

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: Standing Committee on Elections and Elected Officials

The bill requires the use of a uniform standard for initiative and referendum petition signature pages. These pages must conform to the requirements of Sections 116.030 and 116.040, RSMo, and will be made available for printing and downloading in an electronic format that is created by the Secretary of State.

This bill requires a \$350 refundable fee, to be deposited into the newly created "Petition Trust Fund," for filing an initiative petition with the Office of the Missouri Secretary of State under Section 116.050. The fee is refunded if the petition is authorized to appear on the ballot within the two year period after a summary statement is prepared for the petition under Section 116.334. There is an additional \$25 per page filing fee for initiative petitions that are in excess of 10 pages long. The Petition Trust Fund shall be used solely by the Secretary of State for refunding the petition fee and any money not refunded will revert to General Revenue.

This bill requires that a word count of proposed initiative petition legislation, either statutory or Constitutional amendment, be placed in boldface type at the end of ballot measures to inform voters of the actual length of a particular bill or amendment. The General Assembly or petition proponent will provide the word count to the Secretary of State who shall decline measures without the proper word count. It also allows viewing or photographs of ballots, but creates the class one election offense of coercing or intimidating a voter to and using ballot viewing to verify the effect of such coercion or intimidation.

The bill also allows major political parties to select election judge candidates under Section 115.081 and eliminates a requirement that such judges live in the jurisdiction of an election authority. The bill also specifies methods for selecting judges when major political parties do not provide a list.