through viability in Florida, as was the case under Roe v. Wade for nearly 50 years. The state opposed Amendment 4's placement on the ballot and continues to oppose its passage. From unsuccessfully challenging the language of the amendment to rewriting the amendment's financial impact statement, sending election police to the homes of petition signers, using taxpayer-funded resources to oppose the amendment and spread misinformation, and threatening TV stations with criminal prosecution for running political ads in favor of Amendment 4, the State has opposed Amendment 4 continuously.

While the challenges may seem never-ending, together we can educate Floridians about Amendment 4 and why it matters.

With so much on the line in our state—a testing ground for anti-democratic policies like censorship, book bans and an extreme abortion ban and practices that undermine the will of Floridians like the unprecedented number of elected officials removed from office by our governor—what is your generation's vision for a Free Florida and a Free Nation? Why is Amendment 4 so important?

GUIDANCE

ABOUT THE ACLU OF FLORIDA

The ACLU of Florida, the state affiliate of the national ACLU, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to defending the civil liberties and rights guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Through litigation, legislation, and public education, the ACLU of Florida strives to ensure that the rights and freedoms of all Floridians are protected.

The ACLU of Florida is non-partisan and does not oppose or endorse candidates. but we must ensure Floridians understand that our civil liberties and democracy itself are on the ballot.

The Social Media Civic Engagement Scholarship does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, military status, or any other restricting classification in its selection of scholarship awardees.

DO'S AND DON'T'S

DO: Educate people about Amendment 4.

DO: Focus on the power people have to hold elected leaders accountable.

DO: Center the communities most impacted by harmful laws in your narrative -- BIPOC, LGBTQ+, Disabled, Students, Teachers, Women and other people who can become pregnant, and Immigrants.

DO: Acknowledge policies and practices that are eroding our rights and liberties, but emphasize we can do something about it.

DON'T: The ACLU of Florida does not endorse or support candidates for public office. For these videos, we ask that you do not endorse or support a candidate for public office directly.

DON'T: Name specific candidates or elected officials.

QUESTIONS

For advice and for scholarship application clarifications, you may reach out to Gaby Guadalupe (gguadalupe@aclufl.org).

RESOURCES

THE STATE'S UNPRECEDENTED CAMPAIGN AGAINST AMENDMENT 4

This election cycle has been moving fast and keeping up with the headlines can be challenging. To help inform your creative process, we created a short timeline of the actions taken by the state over the past four months to oppose Amendment 4:

- In July, the state called a [second convening of the Financial Impact Estimating Conference](#) to bring in an out-of-state actor from the Heritage Foundation to rewrite Amendment 4's financial impact statement. Financial impact statements are statements that accompany amendments on the ballot and can look like they are part of the amendment itself. The FEIC is meant to produce a neutral objective overview of how a measure will impact state funds, but politicization of the process, [threatens the integrity of every future ballot measure](#). Nonetheless, the Florida Supreme Court [refused to take action to stop](#) the state from publishing on the ballot the misleading, speculative, and unconstitutional language of the second FIEC, even though it disregards the admonitions of [a circuit court ruling](#) finding an earlier version of the state's financial impact statement to be misleading and inaccurate.
- In early September, the state [deployed its election police force](#) to the homes of people who signed petitions for Amendment 4 to question them. Petitions for Amendment 4 were collected and submitted for state verification over a year ago. [On April 1](#), the Amendment 4 campaign exceeded the statutory threshold of verified petitions by more than 100,000 petitions and the Florida Supreme Court ruled that Amendment 4 met the legal requirements to be placed on the November ballot. The deployment of election police to the homes of Floridians appeared to many, including individuals who were targeted, to be voter intimidation.
- Within days of election police being deployed, Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) [launched](#) a misinformation campaign against Amendment 4. The ACHA used taxpayer dollars to launch television, and radio advertisements containing inflammatory, false, and misleading statements that misrepresent Amendment 4, which denied the experiences of those harmed by the extreme ban, while seeking to influence the outcome of the election. The state agency was [sued](#), but the state court did not consider the merits of the case and [dismissed](#) the suit, saying no one had standing to appear in court and challenge these issues.
- During the first week of October, the Florida Department of Health sent cease-and-desist letters to multiple broadcast stations that aired an ad supporting Amendment 4. The groups backing Amendment 4 sued the state on October 16 and [secured a temporary restraining order](#) by a federal court on October 17. The Honorable Chief United States District [Judge Mark E. Walker](#) stated in his opinion, "To keep it simple for the state of Florida: It's the First Amendment, stupid," as he shut down the state's attempt to censor Floridians' political speech.

RESOURCES

- On October 11, the Florida Secretary of State's office published a lengthy but factually baffling report targeting the petition initiative for Amendment 4. The [state's suspiciously timed report](#) makes nonsensical claims about a few hundred petitions, which would have had no effect on the campaign meeting the statutory requirements and turning in over 1 million petitions. Importantly, the state had an opportunity to file objections to petitions before April but did not object to the inconsequential petitions even though it now claims it had knowledge of alleged fraud months before that deadline.
- On October 16, anti-abortion opponents filed [11th-hour lawsuits](#) against the campaign and 21 counties across the state seeking to strike Amendment 4 from the ballot or nullify election results based on the state's questionable October 11 report and render null and void the votes of Floridians who have already voted or will cast a vote on Amendment 4.

RESPONSES TO FALSE CLAIMS AND MISINFORMATION BY THE STATE

- Falsehood: Amendment 4 is “vague and deceptive.”
 - Amendment 4 is clear and simple. It will protect abortion through viability as was the case for decades under Roe v. Wade. The Florida Supreme Court, upon reviewing the ballot language, held "the ballot title and summary fairly inform voters, in clear and unambiguous language, of the chief purpose of the amendment and they are not misleading."
- Falsehood: Amendment 4 takes away parental consent.
 - Amendment 4 will not repeal or void parental consent laws. Someone who wants to end that requirement would have to challenge it in the courts—the same courts that just reversed 40 years of precedent to find that the Florida Constitution no longer protects abortion. Additionally, the amendment language explicitly protects the parental notification provision already in Florida's constitution.
- Falsehood: Amendment 4 allows “late-term abortions” through the ninth month of pregnancy.
 - This falsehood by anti-abortion extremists is intended to stoke fear, shame and hate. Fewer than 1% of abortions happen after 24 weeks, and, when they do, it is because something has gone terribly wrong with the pregnancy or the pregnant person's health and life is endangered by the pregnancy. [There is no such thing as a “late-term” elective abortion.](#)
- Falsehood: The current ban does not place women's lives at risk and women who have died or have almost died have faced these deadly risks because of the negligence of doctors.
 - Research has shown that [abortion bans kill women](#). A [report](#) by Physicians for Human Rights details how Florida's abortion ban “harms the health and safety of Florida patients while obstructing clinicians from providing basic reproductive and maternal medical care.”

RESOURCES

- Falsehood: Amendment 4 would remove physicians from the decision-making process and invalidate regulations, allowing anyone to perform an abortion.
 - Under Florida law, only licensed doctors are allowed to perform abortions. Nothing in Amendment 4 changes that.
- Misleading: Amendment 4 doesn't define viability
 - Roe v. Wade, which protected individuals' right to abortion through viability, was the law of the land from Jan. 1973 until Jun. 2022, when 6 members of the current Supreme Court overturned it. Viability is a well-understood medical concept that governed abortion care for nearly 50 years. Additionally, it is defined in Florida Statutes.
- Falsehood: Florida's abortion ban has meaningful exceptions for rape, incest and health of the mother that protect women
 - Florida's ban has no exceptions for rape and incest after 15 weeks of gestation (which is at most 11 weeks after the rape survivor misses her period). Prior to these 11 weeks, she is forced to provide written documentary proof of her rape in order to access the care she needs. The majority of rape victims do not report their assaults and no one should be forced to relive their trauma in order to be free from carrying and giving birth to their attacker's child. [Since the fall of Roe v. Wade, across the nation, over 64,000 pregnant people in states with abortion bans have been forced to carry and give birth to their rapist's child.](#)
 - Florida's abortion ban contains an overly narrow and unworkable exception for a woman's health only if "necessary to save the pregnant woman's life or avert a serious risk of substantial and irreversible physical impairment of a major bodily function." This requires doctors to delay necessary and critical medical care until the patient is on the brink of death, as we saw with [Anya Cook](#).
- Misleading: There is no criminal liability for pregnant women or their loved ones who support them in receiving abortion care under Florida's current ban.
 - The [six-week ban punishes](#) "any person who willfully performs, or actively participates in, a termination of pregnancy" in violation of the law as a third-degree felony with up to five years in prison, up to a US \$5,000 fine, loss of medical licenses, or all the above. Unlike many other states, Florida's ban does not clearly exempt pregnant people themselves from criminal prosecution. While politicians may be messaging a more measured stance before the election, the current statute could be interpreted by the Florida courts to allow broader enforcement. Project 2025 by the Heritage Foundation, one of the authors of the state's fiscal impact statement, lays out [a clear plan for obliterating reproductive rights](#) and ending all abortions.

LINKS TO ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ACLU of Florida's Voter Center: [Learn how to participate in the 2024 Election](#)
- ACLU of Florida's Reproductive Healthcare Resource Center highlighting what voter's need to know about the ban and about abortion: [Learn about Florida's extreme abortion ban](#)