

Citizen Initiatives Qualify for November Election

Arizonans can pursue changes to law through a citizens' initiative process. If a ballot initiative is passed by voters, those changes to the law or the Arizona Constitution are [largely out of bounds for legislative changes](#) – the legislature can only amend the changes to “further the purpose” of them with a two-thirds majority vote.



This year, there were [22 initiative applications](#) filed on a wide variety of topics. Though the process to *file* an initiative is simple, it is extremely difficult to obtain signatures necessary to place an initiative on the ballot. To qualify their ideas for the ballot, citizens had to obtain 150,642 valid signatures to change state statutes, and 225,963 valid signatures for a change to the state Constitution.

Only three initiative applicants provided enough signatures. Groups opposing the measures have legally challenged each of the three initiatives, and court action will determine whether the proposals appear before voters. If signatures are verified and no legal challenges are successful, Arizona voters will decide the outcome of these proposals in the election on November 8:

Hospital Executive Compensation Act

[The proposal](#), supported by the Service Employees International Union, would limit the total annual compensation paid to executives, administrators, and managers of hospitals, hospital groups, and affiliated medical entities to the yearly compensation for the President of the United States (\$450,000). It would also limit severance pay for these positions, and require additional disclosure of compensation details.

Hospital and healthcare organizations and the Arizona Chamber of Commerce have announced their opposition to the measure.

Regulation and Taxation of Marijuana Act

[The proposal](#), supported by the Marijuana Policy Project, would allow adults 21 and over to possess and grow limited amounts of marijuana for recreational purposes, and would create a 15% tax on retail marijuana sales – revenues from the tax would go to public health and education efforts. The proposal would add a system for regulating the marijuana businesses. Local governments could regulate and limit marijuana businesses.

Business and law enforcement entities have consistently opposed the proposal.

Fair Wages and Healthy Families Act

[The proposal](#), supported by Living United for Change in Arizona, would gradually increase the Arizona minimum wage – to \$10 in 2017, and then in increments to a total of \$12 by 2020. (The current minimum wage is \$8.05.) Workers paid in tips would see an hourly increase of up to \$9. The proposal would also provide designated amounts of paid sick time and family time, with some exceptions.

The Arizona Chamber of Commerce and the Arizona Restaurant and Hospitality Association oppose the measure.

Legislative Action Stalled as Election Looms

Numerous study committees will convene later this year to evaluate a wide variety of policy topics, but for now, the Capitol is quiet as legislators focus on their re-election campaigns and other political goals. With many long-time legislators leaving office, the election will greatly impact Arizona's future. [Click here](#) to learn more about the candidates running in the August 30 Primary Election and the November 8 General Election.