



Ballot Language

Issue 1 Proposed Constitutional Amendment

ELEVATING THE STANDARDS TO QUALIFY FOR AN INITIATED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AND TO PASS A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

Proposed by Joint Resolution of the General Assembly

To amend Sections 1 b, le, and lg of Article II and Sections 1 and 3 of Article XVI of the Constitution of the State of Ohio

A majority yes vote is necessary for the amendment to pass.

The proposed amendment would:

- Require that any proposed amendment to the Constitution of the State of Ohio receive the approval of at least 60 percent of eligible voters voting on the proposed amendment.
- Require that any initiative petition filed on or after January 1, 2024 with the Secretary of State proposing to amend the Constitution of the State of Ohio be signed by at least five percent of the electors of each county based on the total vote in the county for governor in the last preceding election.
- Specify that additional signatures may not be added to an initiative petition proposing to amend the Constitution of the State of Ohio that is filed with the Secretary of State on or after January 1, 2024 proposing to amend the Constitution of the State of Ohio.

If passed, the amendment will be effective immediately.

(see next pages for FAQ)

FAQ

Why Issue 1?

Issue 1 is an important amendment for several reasons:

1. **Issue 1 enables ALL Ohioans to have a voice in proposing new amendments to the Ohio Constitution.** It requires Ohioans from all 88 counties to participate in the petition gathering process (instead of only 44 counties), ensuring that smaller, rural counties will not be ignored and giving their citizens a voice. Likewise, since only 9 counties have more than 50% of the population, it also ensures that citizens from more cities and counties will have a voice in ratifying any amendment.
2. **Issue 1 raises the bar for passing a new Constitutional amendment.** While it has no impact on citizen-initiated laws or referendums, it recognizes the need for the Constitution to be a foundational document, rather than a dumping ground for frivolous issues that can't get through the duly elected legislature. It *should be* harder to change the Constitution than to change a law.

Our Answers to Objections

▶ Issue 1 Ends Majority Rule

- ▶ Exactly. Constitutional changes should be harder to make than simple laws. If it is the same process to enact a new law or amend the Constitution, why would anyone propose a law?
- ▶ Ratification should require broad consensus across the state, not just the largest counties. Today a bare majority can change the Constitution- we believe all Ohioans from all 88 counties should have a voice, not just the largest 44 counties.
- ▶ Supermajorities are fine for them, but not for us? The Democratic Party in Ohio, the ACLU, Planned Parenthood and other opposing organizations all require 60% or more to change their bylaws.

▶ Issue 1 Shreds Our Constitution

- ▶ The Legislature has NO advantage with respect to amendments -- the same standard for both will apply.



- ▶ Issue 1 does not change the referendum process that allows 50%+1 to rescind a law passed by the legislature.
- ▶ **Issue 1 Takes Away Our Freedom**
 - ▶ The other side is falsely accusing us of doing what they are actually doing:
 - ▶ Today, as we have seen with the petition process for this November abortion amendment, big outside money is paying \$25/hr plus expenses for petition gatherers from all over the country to come to Ohio to promote the amendment.
 - ▶ The ALCU and Planned Parenthood provided the language for the proposed abortion amendment and are funding an expected \$70 million in media promotion, with a complicit media. George Soros is one of the largest contributors to the ACLU.
 - ▶ The “Reproductive Freedom” amendment is almost identical to the “abortion” amendment that passed in Michigan last year, also written and promoted by outside interests.
 - ▶ Issue 1 does not affect citizen-led petitions for new laws or overturning legislatively driven laws. It only applies to our Constitution.
 - ▶ 15 of last 20 amendments passed with more than 60% of the vote. Good amendments can still be passed. Amendments with less support will be weeded out.
- ▶ **Issue 1 takes away “one person, one vote”**
 - ▶ What does this even mean? Every person will still have one vote. Actually, if providing every Ohioan with a voice is so important, than Issue 1 gives all Ohioans in all 88 counties a voice which they do not have today.
- ▶ **Issue 1 Applies to All Issues**
 - ▶ Most other states don’t let voters submit amendments at all, and most have much stricter rules. We should push legislation through the Legislature -- that is how the system is supposed to work.
 - ▶ The standard will be the same for both sides - it should be harder to amend the Constitution, no matter who is proposing the change.

Other Questions

Why do we need to have this election in August, when the Republicans previously decried August elections?

- ▶ Although we don't like to have to have special elections like this, the radical left has forced us into this position by proposing a tidal wave of radical, immoral and dangerous amendments starting this November with the "Reproductive Freedom" amendment and legalization of marijuana. They have already started petition gathering for other radical amendments that they want to propose in 2024, including eliminating police immunity, gun rights restrictions, harmful small business regulations, and their green agenda. If we don't pass Issue 1 in August, it will be too late to stop all these new, radical amendments.

Why should it be harder to amend the Constitution?

- ▶ Our Constitution, just like our Federal Constitution, is a foundational document, not a dumping ground for "laws" that could not get through the legislature. Since it is so easy to amend the Ohio Constitution, we have had 174 amendments, whereas the U.S. Constitution has only had 27, and even Kentucky has only had 43.
- ▶ Ohio is one of the easiest states in which to pass a new Constitutional amendment. That's why we've had so many, either through the Legislature or through citizen-led initiatives. 32 other states do not even allow citizen led amendments at all. Of the remaining 18 states, 9 have stricter rules for passing an amendment than Ohio's simple majority vote.
- ▶ Our Constitution needs to be foundational and stable. Many of the frivolous amendments should have been passed as laws, such as changing the address of a casino, standards of care for poultry, minimum wage, and specific programs for job growth or infrastructure.
- ▶ If it is just as easy to amend the Constitution as it is to propose a new law, then most initiatives will obviously be amendments.

Does Issue 1 give any advantage to the Legislature over the people with respect to Constitutional Amendments?

- ▶ No. Amendments proposed by both the Legislature and the citizens will both require 60% of the voters to ratify it.



Does Issue 1 take any voting power away from the people?

- ▶ Quite the contrary. The current system allows only 44 counties to determine whether to put an amendment on the ballot. We believe ALL Ohioans should have a voice in something as important as amending the Constitution. For the “majority vote” needed today, the proponents can focus on only a handful of counties to get the 50%+1 votes needed to pass an amendment, The top 9 counties (out of 88) in Ohio have more than 50% of the population.

Is Issue 1 only appearing on the ballot in August in order to block the “abortion amendment” being proposed for November 2023?

- ▶ Radical activists have determined that they cannot get their agenda through the Republican Legislature in Ohio, so they are taking advantage of the lax process for amending the Constitution and bypassing the legislature.
- ▶ While the abortion amendment was an unexpected event and is of extreme concern to pro-family and pro-life groups across the state, there are other amendments that are being proposed in a hurry by the other side that would get through using the current, easy process (previously listed). The evidence of this is the broad coalition that has endorsed Issue 1, including gun organizations, the Chamber of Commerce, small businesses, farmers and agriculture, and more.
- ▶ NOTE ON NOVEMBER:
 - ▶ The proposed “Reproductive Freedom” amendment that is proposed for this November is about much more than abortion. This dangerous amendment would also allow both abortions and transgender surgeries, without parental consent, paid for by taxpayer dollars. Virtually all pro-life and pro-family organizations oppose the November initiative and understand that we must vote YES in August to raise the bar and make it more difficult to pass the upcoming radical agenda.

Sources:

www.voteyesohio.com : official website for Issue 1

www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Legal/Ballot-Initiatives/Initiative-and-Referendum-Signature-Requirements : rules for submitting ballot initiatives

www.voteyesohio.com/ballot-language : official ballot language

[Ohio Counties by Population \(ohio-demographics.com\)](http://ohio-demographics.com) : Ohio population by county