

BALLOT LANGUAGE FOR CONSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVE NO. 133 (CI-133)

CONSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVE NO. 133

A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION

The Montana constitution reserves to the people the powers of initiative and referendum. CI-133 amends the constitution to secure this fundamental right from interference by the government. Specifically, CI-133 requires impartial, predictable, open, and timely processes for ballot issues. Petitions and ballot statements must be approved within 90 days of the initial submission, and legal challenges to ballot qualification must be resolved before the deadline for finalizing ballots. CI-133 requires the state to allow ample time for signature gathering, prohibits disqualification of petitions because of minor or technical issues, allows voters to withdraw their signatures if they so choose, and prohibits the use of government resources to support or oppose a ballot measure.

YES on Constitutional Amendment CI-133

NO on Constitutional Amendment CI-133

THE COMPLETE TEXT OF CONSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVE NO. 133 (CI-133)

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

NEW SECTION. **Section 1.** Article II of The Constitution of the State of Montana is amended by adding a new section 37 that reads:

Section 37. Right to initiative and referendum. (1) The people have a fundamental right to exercise their powers of initiative and referendum under Article III and Article XIV. The government may not deny or burden this right unless justified by a compelling government interest achieved by the least restrictive means.

(2) This right guarantees impartial, predictable, transparent, and expeditious processes for proposing a ballot issue, qualifying a ballot issue for the ballot, and submitting a ballot issue to the qualified electors without interference from the government or the use of government resources to support or oppose the ballot issue. This right includes but is not limited to:

- (a) proposing a ballot issue by submitting the full text of the ballot issue and proposed ballot statements, with the government modifying the proposed ballot statements only if they are not a true and impartial explanation expressed in plain, easily understood language;
- (b) obtaining a determination regarding whether the ballot issue and ballot statements are legally sufficient for submission to the qualified electors prior to the petition being approved for circulation;
- (c) the resolution of legal challenges to the determination made in subsection (2)(b) and the issuance of an approved petition for circulation within 90 days of the initial submission of the ballot issue to the government;
- (d) reasonably ample time to gather signatures without unjustified burdens on signature gathering, on signature gatherers, or on the preparation or submission of signed petitions;
- (e) verification of signatures and petitions without the invalidation of a signature or petition due to a technical or minor deficiency;
- (f) the ability to withdraw one's signature from a petition, with the deadline for a withdrawal being the same as the deadline for submitting signed petitions to the government;
- (g) the resolution of legal challenges to the qualification of a ballot issue for the ballot prior to the deadline for finalizing ballots for the election; and

(h) submission of a ballot issue to the qualified electors in an impartial manner for their approval or rejection by a majority of those voting thereon at a single election.

NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Self-executing.** [This act] is self-executing.

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