

## Explanation of the Initiative Petition Process

In 1905 the people of Missouri added to our state constitution provisions for amending the constitution by initiative and referendum. They reserved to themselves the state the power to directly amend their own constitution without the intervention of legislators, the governor or other politicians. This power of the people is in Article III, Section 49.

The signatures of eight percent of the voters based on the gubernatorial election in two-thirds of the congressional districts are required to place a constitutional amendment on the ballot for voter approval. (Art III, Section 50.)

Before a petition can be submitted for signatures, it must be approved as to form by the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State has about 30 days to get input from the Attorney General and the state Auditor and then prepare an official "Ballot Title." The "Ballot Title" includes the "Ballot Summary" ( a 100 word or less summary of the proposal) prepared by the Secretary of State and the "Fiscal Summary" (50 words or less) prepared by the State Auditor. The "Ballot Title" is what the voter actually sees in the voting booth. NOTE: The Secretary of State has the authority, subject to court review, to draft the "Ballot Title" but has no authority to change the actual text of the proposed constitutional amendment. Parties have 10 days to contest the Secretary of State's ballot title in court, if they wish.

After the ballot title is approved, proponents they collect signatures of voters. Signers must be registered voters and petition circulators must witness the signatures by notary affidavit.

The signed petitions are then filed with the Secretary of State to verify the validity and number of the signatures. The petitions are sent to the local election authorities to verify signatures against the voter registration rolls. If the petition has been signed by the required number of registered voters in six of nine congressional districts, the Secretary of State certifies the petitions for a vote at election time. Parties have ten days to contest the Secretary of State's action.

If a majority of the voters approve the amendment it goes in to effect as law 30 days after the election. No approval of the governor or legislature is required. The people have spoken.

<b>Number of Signatures Required for Initiative Petitions</b> <b>(Source: Secretary of State)</b>	
<b>Congressional District</b>	<b>Signatures required for Constitutional Amendment</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	23,182
2 <sup>nd</sup>	28,787
3 <sup>rd</sup>	23,775
4 <sup>th</sup>	22,829
5 <sup>th</sup>	23,527
6 <sup>th</sup>	25,775
7 <sup>th</sup>	25,450
8 <sup>th</sup>	21,563
9 <sup>th</sup>	24,305