

HCS HJR 16 -- INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM PETITIONS

SPONSOR: Dugger

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Elections by a vote of 9 to 0.

Upon voter approval, this proposed constitutional amendment changes the number of voter signatures that are required to place an initiative petition or a referendum on a ballot. Currently, an initiative petition proposing an amendment to the Missouri Constitution must be signed by 8% of the legal voters in each of two-thirds of the Congressional districts. The resolution changes the requirement to 5.25% of the legal voters in each Congressional district.

Currently, a referendum petition must be signed by 5% of the legal voters in each of two-thirds of the Congressional districts. The resolution changes the requirement to 3.25% of the legal voters in each Congressional district.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Net Effect on General Revenue Fund of an income of \$0 in FY 2012, an income of \$0 or a cost of More than \$7,000,000 in FY 2013, and an income of \$0 to a cost of Unknown in FY 2014. No impact on Other State Funds in FY 2012, FY 2013, and FY 2014.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill will make signature collection mandatory in each Congressional district. The law must be revised to accommodate the change from nine to eight Congressional districts and this is a fair way to achieve it.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Dugger.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that it might make the petition process more difficult for small groups with few resources. Lowering the percentage requirement makes good sense and might be a better way to modify the law.

Testifying against the bill were Ron Calzone, Missouri First; Jacqueline Winship, Missourians Against Human Cloning; and Concerned Women for America of Missouri.