

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

Action: Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed

Vote: 3 - 2 - 0

Yeas: Avakian, Monnes Anderson, Brown

Nays: Ferrioli, Kruse

Exc.: 0

Prepared By: Marjorie Taylor, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 5/18, 5/23, 6/6, 6/7, 6/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Requires persons being paid to obtain signatures on state initiative, referendum or recall petition to register with Secretary of State and complete training program. Directs Secretary of State to prepare official templates of cover and signature sheets for each state initiative, referendum or recall petition. Requires persons obtaining signatures on state initiative, referendum or recall petition to use cover and signature sheets contained in official templates prepared for petition. Allows a person to correct or alter information from a person who signed a signature sheet if the signer initials the sheet or if the signer has a disability and requests assistance. Prohibits signatures on a sheet from being counted if the sheet is not certified by the circulator according to statute. Allows chief petitioners to apply for modifications of official templates. Requires chief petitioner of initiative or referendum who pays persons to obtain signatures to keep detailed accounts for review by Secretary of State, Attorney General and Commissioner of Bureau of Labor and Industries. Increases number of signatures required to sponsor prospective petition for state measure to be initiated. Modifies provisions relating to verification of signatures. Requires treasurers appointed by chief petitioners of any initiative, referendum or recall petition to file electronic statement of contributions and expenditures with Secretary of State. Requires circulator of petition to witness signing of signature sheets. Requires signatures gathered on initiative or referendum petitions for the November 2008 election to be filed with the Secretary of State by January 4, 2008. Allows petitioners to submit additional signatures after January 4, 2008. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Initiative fraud and money in the signature gathering process
- Requirements of registration and training for paid signature gatherers
- Ballot title shopping its effect on the number of initiatives filed per cycle
- Continued discussion about the initiative process and possible reforms

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Indicates that provisions related to electronic templates for initiative and referendum petitions do not apply to the backside of a petition and a circulator witnessing signatures. Allows a person to correct or alter information from a person who signed a signature sheet if the signer initials the sheet or if the signer has a disability and requests assistance. Prohibits signatures on a sheet from being counted if the sheet is not certified by the circulator according to statute. Allows a treasurer or chief petitioner to file a statement of organization. Prohibits signature on a sheet from being counted if the sheet is not certified by the circulator according to statute. Clarifies which initiative petitions provisions of the law apply to. Requires signatures gathered on initiative or referendum petitions for the November 2008 election to be filed with the Secretary of State by January 4, 2008. Allows petitioners to submit additional signatures after January 4, 2008.

BACKGROUND: Since 1902, the Oregon Constitution has provided voters with two methods of directly affecting changes to Oregon law and the Oregon Constitution, the initiative and the referendum. The initiative process gives direct legislative power to the voters to enact new laws, change existing laws, or amend the Oregon Constitution. Any citizen may be a chief petitioner of an initiative petition or referendum. For an initiative to qualify for the next general election—November of even-numbered years—chief petitioners must receive written approval from the Secretary of State to circulate signature sheets in order to collect signatures from registered voters. Chief petitioners must then obtain the necessary number of valid signatures and submit them to the Secretary of State no later than four months prior to the date of the next regularly scheduled general election.

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This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.