

HJR 3 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Rules

Prepared By: Melissa Leoni, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 3/10

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure proposes an amendment to the Oregon Constitution to require petitions for a proposed initiative law to be signed by a number of qualified voters from each county that equals six percent of the total number of votes cast in the county for Governor at the previous election. It also requires petitions for a proposed constitutional initiative amendment to be signed by a number of qualified voters from each county that equals eight percent of the total number of votes cast in the county for Governor at the previous election. The measure also prohibits persons who are not qualified voters from directly or indirectly making contributions in connection with an initiative measure or to influence the outcome of an election on an initiative to the extent contribution limits are permitted under the United States Constitution. The measure refers the proposed amendment to the people for their approval or rejection at the next general election.

Fiscal impact: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued

Revenue impact: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon Constitution provides voters with three methods to directly make changes to Oregon Revised Statutes and the Oregon Constitution: the initiative, referendum, and referral. In 1902, 91 percent of voters approved an amendment to the Oregon Constitution to allow for the initiative and referendum process. The initiative process gives direct legislative power to the voters to enact new laws, change existing laws, or amend the Oregon Constitution.

Section 1, Article IV of the Oregon Constitution establishes the number of signatures that must be gathered for a statutory or constitutional initiative to qualify for the ballot. The number of signatures required is a percentage of the number of votes cast for Governor during the most recent gubernatorial election – six percent for statutory amendments and eight percent for constitutional amendments. For 2024 and 2026 initiative petitions, chief petitioners are required to gather 117,173 valid signatures for a statutory initiative and 156,231 valid signatures for a constitutional initiative.