



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF FLORIDA

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## Nearly Quarter of Florida Legislative Races Are Uncontested

### Amendments 5 & 6 Would Build Competition in Future

FLORIDA -- In a recent survey by [www.FollowTheMoney.org](http://www.FollowTheMoney.org), Florida ranked last in competitive races. This year's large number of unopposed state legislative candidates affirms the disturbing lack of competition. In next week's election, for 32 incumbent lawmakers, the night will be over before it starts.

Fortunately, voters will have the chance this year to decide if rules should be established for drawing districts lines.

"This year, voters will have a chance to establish rules for lawmakers to follow," Florida League president Deirdre Macnab said. "These will keep communities together, protect minority voting rights, and finally let voters choose their representatives, instead of leaving the parties and incumbents in charge."

Every 10 years, Tallahassee legislators redraw districts using Census data. With no rules to guide them, guess what happens? They draw districts to ensure their own re-election. As a result, an astounding 98.2% of state legislators have been re-elected over the past 10 years, with Florida having the LEAST amount of competitive elections in the country, tied for dead last with California and Massachusetts. In other words, voters end up with no choices in many of our state districts.

The chair of the campaign behind Amendments 5 and 6, Ellen Freidin, said Thursday the high number of incumbents facing no opposition is one of the main reasons she is pushing for Fair Districts. The amendments, if approved by at least 60 percent of Florida voters, would guide the 2012 round of redistricting.

And on the eve of Halloween, incumbents are fighting tooth and nail to prevent these rules from passing. By using out-of-state money, waging court battles, accusing supporters of partisanship, and threatening the dilution of minority voting rights, incumbents are using all the tricks they can muster to scare Florida voters away from Fair Districts. A broad-based coalition of groups including AARP, the League of Women Voters, the Florida League of Cities, and the Florida Association of Counties, along with NAACP, Democracia Ahora, and every major paper in the state, have stood in support of Amendments 5 and 6.

For more information, contact League president Deirdre Macnab at (407) 415-4559.