

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

State of Arkansas
95th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2025

SJR 12

By: Senator C. Tucker

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

AN AMENDMENT TO THE ARKANSAS CONSTITUTION REQUIRING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO ESTABLISH BY LAW A REVISED ELECTION PROCESS; REQUIRING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO ESTABLISH BY LAW AN ELECTION PROCESS IN WHICH CANDIDATES AT A PRIMARY ELECTION, SPECIAL PRIMARY ELECTION, OR ELECTION FOR NONPARTISAN OFFICE APPEAR ON A SINGLE BALLOT REGARDLESS OF POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATION AND THE TOP TWO CANDIDATES FOR EACH OFFICE ADVANCE TO THE GENERAL ELECTION OR SPECIAL ELECTION; AND REQUIRING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO ESTABLISH BY LAW A PROCESS BASED ON PARTY AFFILIATION FOR SELECTING DELEGATES TO ATTEND A QUADRENNIAL NATIONAL NOMINATING CONVENTION OF A POLITICAL PARTY TO SELECT A NOMINEE FOR THE OFFICE OF PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND A PROCESS FOR CHOOSING AND ELECTING ELECTORS FOR PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Subtitle

AN AMENDMENT TO THE ARKANSAS
CONSTITUTION REQUIRING THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY TO ESTABLISH BY LAW A REVISED
ELECTION PROCESS.

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



02/06/2025 11:26:15 AM MBM122

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. The Arkansas Constitution is amended to add an additional amendment to read as follows:

§ 1. Election process for general elections, special elections, and elections for nonpartisan office.

(a) The General Assembly shall enact laws establishing an election process for general elections, special elections, and elections for nonpartisan office in which:

(1)(A) The names of all persons who have filed as candidates for a primary election, special primary election, or election for nonpartisan office shall be listed on a single ballot, regardless of political party.

(B) The political party affiliation, if any, of each candidate shall appear on the ballot beside the name of each candidate at an election for partisan office.

(C)(i) A candidate who is unaffiliated with a political party shall appear on the primary election ballot or special primary election ballot.

(ii) The word "Independent" shall appear on the ballot beside the name of an unaffiliated candidate;

(2)(A) The two (2) candidates receiving the greatest number of votes cast for each office at the primary election, special primary election, or election for nonpartisan office shall advance to the general election or special election, regardless of each candidate's political party affiliation, if any.

(B) If only one (1) or two (2) persons file as candidates for an office at a primary election, special primary election, or election for nonpartisan office, the candidate or candidates shall automatically advance to the general election or special election.

(C) The General Assembly may provide by law that if one

(1) candidate receives a specified percentage of the vote for an office at a special primary election, only that one (1) candidate shall advance to the special election; and

(3)(A) The candidate receiving the greatest number of votes for the office at the general election or special election shall be declared the winner of the general election or special election.

(B)(i) If only one (1) candidate for an office will be listed on the general election ballot or special election ballot, the candidate shall be declared elected, his or her name shall not appear on the general election or special election ballot, and the name of the candidate declared elected shall be certified as elected in the same manner as if the candidate had been voted upon at the general election or special election.

(ii) If subdivision (a)(3)(B)(i) of this section applies, the general election or special election shall not be held if no other office or issue is on the general election ballot or special election ballot.

(b)(1) The election process under subsection (a) of this section shall apply to all elections for:

(A) Federal congressional office;

(B) State office;

(C) County office; and

(D) Nonpartisan office, including without limitation:

(i) A judicial office; and

(ii) The office of prosecuting attorney.

(2) The election process under subsection (a) of this section does not apply to elections for:

(A) Municipal office; and

(B) Local office.

(c)(1) The election process under subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to primary elections and general elections for President of the United States.

(2)(A) The General Assembly shall provide by law for a presidential primary election to select delegates to attend a quadrennial national nominating convention of a political party to select nominees for President of the United States and Vice President of the United States.

(B) Voting at the presidential primary election shall be

based on party affiliation.

(3)(A) The General Assembly shall provide by law for a process to choose and elect electors for President of the United States and Vice President of the United States.

(B) The choice and election of electors for President of the United States and Vice President of the United States may appear on the general election ballot.

(d) The General Assembly shall enact all laws necessary to implement this amendment, including without limitation laws concerning:

(1) The process for filing as a candidate for a primary election, special primary election, and election for nonpartisan office, including without limitation the process for filing as an unaffiliated candidate;

(2) Procedures for conducting primary elections, general elections, elections for nonpartisan office, and special elections, including without limitation a process for:

(A) Resolving tie votes; and

(B) Determining when and if candidate vacancies may be filled at primary elections, general elections, elections for nonpartisan office, and special elections;

(3) When primary elections, general elections, elections for nonpartisan office, and special elections shall occur;

(4) The process for filing as a candidate at a presidential primary election;

(5) The date a presidential primary election shall occur;

(6) Procedures for conducting a presidential primary election;

(7) The process for electors for President of the United States and Vice President of the United States to file for inclusion on the ballot;

(8) When the choice and election of electors for President of the United States and Vice President of the United States shall occur;

(9) Procedures for conducting an election to choose and elect electors for President of the United States and Vice President of the United States;

(10) The process for filing as a write-in candidate; and

(11) Other matters deemed necessary by the General Assembly for the implementation of this amendment.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Constitution, Article 3, § 13, is repealed.

~~§ 13. Procedures for elections with one candidate.~~

~~(a) As used in this section, "election" means:~~

- ~~(1) A primary election;~~
- ~~(2) A special primary election;~~
- ~~(3) A general election; and~~
- ~~(4) A special election.~~

~~(b) The General Assembly may enact laws providing that if there is only one (1) person qualified as a candidate for an office after all deadlines for filing as a candidate have passed so that there will be only one (1) name listed on the election ballot for the office and no write-in candidates qualify to appear as candidates for the office on the election ballot:~~

- ~~(1) The one (1) candidate for the office shall be declared elected and his or her name shall not appear on the election ballot;~~
- ~~(2) The name of the candidate declared elected shall be certified as elected in the same manner as if the candidate had been voted upon at the election; and~~
- ~~(3) The election shall not be held if no other office or issue is on the election ballot.~~

SECTION 3. Arkansas Constitution, Amendment 29, Section 5, is amended to read as follows:

§ 5. Election to fill – Placing names on ballots.

Only the names of candidates for office nominated ~~by an organized political party at a convention of delegates, or by a majority of all the votes cast for candidates for the office in a primary election, or by petition of electors~~ as provided by law, shall be placed on the ballots in any election.

SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE. This amendment is effective on and after January 1, 2027, and shall be applicable to elections occurring on and after January 1, 2028.

SECTION 5. 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 Requiring the General Assembly to Establish by Law a Revised Election Process; Requiring the General Assembly to Establish by Law an Election Process in which Candidates at a Primary Election, Special Primary Election, or Election for Nonpartisan Office Appear on a Single Ballot Regardless of Political Party Affiliation and the Top Two Candidates Advance to the General Election or Special Election; and Requiring the General Assembly to Establish by Law a Process Based on Party Affiliation for Selecting Delegates to Attend a Quadrennial National Nominating Convention of a Political Party to Select a Nominee for the Office of President of the United States and a Process for Choosing and Electing Electors for President of the United States and Vice President of the United States."