



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
<b>Alaska</b>	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		
<b>Arizona</b>	10% of votes cast for governor in last election	153,365	None	15% of votes cast for governor in last election	230,047	None
<b>Arkansas</b>	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
<b>California</b>	5% of votes cast for governor at last election	433,971	None	8% of votes cast for governor at last election	694,354	None
<b>Colorado</b>	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
<b>Florida</b>	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
<b>Idaho</b>	6% of qualified electors at previous election	45,893	None (a)	N/A		
<b>Illinois</b>	N/A			8% of total votes cast for governor in last election	279,039	None
<b>Maine</b>	10% of votes cast for governor in last election	55,087	None	N/A		
<b>Massachusetts</b>	<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
<b>Michigan</b>	8% of votes cast for governor in last election	304,101	None	10% of votes cast for governor in last election	380,126	None
<b>Mississippi</b>	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
<b>Missouri</b>	See geographic distribution -- no total signature requirement	86,989 - 94,762 <sup>d</sup>	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 <sup>d</sup>	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
<b>Montana</b>	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
<b>Nebraska<sup>c</sup></b>	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
<b>Nevada</b>	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)
<b>North Dakota</b>	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
<b>Ohio</b>	<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
<b>Oklahoma</b>	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
<b>Oregon</b>	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
<b>South Dakota</b>	5% of votes cast for governor in last election	16,776	None	10% of votes cast for governor in last election	33,551	None
<b>Utah</b>	<p><b>Direct</b> - 10% of votes cast for governor in last election</p> <p><b>Indirect</b> – <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><b>Direct</b> – 91,996</p> <p><b>Indirect</b> – 45,998 + 45,998</p>	<p><b>Direct</b> - 10% of votes cast for governor in at least 26 of 29 state senate districts</p> <p><b>Indirect</b> – 5% of votes cast for governor in at least 26 of 29 state senate districts</p>	N/A		
<b>Washington</b>	8% of votes cast for governor in last election	224,880	None	N/A		
<b>Wyoming</b>	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 9<sup>th</sup> 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.

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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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