

# Largo/Mid-Pinellas Chamber of Commerce joins fight against state Amendment 4

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## Chamber joins fight against Amendment 4

After several failed attempts, the "hometown democracy" initiative has been approved for the November 2010 state ballot as Amendment 4.

To prevent its passage, the Largo/Mid-Pinellas Chamber of Commerce has joined a growing number of organizations in a fight against the amendment. Following the recommendation of its Government Action Committee, the chamber's board of directors voted unanimously to focus its resources on educating the public about the amendment and the negative impact it would have on the state.

If approved, the new law would require that all local comprehensive land-use plan changes meet voter approval, eliminating the open, accessible and democratic planning process that now exists. According to the chamber, this "vote on everything" amendment would dictate that citizens — not the representatives they elected — be forced to regularly decide hundreds of intricate land-use planning issues.

"If this amendment passes, you might just as well put up signs on the Florida state line that read 'closed for business,'" said Tom Morrissette, chamber president. "The disruption to local communities and the daily lives of Floridians will be extraordinary. It will not be unusual for the voters to have to decide on 200 to 300 comprehensive plan changes every year.

"What business would want to locate in the state and create jobs when they have to deal with this type of timely and costly process?"

More information about Amendment 4 can be found at the [www.largochamber.org](http://www.largochamber.org) under the Floridians for Smarter Growth link.

## SCORE to provide free business counseling

The Largo/Mid-Pinellas Chamber of Commerce has announced that business counseling services provided by SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) will be offered at its offices by appointment on the first and third Thursday each month beginning this week.

SCORE represents a group of working and retired business executives who volunteer their experience, providing assistance to people looking to start a business and counseling for owners/managers of existing businesses. A resource partner with the U.S. Small Business Administration, SCORE is a national, nonprofit group with more than 10,500 members that began in 1964.

"We are very excited to offer this specialized business counseling at the chamber," Morrissette said. "I have had the pleasure of working with several SCORE chapters during the years, and the expertise these individuals provide in service to the business community is immeasurable."

Four one-hour counseling sessions, beginning at 10 a.m., will be available on the scheduled Thursdays that SCORE representatives will be at the chamber. It's free. Appointments can be made by calling (727) 584-2321.

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