

Protecting Florida's Nonprofit Safety Net: Amendment 3 Campaign Strategy

Lane: The one-two punch on nonprofits and the Floridians who rely on them

Bottom Line

Run an education-first campaign built on one trade-off: Amendment 3 means less funding, more need, and fewer services.

1. How this campaign wins

Threshold math, not a majority. Amendment 3 needs 60% to pass. Every decision should be measured against whether it moves persuadable Floridians into credible doubt, not whether it wins an argument. Volume of activity is not the objective. Concentrated doubt in the right places is.

Own one lane and stay in it. Others will carry the fiscal case and the cuts to police, fire, parks and libraries. Nonprofits can explain the second-order impact better than any other organizations: nonprofits lose government support at the exact moment more Floridians need help. That story is under-covered, which makes it both the nonprofit sector's advantage and a fresh angle for reporters, especially because charitable organizations have compelling, human-interest stories to share. Coordinate facts and timing with the broader opposition, but do not get absorbed by it.

The nonprofit community is the field program. Other organizations dream of the kind of built-in field operation Florida nonprofits already have: nearly every nonprofit has an email list, a volunteer roster, a board, a newsletter, a physical location and daily contact with the people who would feel the cut. The work is making that network easy to activate, not building voter contact from scratch.

What the Measure Does

Staged homestead exemption increase (\$150,000 in 2027, \$250,000 in 2028 on non-school levies), a cut in the non-homestead assessment growth cap from 10% to 5%, and a path for a future Legislature to eliminate the rest of non-school homestead property taxes without another statewide vote. School taxes are excluded. Property taxes fund roughly 74% of local government budgets, with a recurring cost approaching \$11.8 billion a year once phased in. Use the \$34 billion figure only when clearly labeled cumulative and multi-year, and source-check every number, local example, and attribution before release.

2. Message Framework

Umbrella message: If Amendment 3 passes, the loss in local revenue would put critical services at risk and harm the communities nonprofits serve.

Pillar	Plain-language explanation
Fewer services	Fewer resources for families in crisis, people with disabilities, low-income children and senior citizens.
Less funding, more need	Cuts to public services raise demand for nonprofits at the exact moment local grants and contracts shrink.
Immediate impact	Governments and nonprofits budget months are already weighing tough decisions about service and program cuts.

Campaign shorthand: Floridians will have more need and less access to vital services, such as low-cost health care, affordable childcare and family intervention programs.

Lead with what happens to people, recognizable local services, real voices, and a clear vote-no ask where counsel permits. **Support with** verified data, member examples, and a concise explanation of how the measure works. **Avoid** fiscal jargon, partisan cues, inflated numbers, and making nonprofits’ institutional interests the story.

3. Audiences, Messengers, and Priority Geography

Role	Priority audiences	Primary ask
Mobilize	Nonprofit leaders, boards, staff, volunteers, donors, funders	Use the toolkit, share local impact, recruit messengers, activate networks.
Persuade	General public plus priority segments: Republican women, Hispanic voters, voters 18-34, renters, recently arrived Floridians	Look past the ballot title, understand the trade-off, vote no.
Validate	Local officials, first responders, faith and business leaders, health leaders, educators, philanthropies	Confirm the risk is real and broader than one sector.
Amplify	Local and statewide media, editorial boards, community creators	Cover and share the underreported nonprofit impact.

Messengers. Local nonprofit leaders translate policy into operational choices such as fewer hours, fewer programs, fewer beds, and longer waits. Board members and volunteers show the warning comes from respected community members. Clients and beneficiaries put a human face on the stakes, with consent and trauma-sensitive care. Donors explain why charity cannot fill a structural gap. Unusual allies, paired with first responders and business voices, show breadth. When groups that rarely agree raise the same warning, voters listen.

Geography. Final targeting should overlay county fiscal exposure, persuasion potential, nonprofit footprint, beneficiary stories and media reach. Strong local messengers should drive placement more than demographics alone. Working hypothesis: South Florida (Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach) for density, service demand and media reach; Tampa Bay (Hillsborough, Pinellas) for nonprofit presence and a competitive electorate; Central Florida (Orange, Osceola) for fast-growing need and a large, diverse population; Northeast Florida (Duval) for major service hubs and influential regional media; and selected rural counties where cuts land hardest and nonprofits have compelling stories to share.

4. Voter contact strategy for a ballot measure

Referendum campaigns are won by sequencing contact against the voting calendar, not by volume. Build the plan around three distinct moments: vote-by-mail request and return, the early voting window, and Election Day. Each is a separate universe with its own message and its own chase. Channel mix should follow voting behavior and audience, not preference. Older and vote-by-mail voters respond to mail and phones. Younger and Election Day voters are reached digitally and in person.

Channel	How FNA should use it
Email	The largest owned asset. Segment by role and send the same argument with different asks. Mirror the mail and digital content so voters hear one message.
Direct mail	Expensive statewide. Use only inside a funded county program, with a senior supplement and a vote-by-mail chase wave, which is where mail historically performs best.
Phones and texting	Counsel-approved and best used to activate members, volunteers, and identified supporters rather than for cold voter contact.
Digital	The primary statewide persuasion channel given cost and reach. See Sections 5 and 6.
In person	Events, service sites, senior centers, houses of worship, campus service groups, and community roundtables. Highest credibility per contact, and low lift where members are already convening people.
Coalition-sourced contact	Canned language, graphics, and email copy so partners contact their own lists in their own voice. Multiplies reach without adding additional costs.
Localized push	Where a county program is funded: canvassing with tablets for clean data capture, lawn signs, and calls or emails from local leaders to their own supporters.

Identify supporters at every touch. Contact forms, toolkit downloads, event sign-ins, and pledge or sign-on signatures should all feed one list that can be re-contacted in the final ten days. Log opposition too, so rapid response knows where pressure is coming from.

Sequence the close. In the final ten days, run the order that works: consequence first, trusted messenger second, voting plan third, vote-no close last. Pair it with county-level voting calendars so every ask includes a date and a place.

5. Paid Media and Advertising

Paid buys reach against a fixed calendar, so it should be planned as its own tactic with its own budget, targeting logic, and production timeline rather than as an extension of the digital workstream. The content rule stays the same: paid extends the strongest organic, member, and validator content rather than running generic political advertising.

Build the buy by audience, not by channel. The mix should follow how each group votes and where they actually are:

- **Older and vote-by-mail voters.** The group most likely to bank a vote early and the least likely to be reached on Instagram or TikTok. Give them a dedicated flight: local broadcast television and radio, print insertions in county dailies and community weeklies, and direct mail timed to the vote-by-mail request and return windows. Connected TV and Facebook reach the younger half of this group.
- **Persuadable general-audience voters.** Meta and YouTube for reach, connected TV for consequence storytelling, local and county news sites and apps for credibility, and search for people looking up the amendment before they vote.
- **Younger voters and renters.** Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and streaming audio, geo-targeted around campuses, festivals, service days, and early voting sites.

Out of home where budget allows. High-traffic corridors in priority counties, transit, and placements near recognizable service hubs. The scenario graphic works well in this format because it is one visual and one line.

Time the flights against the ballot calendar, not the news cycle. Three flights: a launch flight in the persuasion phase, a sustaining flight through early voting, and a reserved final ten days. Weight the vote-by-mail flight earlier than instinct suggests. A mail ballot returned in week one cannot be won back.

Report every two weeks and move money mid-flight. Track by audience segment and county, not just by platform, so the reporting answers whether the older vote-by-mail push is landing rather than only whether impressions are being delivered.

Set a decision point. Confirm the paid budget early enough that creative and the buy can be built for the persuasion phase. If it is not confirmed by that date, shift the resource into member and validator amplification rather than compressing a rushed buy into the final weeks.

6. Validators, Coalition, and Earned Media

Map before you recruit. Build the coalition in two tiers. **Grasstops** targets include county commissioners and mayors, sheriffs and fire chiefs, hospital and free clinic leaders, school district leaders, faith leaders, chambers of commerce, United Ways, community foundations, service clubs, veterans' organizations, senior centers, animal welfare groups and university researchers. **Grassroots** targets are the volunteers, donors, clients and neighbors those organizations already reach. Recruit the first tier to unlock the second.

Activate deliberately. A sign-on letter establishes breadth in one artifact. From there: op-eds and letters to the editor drafted as templates with named signers lined up in advance, editorial board meetings, regional roundtables and press events, radio call-ins including Spanish-language radio in South Florida and a rapid response network that can be triggered in hours rather than days.

Create a moment: Organize a day of action where nonprofits, their allies, clients and volunteers all post to social media with the #amendment3. The goal is to create an environment where all stakeholders — media, voters and civic leaders — see the conversation.

Pair validators across party lines. Recruit a credible Republican and a credible Democrat willing to raise the same alarm together, and put them on the same op-ed, the same panel and the same press event. Amendment 3 will otherwise be read through a partisan lens by default, and a visibly bipartisan pairing is the fastest way to signal that this is a services question rather than a party fight.

Engage independent experts. Identify and prepare a handful of nonprofit finance experts, county budget officials and university public policy researchers who can explain the funding mechanics without a stake in the outcome and offer them to reporters as sources. This is the single highest-leverage credibility move available, because the same argument travels further coming from someone with no stake in the outcome. Delivered by the sector itself, voters hear an organization defending its own funding.

Build a speakers' bureau and a speaking calendar. Recruit and train 12 to 20 speakers by region and service area, then build a database of speaking opportunities running from statewide conferences down to Rotary and chamber meetings. Existing calendars are cheaper to fill than new events are to create.

Earned media posture. Engage media early to frame the nonprofit impact story before the opposition defines it. Run a rolling op-ed calendar for a steady drumbeat rather than a single push. Brief reporters who cover nonprofits, local government and county budgets. Time proactive moments to milestones, such as county budget hearings and any new fiscal analysis, and anchor the biggest event to the start of early voting: a coalition press conference pairing nonprofit leaders with first responders, faith voices and the bipartisan validator pair on the day early voting begins can turn the news moment into a voting ask. Whenever possible, provide a Floridian who relies on the nonprofit for assistance to speak with the reporter.

7. Content and Collateral to Build

The test for every asset is whether an ally can use it within fifteen minutes without editing. Built for handoff, not just for publication.

Asset	Purpose
Key messages document	Internal master. Everything outward-facing derives from it.
Tough Q&A	Internal. Updated weekly from monitoring and member feedback.
Statewide one-pager	Leave-behind for meetings, media, and legislative offices.
Modular fact sheets	By service area: health, children, hunger, housing, crisis, seniors, animals.
Localizable impact template	Members fill in their own numbers and service area.
Myths vs. facts set	Web page plus a matching graphic series for social and comments.
Scenario graphic	The signature visual: funding down, need up, gap widening.
Video	One anchor testimonial video of two to three minutes plus vertical cutdowns. Filmed on site, not slick.
Social library	Ten sample posts and five creative assets in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole.
Op-ed and LTE templates	Drafted for signature by validators and members.
Member email templates	Segmented by boards, staff, volunteers, and donors.
Presentation deck	For member briefings, community groups, and speaking engagements.
Voting information card	Dates, locations, and the ask, in all three languages.

8. Phasing and Measurement

Phase	Timing	Primary activity
1. Foundation	Aug 17-31	Interviews, legal posture, fact validation, message and targeting, story intake, hub build.
2. Build and recruit	Sept 1-30	Toolkit and training, speakers and validators, digital content system, young-voter partnerships, paid creative.
3. Persuasion	Oct 1-18	Earned and opinion media, local stories, roundtables, day of action, paid launch, rapid response.
4. Mobilization	Oct 19-Nov 3	Voting information and vote-no asks, member activation, concentrated reach, county voting calendars.
5. Close and evaluate	Nov 4-6	Thank partners, document results, preserve the coalition and story bank.

Rapid response. Two-hour triage: verify the claim and its reach, assess the harm, choose the lightest effective response (monitor, correct privately, answer through a validator, or respond publicly), return to the core message and a local human consequence, and log the issue to update the Q&A. Do not chase every argument.

Measurement. Track member activation (toolkit use, trained organizations, stories, signatories), narrative reach (placements, op-eds, share of coverage tying Amendment 3 to nonprofit services), digital performance reported every two weeks, geographic coverage of priority counties, message pull-through by audience, and persuasion signals from available tracking. Review weekly, report monthly, and reallocate staff time and paid investment accordingly.

North Star

Make the consequence clear, local and human. Amendment 3 means less funding, more need, fewer services and harm to everyday Floridians.