

State of Arkansas
95th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2025

A Bill

SENATE BILL 209

By: Senator K. Hammer

By: Representative Underwood

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING INITIATIVE
PETITIONS AND REFERENDUM PETITIONS; TO DISQUALIFY
SIGNATURES OBTAINED BY A CANVASSER UNDER CERTAIN
CIRCUMSTANCES; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO DISQUALIFY SIGNATURES OBTAINED BY A
CANVASSER UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES;
AND TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 7-9-103, concerning the signing of a petition, penalty for falsification, and notice of suspected forgery for initiative petitions and referendum petitions, is amended to add an additional subsection to read as follows:

(e)(1) The Secretary of State shall not count signatures collected and witnessed by a canvasser if the Secretary of State finds by a preponderance of the evidence that the canvasser has violated Arkansas laws regarding canvassing, perjury, forgery, or fraudulent practices in the procurement of petition signatures or any provision of the Arkansas Constitution applicable to the collection of signatures on an initiative petition or referendum petition during the current election cycle.

(2) This subsection shall not constrain the duties and authority of the Secretary of State as set forth in Arkansas law.



SECTION 2. DO NOT CODIFY. SEVERABILITY. The provisions of this act are declared to be severable and the invalidity of any provision of this act shall not affect other provisions of the act which can be given effect without the invalid provision.

SECTION 3. DO NOT CODIFY. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the process for citizens to propose initiated acts and amendments to the Arkansas Constitution is critical to a well-functioning democracy in this state; that it is of the utmost importance that the integrity of the initiative process be strengthened through this act so that petitioners and voters maintain a high degree of confidence in the soundness of their right to legislate as citizens of Arkansas; and that this act is immediately necessary because any delay in the implementation of this act would disrupt the initiative process for the 2026 general election, which would have a detrimental effect on the public peace, health, and safety of Arkansas. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective on:

- (1) The date of its approval by the Governor;
- (2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor, the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the bill; or
- (3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.

APPROVED: 3/12/25