

STAPLE  
HERE

It is a class A misdemeanor punishable, notwithstanding the provisions of section 560.021, RSMo, to the contrary, for a term of imprisonment not to exceed one year in the county jail or a fine not to exceed ten thousand dollars or both, for anyone to sign any initiative petition with any name other than his or her own, or knowingly to sign his or her name more than once for the same measure for the same election, or to sign a petition when such person knows he or she is not a registered voter.

**INITIATIVE PETITION**

Page No. \_\_\_\_\_

To the Honorable John R. Ashcroft, Secretary of State for the state of Missouri: \_\_\_\_\_ County (or city of St. Louis), respectfully order that the following proposed amendment to the constitution shall be submitted to the voters of the state of Missouri, for their approval or rejection, at the general election to be held on the 3rd day of November, 2026, and each for himself or herself says: I have personally signed this petition. I am a registered voter of the state of Missouri and \_\_\_\_\_ County (or city of St. Louis), my registered voting address and the name of the city, town or village in which I live are correctly written after my name.

**[OFFICIAL BALLOT TITLE]**



**CIRCULATOR'S AFFIDAVIT**

STATE OF MISSOURI, COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_, I, \_\_\_\_\_ being first duly sworn, say (print names of signers)

	Signature	Date Signed	Registered Voting Address	Zip Code	Cong. District	Printed First and Last Name
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
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signed this page of the foregoing petition, and each of them signed his or her name thereto in my presence; I believe that each has stated his or her name, registered voting address and city, town or village correctly, and that each signer is a registered voter of the state of Missouri and \_\_\_\_\_ County (or city of St. Louis). FURTHERMORE, I HEREBY SWEAR OR AFFIRM UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY THAT ALL STATEMENTS MADE BY ME ARE TRUE AND CORRECT AND THAT I HAVE NEVER BEEN CONVICTED OF, FOUND GUILTY OF, OR PLEADED GUILTY TO ANY OFFENSE INVOLVING FORGERY. I am at least 18 years of age. I do \_\_\_\_\_ do not \_\_\_\_\_ (check one) expect to be paid for circulating this petition. If paid, list the payer: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Affiant (Person obtaining signatures) \_\_\_\_\_ Street Address of Affiant \_\_\_\_\_ City, State and Zip Code of Affiant \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of Affiant \_\_\_\_\_ City, State and Zip Code of Affiant \_\_\_\_\_

Subscribed and sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, A.D. \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Notary \_\_\_\_\_ Address of Notary \_\_\_\_\_

(Seal)

NOTICE: The proposed amendment revises Article III of the Constitution by adopting one new Section to be known as Article III, Section 54.

*Be it resolved by the people of the state of Missouri that the Constitution be amended:*

Section A. Article III of the Constitution is revised by adopting one new Section to be known as Article III, Section 54 to read as follows:

Section 54.

1. Notwithstanding any provision of this Constitution to the contrary, the legislature shall be prohibited from weakening citizens' direct lawmaking power. For the purposes of this subsection, the term "weakening citizens' direct lawmaking power" shall be defined to include proposing or passing any law or constitutional amendment which, if enacted, would weaken citizens' power of initiative, weaken citizens' power of referendum, or weaken both of those powers, whether explicitly or by implication. The term shall be construed broadly and shall include any change making it more difficult for the citizens to reject by referendum acts of the legislature or making it more difficult for the citizens to propose or enact laws or constitutional amendments through the initiative. Examples of such changes include, but are not limited to, raising signature thresholds, shortening the time allowed for signature collection, narrowing allowable subject matter, imposing additional qualifications or procedural requirements on petitioners, or raising the vote percentage required to approve a measure at the ballot. In no case shall any such change be made by way of an act or amendment put forward by the legislature.

2. Notwithstanding any provision of this Constitution to the contrary, the legislature shall be prohibited from attempting to change any citizen-initiated law or citizen-initiated amendment, except in the event that eighty percent of the House and Senate approve the change.

(1) For the purposes of this subsection, a "citizen-initiated law" is defined to be a law that the people have proposed and enacted by the initiative at any time, whether before, on, or after the effective date of this section.

(2) For the purposes of this subsection, a "citizen-initiated amendment" is defined to be a portion of this Constitution that the people have proposed and enacted by the initiative as a constitutional amendment at any time, whether before, on, or after the effective date of this section.

(3) For the purposes of this subsection, "attempting to change" a citizen-initiated law or citizen-initiated amendment means proposing or passing any law or constitutional amendment which, if enacted, would modify, repeal, or supersede any part of a citizen-initiated law or citizen-initiated amendment, whether explicitly or by implication.

(4) This subsection shall not be construed to authorize the legislature to take any action prohibited by a provision of this Constitution outside this subsection. Nothing in this section shall be construed to permit the legislature to amend this Constitution without the direct consent of the voters as expressed at a referendum.

3. Notwithstanding any provision of this Constitution to the contrary, any law or constitutional amendment put forward by the legislature which is proposed, passed, or enacted after the effective date of this section in violation of subsection 1 or 2 of this section is null and void, and any citizen may challenge it in court.

4. Notwithstanding any provision of this Constitution to the contrary, every ballot measure shall be decided at a general election, except in the event that eighty percent of the House and Senate approve a special election for the measure.

5. For the purposes of this section, the term "ballot measure" encompasses all measures put to a statewide vote of the people, whether changing the laws or changing this Constitution. For the purposes of this section, "eighty percent of the House and Senate approve" means that at least eighty percent of the members of the House and at least eighty percent of the members of the Senate each separately approve.

6. Notwithstanding any provision of this Constitution to the contrary, there is established an independent citizens' commission responsible for preparing every ballot summary and ensuring every ballot summary is clear, unbiased, fair, and accurate, as described below.

(1) The independent citizens' commission established by this section shall be known as the "Missouri Citizens' Commission on Ballot Questions".

(2) All members of the commission shall be residents and registered voters of the state of Missouri. Except as otherwise specifically provided in this section, no state official, no member of the General Assembly, no active judge of any court, no employee of the state or any of its institutions, boards, commissions, agencies or other entities, no elected or appointed official or employee of any political subdivision of the state, no officer or employee of any political party, and no lobbyist as defined by law shall serve as a member of the commission. No immediate family member of any person ineligible for service on the commission under the provisions of this subdivision shall serve on the commission. The phrase "immediate family" means the parents, spouse, siblings, children, or dependent relative of the person, whether or not living in the same household.

(3) The commission shall consist of thirteen members selected through the following process:

(a) The chief election official of the state, as determined by law or by this Constitution, shall administer an application process in the following manner:

(i) By December 15 of each year of a general election, and no earlier than November 15 of that year, the chief election official shall mail applications for commissioner to a minimum of one-half of one percent of Missouri registered voters, selected at random from the list of registered voters maintained by the state.

(ii) The application shall require applicants who choose to apply to affirm under penalty of perjury that they meet the qualifications set forth in this section and that they identify with one of the two political parties with the largest representation in the legislature (hereinafter in this section, "major parties"), or identify with any

other established political party under state law (hereinafter in this section, "minor party"), or do not identify with any political party. If an applicant identifies with a party, the applicant shall identify which party the applicant identifies with. The application shall additionally display the oath of office administered to commissioners and require the applicant to indicate whether they are willing to take that oath.

(iii) As applications are received, the chief election official shall determine whether the application is complete and whether the applicant meets the qualifications in subdivision (2) of this subsection based solely on the information contained in the application. If the application is incomplete, the chief election official shall notify the applicant, if possible. If the applicant is not qualified, the application shall be rejected.

(iv) Within seven days after the submission of each completed and qualifying application, the chief election official shall publicly list online the applicant's full name, county of residence, and party identification or absence thereof.

(v) Starting on the second Tuesday of each year following a general election, the chief election official shall mail additional applications for commissioner on a weekly basis to a minimum of one-tenth of one percent of Missouri registered voters selected at random until at least one hundred qualifying applicants who identify with each of the two major parties have submitted completed applications and at least one hundred twenty qualifying applicants who identify with a minor party or do not identify with any political party have submitted completed applications, for a total of at least three hundred twenty completed and qualifying applications.

(vi) Only individuals who are randomly selected by the chief election official to receive applications by mail in accordance with this subsection shall be permitted to apply to serve as commissioner, and the chief election official shall mail said applications in the same order in which their recipients are randomly selected.

(vii) Each selection, of any sort, which is required by any part of this section to be made randomly or by lot shall be made in a publicly observable way and in such a way as to let the public verify beyond any doubt that the selection is truly random.

(viii) The chief election official shall accept applications for commissioner until February 14 of each year following a general election. By February 21 of each year following a general election, the chief election official shall provide all completed and qualifying applications to the chief justice of the supreme court.

(b) By March 7 of each year following a general election, the chief justice of the supreme court shall:

(i) Select, from all completed and qualifying applications, eighty candidates from each pool of major-party applicants and one hundred candidates from the pool of minor-party and no-party applicants. Candidates shall be selected using a process substantially similar to that employed to ensure juries are drawn from a fair cross-section of the community so that the combined set of all candidates reflects to the greatest extent possible the full population of the state, including but not limited to rural, urban, and suburban participation.

(ii) Submit the selected candidates to the chief election official, the majority leader of the Senate, the minority leader of the Senate, the speaker of the House of Representatives, and the minority leader of the House of Representatives.

(c) By March 21 of each year following a general election, the majority leader of the Senate, the minority leader of the Senate, the speaker of the House of Representatives, and the minority leader of the House of Representatives shall be permitted to each strike ten candidates from any pool or pools, up to a maximum of forty total strikes by the four legislative leaders.

(d) By March 28 of each year following a general election, the chief election official shall select commissioners by randomly drawing two names from each of the two pools of remaining candidates identifying with a major party, and three names from the pool of remaining minor-party or no-party candidates.

(e) By April 14 of each year following a general election, the selected commissioners shall review the pools of remaining candidates and appoint the remaining commissioners as follows: two commissioners from each of the two pools of remaining candidates identifying with a major party, and two commissioners from the pool of remaining minor-party and no-party candidates. These remaining commissioners shall be chosen in a manner that ensures the commission reflects to the greatest extent possible the full population of the state, including but not limited to rural, urban, and suburban participation. The appointment of each remaining commissioner shall require the affirmative votes of at least four of the commissioners selected through the process described in paragraph (d) of this subdivision, including at least one affirmative vote by a commissioner identified with each of the two major parties and at least one affirmative vote by a minor-party or no-party commissioner. If, for any seat on the commission, no candidate receives the minimum required votes, the chief election official shall fill the vacancy within five days by randomly drawing a name from the remaining qualifying candidates in the appropriate selection pool.

(4) Except as provided below, the term of office of each member of the commission expires upon the appointment of the final member of the succeeding commission. If a commissioner's seat becomes vacant for any reason, the chief election official shall fill the vacancy within five days by randomly drawing a name from the remaining qualifying candidates in the selection pool from which the original commissioner was selected. A commissioner's seat shall become vacant upon the occurrence of any of the following:

(a) Death or mental incapacity of the commissioner;

(b) The chief election official's receipt of the commissioner's written resignation;

(c) The commissioner's absence from a cumulative total of three meetings of the commission;

(d) The commissioner ceases to be qualified to serve as a commissioner under subdivision (2) of this subsection; or

(e) After written notice and an opportunity for the commissioner to respond, a vote of ten of the commissioners finding substantial neglect of duty, gross misconduct in office, or inability to discharge the duties of office.

(5) The chief election official shall be secretary of the commission without vote, and in that capacity shall furnish, under the direction of the commission, all technical and legal services that the commission deems necessary. The commission shall elect its own chairperson. The commission has the sole power to make its own rules of procedure.

(6) If the chief election official or any other official or group of officials fails to perform a duty required under this subsection by the date required, the chief justice of the supreme court shall assume all duties assigned to said official by this subsection until either said official is replaced by a successor or else the month of the next general election concludes, whichever happens first.

(7) Except as provided in subdivisions (13), (14), and (15) for a vote on a ballot summary, any other final decision of the commission requires the concurrence of a majority of the commissioners. All decisions of the commission shall be recorded, and the record of its decisions shall be readily available to any member of the public without charge.

(8) Subsequent to April 21, 2027, the commission shall have sole and exclusive authority to consider and adopt ballot summaries for all ballot measures and shall adopt a ballot summary for every ballot measure submitted without substantial formatting errors. The commission shall ensure that each ballot summary it adopts is as clear, unbiased, fair, and accurate as possible. The term "ballot summary" refers to the summary statement that is placed on the ballot, that is posted in each polling place next to the sample ballot, and that explains what a vote for and what a vote against a ballot measure represents. The ballot summary does not include any fiscal note summary included in the official ballot title, and the commission shall have no authority over the fiscal note summary unless and to the extent otherwise provided by law.

(9) When a citizen petitioner submits a filing giving notice of an initiative petition or referendum petition intended for circulation, they shall submit with such filing a proposed ballot summary, which shall be considered by the commission. Similarly, when the legislature orders a referendum, the legislature shall submit a proposed ballot summary, which shall be considered by the commission. Within seven days of any such filing by a citizen petitioner or order by the legislature, the most senior professional staff member employed by the legislature for the purpose of drafting or aiding in the drafting of bills shall submit a separate proposed ballot summary, which shall be considered by the commission, provided such staff member is selected for employment by a committee of the legislature consisting of no more than a bare majority of members from one major party. For the purposes of this subdivision, "bare majority" means the smallest number of members required to constitute a majority.

(10) Each commissioner shall be permitted to submit up to one additional proposed ballot summary or set of changes to a proposed ballot summary for any ballot measure to be considered by the commission, provided that if any language proposed by a commissioner was in whole or in part provided by, informed by, or developed in coordination with anyone other than the commissioner, in writing or otherwise, the commissioner shall disclose the identity of the natural person or persons who were the original source of the language along with any and all communications relating to the language.

(11) Every ballot summary submitted for consideration by the commission shall be written to be as clear, unbiased, fair, and accurate as possible.

(12) Before considering any ballot summary, the commission shall publish each proposed ballot summary. The commission shall provide public notice of each summary that will be voted on and provide at least ten days for public comment on the proposed summary or summaries before voting to adopt.

(13) A final decision of the commission to adopt a ballot summary requires a majority vote of the commission, including at least one commissioner who identifies with each major party and at least two commissioners who identify with a minor party or do not identify with any political party.

(14) If more than one summary satisfies subdivision (13), the summary that receives the highest number of votes shall be adopted. If two or more summaries that satisfy subdivision (13) receive the same, highest number of votes, the chief election official shall resolve the tie by lot.

(15) If no summary satisfies subdivision (13), the commission shall use the following procedure to adopt a summary:

(a) Each commissioner shall order each proposed summary by preference. Each summary shall be assigned a point value inverse to its order among the number of choices, giving the least-preferred summary one point and the most-preferred summary a point value equal to the number of summaries submitted.

(b) The commission shall adopt the summary receiving the highest total points, which is also ordered among the top half of summaries by at least three commissioners not identified with a major party. If summaries are tied for the highest point total, the chief election official shall resolve the tie by lot. If no summary meets the requirements of this paragraph, the process prescribed by this subdivision shall be repeated. If it then remains that no summary meets the requirements of this paragraph, the chief election official shall randomly select the final summary from among all submitted summaries.

(16) The commission shall, in every instance, certify a ballot summary no later than forty-eight days following the legislature ordering a referendum or a citizen petitioner submitting a filing giving notice of an initiative petition or referendum petition intended for circulation, except that any such deadline which otherwise would occur prior to June 8, 2027, shall be deferred to June 8, 2027.

(17) Each commissioner, at the commencement of their service on the commission, shall take the following oath or affirmation: "I do solemnly swear, or affirm, that I will faithfully and impartially perform the duties of my office as described by the Constitution of the state of Missouri; that I will place clarity, fairness, accuracy, and freedom from bias above all personal, partisan, or ideological considerations throughout the preparation and adoption of each and every ballot summary, no matter the temptation to do otherwise; and that I will not

knowingly receive, directly or indirectly, any tangible or intangible item, service, or thing of value for the performance or nonperformance of any act or duty pertaining to my office, other than any compensation provided for by law.” The oath or affirmation shall be administered by a judge of the supreme court or a circuit court and shall be filed in the office of the secretary of state. Any commissioner refusing to take said oath or affirmation shall be deemed to have vacated his or her office, and any commissioner convicted of having violated his or her oath or affirmation shall be deemed guilty of perjury, and be forever disqualified from holding any office of trust or profit in this state.

(18) Commissioners shall be subject to the same personal financial disclosure requirements as members of the legislature.

(19) No commissioner shall receive compensation for the provision of lobbying services or political consulting services, nor shall any former commissioner receive compensation for the provision of such services during the twelve months subsequent to their service on the commission. No commissioner shall be appointed to any office by an elected official of the state during their service on the commission, nor shall any former commissioner be appointed to any office by an elected official of the state during the twelve months subsequent to their service on the commission.

(20) No person or entity seeking to influence commissioners’ official actions shall directly or indirectly offer any commissioner a gift of any tangible or intangible item, service, or thing of value, except that this paragraph shall not prevent any individual from offering gifts or family support to those related to such individual within the fourth degree by blood or marriage.

(21) The commission shall conduct all of its business at open meetings, which shall be virtual and shall occur once per week, as needed. Nine commissioners, including at least one commissioner from each selection pool, shall constitute a quorum, and all meetings shall require a quorum. The commission shall provide public notice of its meetings at least seven days in advance. The commission shall use technology to provide contemporaneous public observation of and participation in all meetings.

(22) Records of the commission shall be public records and subject to generally applicable state laws governing public access to public records, including the Sunshine Law. Each commissioner is the custodian of records under the custody and control of the commissioner. The chief election official is the custodian for all other records relating to the commission.

(23) Proceedings of the commission shall be public meetings subject to generally applicable state laws governing public access to public meetings, including the Sunshine Law. Open public meetings of commission proceedings shall be subject to recording by citizens, so long as the proceedings are not materially disrupted.

(24) The legislature may set compensation for the commission, including pay and reimbursement for any actual and necessary expenses. The legislature shall not set conditions on commissioners’ eligibility for such compensation or otherwise seek to influence commissioners’ use of the powers granted them by this section.

(25) The powers granted to the commission are not subject to the control or approval of the legislature, and are exclusively reserved to the commission. The commission, and all of its responsibilities, operations, and functions are not subject to change, transfer, reorganization, or reassignment, and shall not be altered or abrogated in any manner whatsoever, by the legislature. No other body shall be established by law to perform functions that are the same or similar to those granted to the commission in this section.

7. Notwithstanding any provision of this Constitution to the contrary, the people shall have the power to directly enact, by majority of votes cast thereon, laws and amendments proposed by initiative petition and relating to any of the subjects on which the legislature can propose laws and amendments, excluding any subject prohibited by this Constitution as of December 31, 2024, with signatures from five percent of the legal voters in each of two-thirds of Missouri’s congressional districts sufficient to propose a law, and with signatures from eight percent of the legal voters in each of two-thirds of Missouri’s congressional districts sufficient to propose an amendment, the number of signatures required calculated based on the total vote for governor at the general election last preceding the filing of any petition.

8. Notwithstanding any provision of this Constitution to the contrary, the people shall have the power to order by petition a referendum on any act of the legislature (except as to laws necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health or safety, and laws making appropriations for the current expenses of the state government, for the maintenance of state institutions and for the support of public schools), with signatures from five percent of the legal voters in each of two-thirds of Missouri’s congressional districts sufficient to order such a referendum, the number of signatures required calculated based on the total vote for governor at the general election last preceding the filing of any petition.

9. If any provision of subsections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 of this section or the application thereof to anyone or to any circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of those provisions and the application of such provisions to others or other circumstances shall not be affected thereby.