



*Synopsis of Senate Committee Amendments**

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Legislative Service Commission

Sub. H.B. 312

126th General Assembly

(S. State and Local Government and Veterans Affairs Committee)

Adds to the House-passed version, initiative and referendum petition withdrawal provisions that (R.C. 3501.05, 3501.38, 3505.01, and 3519.08):

(1) Modify current law's prohibition against any petition being withdrawn after it is filed in a public office, continuing this rule only for a declaration of candidacy, nominating petition, or other petition for the purpose of becoming a candidate.

(2) Establish an exception to that current rule for the withdrawal of initiative and referendum petitions by (a) prohibiting the presentation to or the filing with any public office of a petition for the purpose of holding an election on any question or issue after that petition has been withdrawn from a public office and (b) providing that this new rule does not prevent a question or issue petition from being withdrawn, before the 60th day before the election at which the question or issue is scheduled to appear on the ballot, by the filing with the same public office with which the petition was filed of a *written notice of the withdrawal* by a majority of the members of the petitioning committee.

(3) Enact specific procedures for the withdrawal of statewide initiative and referendum provisions that are consistent with the general provisions mentioned in (2) above and further state that, upon a withdrawal, the following apply:

- If the Ohio Ballot Board has not already certified the ballot language at the time a majority of the members of the committee gives notice of the withdrawal, the Board must not certify ballot language for that proposed initiative or referendum to the Secretary of State.
- The Secretary of State must not certify a ballot form or wording to the boards of elections that includes ballot language for the proposed initiative or referendum.
- The proposed initiative or referendum must not appear on the ballot.

* This synopsis does not address amendments that may have been adopted on the Senate floor.

(4) Specify that the withdrawal of initiative and referendum petition provisions must be considered remedial in operation and must be applied to any petition for which ballot language has not yet been approved, regardless of when the petition was filed and regardless of whether the petition has been verified.

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