

Initiative, Referendum and Recall Position

League of Women Voters of Oregon

Adopted 1988; Revised 1996; Educational Update 2001*

- A. Statute Initiatives.** The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports the constitutional right of Oregon citizens to propose or revise statutes through the direct initiative process. The League supports the following:
1. Requiring a number of valid signatures not less than six (6) percent of the total number of votes cast for all candidates for governor at the last election at which a governor was elected for a term of four years;
 2. Requiring more than 25 signatures to file the prospective petition with the Secretary of State;
 3. Prohibiting legislative changes to an initiative statute for at least two years from its effective date, except to clarify implementation and to correct errors in form and style;
 4. Requiring an advisory opinion as to the constitutionality of each proposed initiative after it has qualified for the ballot. Such opinion should be published in the Voters' Pamphlet;
 5. Limiting the time frame for collecting signatures to one year;
 6. Optional use of the indirect initiative.
- B. Constitutional Initiatives.** The League of Women Voters of Oregon discourages amending the Oregon Constitution by the initiative process. If amendments by initiatives are allowed, the League supports the following restrictions:
1. Requiring a number of valid signatures not less than ten (10) percent of the total number of votes cast for all candidates for governor at the last election at which a governor was elected for a term of four years;
 2. Requiring more than 25 signatures to file the prospective petition with the Secretary of State;
 3. Establishing a formula for a geographic distribution of signatures in order to reflect statewide interest in a measure;
 4. Requiring an advisory opinion as to the constitutionality of each proposed initiative after it has qualified for the ballot. Such opinion should be published in the Voters' Pamphlet;
 5. Limiting the time frame for collecting signatures to one year;
 6. Requiring more than a simple majority of the total votes cast for the measure for passage;
 7. Exempting the Oregon Bill of Rights and revenue measures from the initiative process; and
 8. Using the indirect initiative process and scheduling discussion of a qualified initiative first on the agenda of the next legislative session.
- C.** The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports the Oregon petition referendum process as provided in the Oregon Constitution.
- D.** The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports the recall process as provided in the Oregon Constitution.
- E.** The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that ballot titles should be stated in clear, concise language and should avoid confusing negatives.
- F.** The League of Women Voters of Oregon opposes paying petition circulators by the signature. Paid petitioners must be required to identify themselves as such, personally and on the signature sheets. With reasonable restrictions, petitioners should be allowed to collect signatures in highly visible privately and publicly owned locations.

- G.** The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports publication and distribution of a state Voters' Pamphlet prior to statewide elections and believes that:
1. The state has an obligation to provide the voters with accurate information so that voters can make reasoned choices;
 2. All ballot measures must be included with official explanatory statements, an official advisory opinion on constitutionality, effects of a "yes" and "no" vote, and summaries of the main arguments for and against the measures;
 3. The number of arguments for and against the measures to be included should be limited; and
 4. The fees charged per page should more clearly reflect the actual costs.

*Updated for background information only – no position change.