



HOW TO TALK TO YOUR MEMBERS ABOUT STATE ISSUE 1 Constitutional Amendment

State Issue 1, which attempts to make it harder to pass amendments to the Ohio Constitution, will appear on the August 8, 2023, Special Election Ballot. Ohioans have had the right to put Constitutional Amendments directly on the statewide ballot with a simple majority vote for passage since 1912. This is the fair and democratic way for Ohioans to advance issues and seek voter approval through direct democracy. Through this process, Ohioans have protected the Ohio Constitution from monopolies, provided pensions to war veterans, invested in job programs and economic development, restored watersheds, built schools, and set civil servant standards.

UNDERMINES THE SACRED PRINCIPLE OF ONE PERSON, ONE VOTE

If passed, State Issue 1 would amend the Ohio Constitution to require any future constitutional amendment to be approved by at least 60% of the voters, instead of by a simple majority (50% plus one vote) as currently required under the Constitution. This requirement would apply to any constitutional amendment, whether proposed by initiative petition, by the General Assembly, or by a constitutional convention.

CREATES ONEROUS BARRIERS THAT WILL FAVOR BIG-MONIED SPECIAL INTERESTS

State Issue 1 also proposes two changes to already cumbersome initiative petition procedures, specifically only for initiative petitions proposing amendments to the Constitution. These changes apply to petitions filed with the Secretary of State on or after January 1, 2024.

First, if passed, **State Issue 1 would eliminate the ten-day cure period to cure insufficient petitions by gathering more signatures.** The current Constitution gives petitioners ten days to collect additional signatures if their petition is found to have insufficient signatures. This currently applies to initiative petitions proposing new laws, referendum petitions, and initiative petitions proposing amendments to the Constitution. If passed, State Issue 1 would remove the cure period for initiative petitions proposing constitutional amendments but maintains the cure period for other petitions.

Second, if passed, **State Issue 1 would require an initiative petition that proposes a constitutional amendment to have signatures from at least 5% of the electors in each of Ohio's 88 counties, rather than 44 counties, as is currently required.** (The petition still must be signed by 10% of the state's electors overall.) The resolution maintains the current 44-county requirements for initiative petitions proposing new laws and for referendum petitions.

LOW-TURNOUT SPECIAL ELECTIONS COST OHIO TAXPAYERS MILLIONS

Putting this amendment on the August special election ballot, just a few months after prohibiting them in most cases, reaches a level of legislative hypocrisy not seen in this state in recent memory. Supporters of prohibiting August Special Elections were right just a few short months ago when they stated that such low-turnout elections (7.9% last August) are a waste of time, effort, and money. An August 8 Special Election will cost Ohio taxpayers \$20 million. Issues, especially

If State Issue 1 is approved by a majority vote of the electors, it takes effect immediately, and the increased approval threshold applies to any constitutional amendment appearing on the ballot at a later election. However, as is noted above, the new requirements for initiative petitions proposing constitutional amendments first apply to petitions filed on or after January 1, 2024.