



Ballot Issues

What is the difference between a Referendum and an Initiative?

Issues are placed on the ballot in one of two ways:

Referendum

A referendum is a proposal by the Legislature that is referred to citizens for a vote.

Initiative

An initiative is a proposal by citizens who have gathered the required number of signatures (five percent of the total number of votes cast for Secretary of State in the previous general election).

What is the difference between the Colorado Constitution and the Colorado Revised Statutes?

The **Colorado Constitution** is the foundation of the laws and government of the State of Colorado. It establishes the basic framework of state government. Voters have the final approval of Constitutional proposals.

Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) are laws passed by the Colorado General Assembly consisting of the House of Representatives (65 members) and the Senate (35 members). The Colorado Revised Statutes are the codified general and permanent statutes of the General Assembly.

Statewide issues appearing on the ballot may be of two types:

Amendments to the Colorado Constitution

- May be referred to the voters by a two-thirds vote of both houses of the General Assembly or may be proposed by citizens using the initiative process. Only the voters (not the legislature) can change the Colorado Constitution. These proposals are called **amendments**.
- Amendments to the Constitution need 55% of the vote to pass.



Amendments to the Revised Statutes (Propositions)

- May be referred to the voters by a majority vote of both houses of the General Assembly or may be proposed by citizens using the initiative process. Although approved by voters, amendments to the Colorado Revised Statutes may subsequently be changed by the legislature. These proposals are called **propositions** and are changes to the statutes.

Signature Requirement for Statewide Initiative Petitions

An initiative is a proposal by citizens who have gathered the required number of signatures.

- According to Article V, Section 1(2) of the Colorado Constitution, the number of signatures required for a statewide initiative petition is “at least five percent of the total number of votes cast for all candidates for the office of secretary of state at the previous general election”.
- The total number of votes cast for all candidates for the office of secretary of state at the November 8, 2022 General Election was 2,484,758. As a result, the signature requirement for statewide initiative petitions and statewide referendum petitions for 2023 through 2026 is:
124,238 (required number was 124,632 for 2019-2022).
- Initiatives that wish to make a change to the Colorado constitution must be signed by at least 2% of the total registered electors in each of the 35 Colorado state senate districts in addition to meeting the requirements outlined in (Article V, Section 1(4) of the Colorado constitution).

Potential Ballot Issues – 2023/2024

In the 2023 Election (off-year election), only fiscal measures may appear on the statewide ballot as established in TABOR. There are two Concurrent Resolutions that have been introduced in the House of Representatives. At present (March 2023), there are no concurrent resolutions filed in the Senate.

To be referred to the ballot as a referendum, the proposal must receive a 2/3 vote in each chamber.



House Concurrent Resolutions (introduced to date (3/23/2023))

1. HCR23-1001: Judicial Discipline Procedures and Confidentiality

“..... judicial discipline, and, in connection therewith, establishing an independent judicial discipline adjudicative board, setting standards for judicial review of a discipline case, and clarifying when discipline proceedings become public.”

Sponsors: Reps. Weissman & Lynch and Sens. Gardner & Gonzales

Status: Sent to House for a floor vote on 3/24/2023.

2. HCR23-1002: Modest Property Tax Exemptions for Veterans with Disabilities

“..... property tax exemption for veterans with a disability to include a veteran who does not have a service-connected disability rated as a one hundred percent permanent disability but does have individual unemployability status.”

Sponsors: Rep Marshall and Sen. Fields.

Status: Passed House on 3rd Reading, 3/20/23

Initiatives Filed/Title Set (as of 3/24/2023)

Establishment of a New Attainable Housing Fee

State Income Tax Rate Reduction

State Income Tax Rate Reduction

Reduction in State Income Tax Rate

Reduction in State Income Tax Rate

Reduction in State Income Tax Rate

Student Funding for K-12 Education

Limitations on Property Tax – numerous proposals are listed

Note: The complete text of the above proposed initiatives may be found on the Secretary of State's website at www.sos.state.co.us

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