



NATIONAL CONFERENCE *of* STATE LEGISLATURES

The Forum for America's Ideas

Signature Requirements for Initiative Proposals

Updated August 2008

	Statutory Initiatives			Constitutional Initiatives		
	Signature Formula	2008 Actual Requirement	Geographic Distribution	Signature Formula	2008 Actual Requirement	Geographic Distribution
Alaska	10% of total votes cast in last general election	23,831	Signatures from 7% of those who voted in the previous general election in at least ¾ of the state's 40 house districts	N/A		
Arizona	10% of votes cast for governor in last election	153,365	None	15% of votes cast for governor in last election	230,047	None
Arkansas	8% of votes cast for governor in last election	61,974	Signatures equal to 4% of votes cast for governor in each of at least 15 of the state's 75 counties	10% of votes cast for governor in last election	77,468	Signatures equal to 5% of votes cast for governor in each of at least 15 of the state's 75 counties
California	5% of votes cast for governor at last election	433,971	None	8% of votes cast for governor at last election	694,354	None
Colorado	5% of votes cast for sec. state at last election	76,047	None	5% of votes cast for sec. state at last election	76,047	None
Florida	N/A			8% of total votes cast statewide in last presidential election	611,009	8% in at least 13 of the state's 23 congressional districts

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures
November 2006

For more information, contact Jennie Drage Bowser at 303-364-7700.

	Statutory Initiatives			Constitutional Initiatives		
	Signature Formula	2008 Actual Requirement	Geographic Distribution	Signature Formula	2008 Actual Requirement	Geographic Distribution
Idaho	6% of qualified electors at previous election	45,893	None (a)	N/A		
Illinois	N/A			8% of total votes cast for governor in last election	279,039	None
Maine	10% of votes cast for governor in last election	55,087	None	N/A		
Massachusetts	<i>To place before the legislature:</i> 3% of votes cast for governor in last election <i>To place on the ballot if the legislature fails to pass:</i> 0.5% of votes cast for governor in last election	66,593 + 11,099	No more than 25% of signatures may be from one county	3% of votes cast for governor in last election	66,593	No more than 25% of signatures may be from one county
Michigan	8% of votes cast for governor in last election	304,101	None	10% of votes cast for governor in last election	380,126	None
Mississippi	N/A			12% of votes cast for governor in last election	91,673	At least 18,355 signatures from each of the 5 congressional districts
Missouri	See geographic distribution -- no total signature requirement	86,989 - 94,762 ^d	5% of votes cast for governor in last election from 6 of the 9 congressional districts	See geographic distribution -- no total signature requirement	139,181 - 151,619 ^d	8% of votes cast for governor in last election from 6 of the 9 congressional districts

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures
October 2007

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	Statutory Initiatives			Constitutional Initiatives		
	Signature Formula	2008 Actual Requirement	Geographic Distribution	Signature Formula	2008 Actual Requirement	Geographic Distribution
Montana	5% of qualified electors in state at large	22,308	5% of qualified voters in each of 34 legislative districts	10% of qualified electors in state at large	44,615	10% of qualified voters in each of 40 legislative districts
Nebraska^c	7% of registered voters at the filing deadline	79,605	5% of registered voters in 38 of the 93 counties	10% of registered voters at the filing deadline	113,721	5% of registered voters in 38 of the 93 counties
Nevada	10% of total votes cast in last general election	58,627	See (b)	10% of total votes cast in last general election	58,627	See (b)
North Dakota	2% of resident population of the state at the last decennial census	12,844	None	4% of resident population of the state at the last decennial census	25,688	None
Ohio	<i>To place before the legislature:</i> 3% of votes cast for governor in last election <i>To place on the ballot if the legislature fails to pass:</i> 3% of votes cast for governor in the last election.	120,683 + 120,683	1.5% of total votes cast for governor in each of 44 of the state's 88 counties	10% of votes cast for governor in last election	402,275	5% of total votes cast for governor in each of 44 of the state's 88 counties
Oklahoma	8% of votes highest vote cast in last state election	74,117	None	15% of votes cast for office receiving highest number of votes in last state election	138,970	None
Oregon	6% of votes cast for governor in last election	82,769	None	8% of votes cast for governor in last election	110,358	None

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	Statutory Initiatives			Constitutional Initiatives		
	Signature Formula	2008 Actual Requirement	Geographic Distribution	Signature Formula	2008 Actual Requirement	Geographic Distribution
South Dakota	5% of votes cast for governor in last election	16,776	None	10% of votes cast for governor in last election	33,551	None
Utah	<p>Direct - 10% of votes cast for governor in last election</p> <p>Indirect – <i>To place before the legislature:</i> 5% of votes cast for governor in last election <i>To place on the ballot if the legislature fails to pass:</i> 5% of votes cast for governor in last election</p>	<p>Direct – 91,996</p> <p>Indirect – 45,998 + 45,998</p>	<p>Direct - 10% of votes cast for governor in at least 26 of 29 state senate districts</p> <p>Indirect – 5% of votes cast for governor in at least 26 of 29 state senate districts</p>	N/A		
Washington	8% of votes cast for governor in last election	224,880	None	N/A		
Wyoming	15% of total votes cast in last general election	29,433	15% of residents in at least 2/3 of the state's 23 counties	N/A		

(a) Idaho's geographic distribution requirement was held unconstitutional by US District Court in December 2001, and that decision was upheld by 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in September 2003. It required that signatures include 6% of the registered voters in each of 22 counties.

(b) Nevada's geographic distribution requirement was held unconstitutional in August 2004. It required that signatures come from 10% of the total votes cast in the last general election in at least 13 of the state's 17 counties. Two new provisions were passed in the 2007 legislative session: One requires that petitions comply with a geographic distribution requirement that is still county-based, but is flexible in that each county's total required signatures is calculated by a formula based on population. This provision is currently in effect for the 2008 election. A second measure that was passed is a constitutional amendment and therefore will require voter approval in two consecutive general elections. This provision replaces the county-based geographic distribution requirement with a requirement that each petition contain the signatures of 10% of voters in each Congressional district.

(c) 2008 requirement not yet determined. Total listed here was effective for 2006 initiatives.

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures
October 2007

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(d) The total number of signatures required varies depending on the combination of districts presented in petitions.

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures, October 2007

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