

HB 1788 -- Initiative Petitions and Referendums

Sponsor: Parson

This bill changes the laws regarding initiative petitions and referendums. In its main provisions, the bill:

- (1) Requires a petition circulator to be a United States citizen and a Missouri resident;
- (2) Specifies that a petition circulator cannot have been convicted of, found guilty of, or pled guilty to any offense involving forgery;
- (3) Prohibits the compensation of petition circulators on a per-signature basis;
- (4) Requires petition circulators to supply certain information to the Office of the Secretary of State verifying their eligibility and to swear by affidavit that they comply with the requirements of the bill;
- (5) Specifies that signatures collected before the circulator registers with the Secretary of State or signatures collected by circulators who have violated the payment-per-signature requirement will not be counted;
- (6) Specifies that anyone who knowingly signs any name other than his or her own to any petition will be guilty of a class one election offense;
- (7) Requires a refundable deposit of \$500 for filing a ballot measure for certification by the Secretary of State. If the ballot measure is not certified, the deposit will be forfeited to the General Revenue Fund; but a person may withdraw and resubmit a petition without paying an additional deposit if it is withdrawn before the Secretary of State's rejection of the petition; and
- (8) Establishes a mechanism for reducing the tax rate imposed by any taxing authority by voter petition. If at least 33% of the registered voters petition for a lower tax rate, their proposal must be considered at the next regular election; and if 66% or more registered voters approve the petition, it will take effect. The election process and tax rate adjustment process are specified in the bill.

The provisions regarding petition circulators and knowingly signing a false name on a petition become effective January 1, 2011.