

HCS HBs 575 & 551 -- INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM PETITIONS  
(Banderman)

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: Standing Committee on Elections

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 575.

This bill requires initiative and referendum petition signature pages to be printed on a form as specified by the Secretary of State. Signature page forms will be made available in electronic format (Sections 116.045 and 116.050, RSMo).

The bill requires petition circulators to be citizens of the United States, residents of Missouri or physically present in Missouri for at least 30 consecutive days prior to the collection of signatures, and prohibits them from being compensated based on the number of signatures collected. Circulator affidavits are updated to reflect these requirements (Sections 116.030, 116.040, 116.080).

Signatures will be recorded using black or dark ink. (Section 116.130)

Currently, any citizen can challenge the official ballot title or fiscal note for a Constitutional amendment, initiative petition, or referendum measure. This bill changes this to only allow any Missouri registered voter to make a challenge (Sections 116.190 and 116.200).

The bill requires final adjudication relating to a challenge of the official ballot title or fiscal note to occur at least eight weeks before the date of the election (Section 116.190).

Currently, the Secretary of State and Attorney General review initiative and referendum petitions for sufficiency as to form and approve or reject them on that basis. This bill changes this to require these officials to review initiative and referendum petitions for compliance with Section 116.050 and with Article III of the Missouri Constitution (Section 116.332).

The bill repeals the requirement that the Joint Committee on Legislative Research hold a hearing to take public comment on a proposed measure within 30 days of the Secretary of State issuing certification that the petition contains a sufficient number of valid signatures (Section 116.153).

This bill is similar to HB 1749 (2024) and HB 703 (2023).