

INITIATIVE PETITION PROCESS

1. **Collecting Signatures on the Initiative Petition** – Once the Attorney General approves the summary language, as he has with the Health Care for All Ohioans Act, the petition can be circulated for signatures. In order for the initiative petition to be sent to the General Assembly for action, signatures must be collected from registered Ohio voters in an amount equal to at least 3% of the total number of votes cast for governor in Ohio's previous gubernatorial election. (The last such election was held in 2006 and 3% of the vote cast for governor then is 120,682.) A second requirement is that these signatures must be collected in at least 44 of Ohio's 88 counties in an amount equal to at least 1.5% of the vote cast for governor in each of those counties. [Note: signatures gathered in a county that do not meet the 1.5% requirement can still count toward the 3% statewide requirement.] For an initiative petition to be placed on the ballot in any calendar year, the requisite number of signatures must be filed with the secretary of state *in the preceding year* no later than ten days before the beginning of the General Assembly's legislative session in the following year, which is the first Monday of each year. (In other words, signatures filed by December in one year, if validated, results in the issue being on the ballot the following year.)
2. **Certifying the Sufficiency of the Number of Signatures Submitted** - Once the petition is filed with the secretary of state, the signatures are checked by boards of elections across the state to validate their sufficiency. Once the secretary of state certifies that a sufficient number of valid signatures were submitted, the initiative petition is then submitted to the General Assembly, which has four months to pass it, amend it, or reject it.
3. **Submitting the Initiative Petition to the Voters** – If the legislature fails to act or rejects the petition, the petitioners have 90 days from the day that the four month period expires to collect the same number of signatures with the same requirements as specified in step 1 above (3% statewide, 1.5% from each of at least 44 counties). However, those people who signed the first time around, as explained in step 1, cannot sign the second round of signature gathering. If the required number of signatures is collected within the 90 days and certified by the secretary of state as to sufficiency of valid signatures, then the initiative petition will be placed on the ballot and voted upon at the time of the next statewide election.