

BALLOT LANGUAGE FOR CONSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVE NO. 117 (CI-117)

CONSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVE NO. 117

A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION

CI-117 amends Article IV, Section 2 of the Montana constitution to define qualified electors as only individuals who are US citizens, 18 years of age or older, who have resided in Montana for at least 30 days before the election. Only individuals who are qualified electors can vote in Montana federal, state, county, municipal and school elections, unless the legislature by law provides an exception for a county or municipal special district election where qualification to vote is based on property ownership. Individuals who do not meet the citizenship and residency requirements will not vote in Montana elections if CI-117 passes. If passed by the electorate, CI-117 will become effective immediately.

YES on Constitutional Initiative CI-117

NO on Constitutional Initiative CI-117

THE COMPLETE TEXT OF CONSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVE NO. 117 (CI-117)

WHEREAS, special interest groups are specifically and tactically pressuring governments to adopt voting provisions that allow noncitizens to vote in our elections, particularly at state and local levels of government; and

WHEREAS, local governments on the East coast have already allowed noncitizen voting, and San Francisco allows noncitizen voting in some elections while New York and many other governments across the nation are considering it; and

WHEREAS, Montanans wish to clarify and clearly establish that the Constitution of the State of Montana limits voting to Montana residents who are U.S. citizens; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the State of Montana that individuals who are not Montana residents and U.S. citizens are specifically excluded from voting in our elections, and in adopting this policy, Montanans clearly provide that the language of our constitution affirmatively acts to both protect a citizen's right to vote and to limit that right to vote to individuals with U.S. citizenship, rejecting the notion that noncitizens have voting rights; and

WHEREAS, this constitution and the legislature should continue to set the requirements for voting in our Montana elections, not each political subdivision, including self-governing units,

NOWTHEREFORE, Montanans adopt the following policy:

If enacted by Montana voters, it is the policy of the State of Montana that voting is limited to individuals who are United States citizens and have been Montana residents for at least 30 days. Individuals who are not U.S. citizens are specifically excluded from voting in our elections. In adopting this amendment Montanans clearly express that the language of our constitution affirmatively acts to both protect a citizen's right to vote and to limit that right to individuals with U.S. citizenship, rejecting the notion that noncitizens have voting rights. Our constitution, and the legislature, should continue to set the requirements for voting in our Montana elections rather than political subdivisions. There are limited exceptions involving county and municipal matters relating to special districts, where issues are referred to voters in a certain area, and the legislature should continue to provide a means to establish and maintain those specialized districts.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Article IV, section 2, of The Constitution of the State of Montana is amended to read:

“Section 2. Qualified elector. ~~Any~~ Only an individual citizen of the United States 18 years of age or older who is a Montana resident for at least 30 days prior to the election who meets the registration ~~and residence~~ requirements provided by law is a qualified elector, unless ~~he~~ the individual is serving a sentence for a felony in a penal institution or is of unsound mind, as determined by a court. Only qualified electors shall

be allowed to vote in federal, state, county, municipal and school elections in Montana, unless the legislature by law provides an exception for a county or municipal special district election where qualification to vote is based on property ownership.”

NEW SECTION. Section 2. Severability. If a part of [this act] is invalid, all valid parts that are severable from the invalid part remain in effect. If a part of [this act] is invalid in one or more of its applications, the part remains in effect in all valid applications that are severable from the invalid applications.

NEW SECTION. Section 3. Effective date. [This act] is effective on approval by the electorate.