



April 2021

Lawmakers Send 3 Amendments to Voters

Wrapping up their legislative session this week, Arkansas lawmakers approved sending a third constitutional amendment to voters on the November 2022 ballot.

Legislators approved two proposals earlier in April, with the third one coming the last week of the 108-day session. State lawmakers have recessed and plan to come back later this fall to deal with redistricting for Arkansas' four U.S. House of Representative seats.

The three measures approved by legislators were among 42 proposed amendments filed this session. Committees in the House and Senate reviewed many of the proposals, with sponsors testifying before them on why their bills should be chosen for the ballot.

Ultimately, two amendments made it out of committee. Senator Jason Rapert and Representative Stephen Meeks filed resolutions urging colleagues to consider one of their proposals for the third slot on the 2022 ballot. Rapert's SJR14 persevered. (See below for links to the proposals).

Arkansas is one of 15 states the legislature and citizens can propose constitutional amendments for voters to decide, and ballot issue groups can also propose state laws and veto referendums. After the end of the 2019 legislative session, a ballot issue group filed a veto referendum on a new state law expanding the types of procedures optometrists can perform. Several groups have voiced a desire to file veto referendums on laws passed this session.

Arkansas' 1874 Constitution currently has 102 amendments, the latest which were approved by voters in November 2020 changing the state's term limit laws and approving a permanent 0.5% sales tax for roadwork and maintenance across the state.

**ARKANSAS LEGISLATURE
BALLOT RECAP**

2022 Referred Constitutional Amendments

HJR1005 - Increasing the percentage of votes needed to pass a future Arkansas constitutional amendment or initiated act

SJR10 - Allowing state legislators to convene themselves in legislative session

SJR14 - The Arkansas Religious Freedom Amendment

2022 Legislative Proposals



A constitutional amendment to reform certain measures presented to voters, to be known as the "Constitutional



A constitutional amendment to allow the General Assembly to convene in extraordinary session upon the issuance of a joint



A constitutional amendment to create the "Arkansas Religious Freedom Amendment"

Amendment and Ballot Initiative Reform Amendment”

[Read the proposal](#)

[See the vote](#)

written proclamation of the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Senate or upon the submission of a written proclamation containing the signatures of at least 2/3 of the members of the House of Representatives and at least 2/3 of the members of the Senate to the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Senate requesting that the General Assembly convene in extraordinary session

[Read the proposal](#)

[See the vote](#)

[Read the proposal](#)

[See the vote](#)

2022 Citizen Initiative Proposals



Arkansas is one of [15 states](#) where citizens have the right to put constitutional amendments, state laws and referendums on the ballot for voters to decide.

The citizen initiative process involves filing a ballot title with the Secretary of State's Office, collecting voter signatures across the state and submitting the petitions for verification. The Board of Election Commissioners also must approve the ballot title.

Referendums require voter signatures equaling 6% of the number of people who voted in the last governor's election. State laws require 8%, and constitutional amendments require 10%.

Submitted to the Secretary of State

Act 376 of 2019 requires ballot issue groups to submit a copy of their ballot title to the Secretary of State's Office before collecting voter signatures.

Ballot titles that have been filed for the 2022 ballot include:

Feb. 4, 2021 - [The Arkansas Township Amendment of 2022](#) - A proposal that would create another layer of local government - township assemblies - among other things was submitted by Academy of Democracy.

Jan. 5, 2021 - [An Amendment Concerning Jurors' Rights](#) - A proposal that would impact the legislature's ability to pass laws regarding jury awards in lawsuits over injury or death was submitted. The person who submitted the proposal did not provide their contact information to the Secretary of State's Office.

May 22, 2020 - [The Arkansas Recreational Marijuana Amendment of 2022](#) - A proposal to legalize adult marijuana use and to allow certain marijuana convictions to be expunged was submitted by Arkansas True Grass.

HAVE A QUESTION?

Send your Arkansas ballot issue questions to
publicpolicycenter@uada.edu



#ARballot

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- Enhance public participation in decisions regarding public issues, and
- Help citizens craft, evaluate and implement alternative solutions to public issues.

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