

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the Arkansas Constitution.

State of Arkansas
95th General Assembly
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HJR 1015

By: Representatives Lundstrum, Achor, Andrews, Barker, Beck, Bentley, A. Brown, K. Brown, N. Burkes, R. Burkes, Joey Carr, John Carr, Cavanaugh, Crawford, Duffield, Duke, Eubanks, Furman, Gonzales, Gramlich, Hall, Holcomb, Hollowell, Jean, Ladyman, Long, J. Mayberry, McAlindon, McClure, McGrew, McNair, S. Meeks, K. Moore, Nazarenko, Puryear, Ray, Richmond, Rose, Torres, Tosh, Underwood, Unger, Vaught, Wing, Womack, Wooten

By: Senators G. Stubblefield, A. Clark, Dees, J. Dotson, J. English, Hester, J. Payton, J. Petty, D. Wallace, Caldwell, Flippo, Hill, B. Johnson, M. Johnson, C. Penzo, Rice, D. Sullivan

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

AN AMENDMENT TO THE ARKANSAS CONSTITUTION TO ENSURE
TRANSPARENCY BY REQUIRING A CANDIDATE FOR SUPREME
COURT JUSTICE, COURT OF APPEALS JUDGE, CIRCUIT JUDGE,
OR DISTRICT JUDGE TO DECLARE HIS OR HER POLITICAL
PARTY AFFILIATION OR INDEPENDENT STATUS WHEN RUNNING
FOR OFFICE AND HAVE THAT POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATION
OR INDEPENDENT STATUS REFLECTED ON THE BALLOT.

Subtitle

A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO ENSURE
TRANSPARENCY BY REQUIRING A JUDICIAL
CANDIDATE TO DECLARE HIS OR HER
POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATION OR
INDEPENDENT STATUS WHEN RUNNING FOR
OFFICE.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS, AND BY THE SENATE, A MAJORITY OF ALL MEMBERS ELECTED TO EACH HOUSE AGREEING THERETO:

THAT the following is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the State of Arkansas, and upon being submitted to the electors of the state



for approval or rejection at the next general election for Representatives and Senators, if a majority of the electors voting thereon at the election adopt the amendment, the amendment shall become a part of the Constitution of the State of Arkansas, to wit:

SECTION 1. INTENT. The purpose of this amendment to the Arkansas Constitution is to ensure transparency by requiring a candidate for Supreme Court Justice, Court of Appeals Judge, Circuit Judge, or District Judge to declare his or her political party affiliation or independent status when running for office and have that political party affiliation or independent status reflected on the ballot.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Constitution, Amendment 80, §§ 17 and 18, are amended to read as follows:

§ 17. Election of ~~circuit and district judges~~ Circuit Judges and District Judges.

(A) Circuit Judges and District Judges shall be elected ~~on a nonpartisan basis~~ by a majority of qualified electors voting for such office within the circuit or district which they serve.

(B) Vacancies in these offices shall be filled as provided by this Constitution.

(C) A candidate for Circuit Judge or District Judge shall:

(1) Have his or her political party affiliation identified on the ballot; or

(2) Be identified on the ballot as an independent candidate.

§ 18. Election of Supreme Court Justices and Court of Appeals Judges.

(A) Supreme Court Justices and Court of Appeals Judges shall be elected ~~on a nonpartisan basis~~ by a majority of qualified electors voting for such office. Provided, however, the General Assembly may refer the issue of merit selection of members of the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals to a vote of the people at any general election. If the voters approve a merit selection system, the General Assembly shall enact laws to create a judicial nominating commission for the purpose of nominating candidates for merit selection to the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals.

(B) Vacancies in these offices shall be filled by appointment of the

Governor, unless the voters provide otherwise in a system of merit selection.

(C) Unless the voters provide otherwise in a system of merit selection, a candidate for Supreme Court Justice or Court of Appeals Judge shall:

(1) Have his or political party affiliation identified on the ballot; or

(2) Be identified on the ballot as an independent candidate.

SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE. This amendment to the Arkansas Constitution is effective on and after January 1, 2027.

SECTION 4. BALLOT TITLE AND POPULAR NAME. When this proposed amendment is submitted to the electors of this state on the general election ballot:

(1) The title of this Joint Resolution shall be the ballot title; and

(2) The popular name shall be "A Constitutional Amendment to Ensure Transparency by Requiring a Judicial Candidate to Declare His or Her Political Party Affiliation or Independent Status When Running for Office."