

Arguments “Against” Proposition 134

Why would Arizona voters give up our right to propose laws through citizen-driven ballot initiatives that have been so beneficial to Arizona residents?

the Arizona Constitution (Article IV, Pt1, Sec1) states that the people have “the power to propose laws and amendments to the constitution and enact or reject such laws and amendments at the polls, independently of the legislature.”

If voters hadn’t had this power to make laws by majority vote:

- >> Those of us with medical debt would now be paying higher interest on that debt
- >> We wouldn't have the Citizens Clean Elections Commission
- >> We wouldn't have the Humane Treatment of Animals Act
- >> Smoking in public places would still be permitted

This proposition asks Arizona voters to give up our fundamental right to citizen-driven initiatives. Why would our legislature, who put this on the ballot, ask us to do such a thing?

All eyes are on Arizona following the recent grand jury indictment of 18 people, 11 of whom are in-state legislators, for trying to steal democracy from our citizens. Most of us, regardless of party affiliation or no affiliation, are repulsed by anti-democracy plots to deprive "Arizona voters of their right to vote and have their votes counted," as alleged in the indictment. This proposition is another such attempt to steal our rights. If passed, it would change the rules to make it nearly impossible to have citizen-driven ballot initiatives.

This “handcuff-the-public” amendment was put on the ballot by a majority of our state legislators.

Should we voluntarily give up our constitutional right to make laws?

NO. We should stand up to those who want us to sit down and keep quiet.

We should Vote NO

Clive "Bob" Sommer, Co-Owner, Changing Hands Bookstore, Tempe

Keep Your Voice: Arizona’s Voter Initiative Under Threat

Vote NO on Proposition 134

This is the latest blatant attempt to take away your decision-making voice by amending the state constitution, making it nearly impossible for ordinary Arizonans to get voter initiatives on the ballot.

A voter initiative is a way for voters to propose new laws or amend existing laws. The process is already tough to do in Arizona. Voter initiatives currently require signatures from 10% of the number of statewide voters. For a constitutional amendment, the requirement is 15%.

Now supporters of this initiative want you to vote for this proposition which will make it even harder for you to have a direct say on important policy. The strategy for taking away your voice - make signatures come proportionately from each of our thirty legislative districts. Opponents could target a single legislative district and do a full-court press to stop organizers from collecting signatures there. It won't matter how popular the measure is in the rest of the state.

It's called sabotage.

The motivation? Simple. The authors of this proposition don't like the decisions you've been making.

For example, for years bills that would have stopped cigarette smoking in public places went nowhere. The legislature made sure those bills never saw the light of day. People finally said enough is enough and got the Smoke Free Arizona Act on the 2006 ballot. We passed it by a wide margin. That really upset a bunch of legislators.

The same goes for Arizona's minimum wage voter initiative. Power brokers were super irritated when you passed that, and they've been trying to make it harder for voter initiatives to make the ballot ever since.

Don't let them get away with this. Keep your voice. Vote NO on Proposition 134.

Will Humble, Executive Director, Arizona Public Health Association, Phoenix

Make no mistake, Proposition 134 has absolutely nothing to do with allowing rural voices to be heard on which citizen Initiatives and referendums make the ballot, and everything to do with legislators wanting to make it as hard as possible for citizens to exercise their State constitutionally granted rights to create new law, change existing law or stop a new law from taking effect. Proposition 134 seeks to amend Article IV, Part 1, Section 1 of the Arizona State Constitution on signature requirements for the citizen initiative and referendum process by requiring that signatures be obtained by Legislative District (there are 30 Legislative Districts) instead of the historical statewide requirement. The percentage of valid signatures is based on the number of votes cast for the Governor's office in the last election where a Governor was elected.

When we, the citizens, exercise our State constitutional rights, because we don't believe the legislature is acting on our behalf, we have the power to act as the Legislature. We, in essence, are the legislature. Our state's founding fathers purposely granted citizens this right, and on a STATEWIDE basis, because they realized that all voices, all votes, and all signatures should count no matter where we live in this state. No matter what your political affiliation is, you should be appalled and vote No on any ballot measure that asks you to not only take away your own rights, but the rights of future Arizona voters. The citizen initiative and referendum process is one of the few legal methods that citizens have that allows us to keep check on our legislators.

Our founding fathers wanted it this way. Don't strip yourself, and all of us, of that power. Please vote no on Proposition 134.

Diane McQueen, Dewey

The signature distribution requirement initiative will make it harder for regular Arizonans to put issues on the ballot. The cost of getting citizen initiatives on the ballot will go up, making it even tougher for Arizonans to have their voices heard. This new signature requirement will make it harder for everyone except those with lots of money and power. Lobbyists and partisan politicians will keep control of our state government. Vote NO on Prop 134.

Blake Sacha, President, Voter Choice Arizona, Gilbert

Many legislators dislike sharing power with voters, so they're asking you to surrender your power that our constitution gives us. Our constitution's authors rejected many proposals to make it more difficult to put initiatives on the ballot; they settled on our current system that has worked since statehood in 1912. The only reason for this proposed change is that some legislators know the majority of Arizonans dislike those legislators' priorities. Prop. 134 would make the state's 7.2 million residents beholden to any one legislative district's 239,000 residents. If the most extreme district--liberal or conservative--dislikes an initiative, then the rest of the state can't vote on the initiative. That isn't the direct democracy our state's founders created when they wrote our constitution. Don't let extreme legislators strip us of our rights as citizens. Vote no on Prop. 134.

James Smith, Ariz. Superior Court Judge (ret.), Self, Phoenix

SCR 1015 is the fourth time the Republican majority in the Legislature has attempted to amend the Arizona constitution to erode Arizonans' direct democracy rights and it is up to us, the voters, to again stop this legislative overreach in its tracks. Erecting barriers like SCR 1015 to the rights of everyday Arizonans to make their own laws should receive a resounding no from the voters. The drafters of the Arizona Constitution knew it was important to provide Arizona citizens with the power, through the initiative process, to directly enact laws or amend the Constitution when the Arizona Legislature refuses to take action desired by a majority of the voters. Recent examples of successful initiatives are the increase in the minimum wage and outlawing dirty money in political campaigns.

For more than 150 years it has been sufficient to collect a number of valid signatures equivalent to 10% (15% for constitutional amendments) of the statewide voted cast in the last election for Governor. SCR 1015 would wipe out that statewide calculation and enact a requirement that the 10% and 15 % thresholds be met in each and every one of Arizona's 30 Legislative Districts. SCR 1015 effectively gives a single legislative district the power to kill any citizen's initiative. At the very least, SCR 1015 would significantly increase the cost of gathering signatures. Small grass roots organizations would face nearly insurmountable obstacles which would mean only rich corporations and deep pocketed national groups would be able to use the initiative process.

Eileen Hollowell, Steering Committee member, Indivisible Tucson Action Alliance, Oro Valley

Sponsored by Eileen Hollowell

I will vote no on Proposition 134 and I encourage other Arizonans to do the same. This amendment immensely increases the cost and complexity of citizen-led ballot initiatives, and by doing so, removes an important check on the influence of out-of-state organizations. We are ONE Arizona, and our processes should reflect that.

Raymond Kimball, Volunteer, Veterans for All Voters, Gilbert

Through the citizen initiative process, the Arizona Constitution grants Arizona voters the right and responsibility to propose and enact needed legislation or to reject laws that run counter to the will of the majority of voters.

The Legislature has interfered with that process by making changes to the signature gathering form. Narrow rows and the restriction to sign within the lines mean people with “j,” “g,” and “y” in their names struggle to sign accurately. To ensure even more signature-invalidating mistakes, signers are required to write their ZIP codes before the name of their city.

Now, the Legislature wants to go a step further by asking voters to agree to a new requirement that petitions achieve the threshold percentage of valid signatures in all 30 legislative districts rather than statewide. This requirement would make the success of future citizen initiatives highly improbable.

Why is the Legislature proposing to make it harder for citizens to do our jobs? Because they aren't doing theirs and want to ensure we can't do ours.

Republicans with a razor-thin one-vote majority in the Senate and House have a stranglehold on legislating that has resulted in failed governance.

With no incentive to negotiate across the aisle, the current Legislature sidelines bills proposed by Democrats. The 2.5% flat income tax and universal school vouchers are bankrupting the state causing harm to our district public schools and cuts to all governmental departments. The general fund that had a \$2.5B surplus in January, 2023, is now in the red.

Enough is enough. Protect and preserve your right to petition the Legislature to propose and enact legislation based on the will of the majority of voters statewide.

Vote NO on Prop. 134.

Judi Moreillon, Author, Educator, and Advocate, Tucson

RepresentUS is a nonpartisan nonprofit advocating on behalf of voters. We have a very simple litmus test for issues that we support or oppose. “Does this measure make it easier or harder for regular people to have a say in their government?” Prop 134 clearly makes it HARDER for regular voters to have a say in their government. It does this in three key ways.

- First, it makes signature collection for ballot measures significantly more difficult and expensive, making it harder for citizens to qualify an issue for the ballot.
- Second, it increases the influence of wealthy out of state interests because they will be the only ones able to afford the higher cost to qualify measures for the ballot.
- And third, Prop 134 allows any single legislative district to veto the will of the rest of the state by refusing to sign the qualification petitions.

At a time when we need MORE citizen involvement in our government, this measure makes it harder for regular voters to have a say in their government. Please vote NO.

Bo Harmon, RepresentUS, Leesburg

I am certain that none of the important ballot measures that the public has supported in our state's history would ever have voted on if this terrible idea had been in effect. Regardless of whether the measure is right-leaning or left-leaning, citizen organizers would not likely have been able to collect the number of signatures required by this constitutional amendment. And remember that this constitutional amendment will be nearly impossible to repeal if we find that it is not working. Simply put, the Arizona Legislature hates when the public exercises their rights enshrined in our state constitution to publicly initiated ballot measures. It's about power for them. Plain and simple. Think of all of those times that we, the public, had to act because the legislature refused to: from restricting the malicious influence of dark money on our elections to requiring the government to fully compensate citizens for government takings. I may disagree with the ballot measures that you want to put on the ballot, and you with mine. But it is un-American and against our proud Arizona heritage to oppose our right to put forward our public initiatives to compete in the marketplace of ideas. Please vote no on Proposition 134 and protect our rare public initiative rights.

Ken Clark, Voter, Representing Myself, Phoenix

The Arizona Forward Party believes that access to the ballot should forever and always be made easier for voters, not more difficult.

Proposition 134 makes it harder for citizen driven referendums, statewide initiatives, and constitutional changes to get on the ballot. The amendment would require EVERY legislative district to meet a petition signature threshold that is currently measured at the state level.

While the proponents claim this will give more representation to all, it will only make it more difficult to obtain the required signatures. If only ONE district fails to collect enough signatures, the referendum, initiative, or amendment will fail to appear on the ballot no matter how popular or relative it is to the rest of the state.

This proposed measure is not intended to balance the viewpoints of rural vs. urban, or Red vs. Blue voters—it is only intended to hinder the citizens' initiative process and to shift power away from voters and leave it solely in the hands of the legislature. All Arizonans in all 30 districts

already have a voice — If there is a measure that a voter doesn't like, they can make their voice heard by voting no on election day.

Vote NO on Proposition 134, and preserve the current citizens' initiative process. Don't allow one single district to veto the wishes of a majority of Arizonans.

Glenn Haselfeld, Leadership Team, Arizona Forward Party, Prescott Valley

Vote NO on Prop 134!

Voters in the state of Alaska chose to use Ranked Choice Voting four years ago. After only one election cycle, voters have buyers' remorse. There is now a measure on the AK 2024 Ballot to get rid of RCV. This isn't unlike in AZ, when in the 90's a ballot measure, similar to Prop 134, amended the constitution to require runoff elections. The result was so bad that the next year another measure was on the ballot and 2/3 of the voters repeal it. Dramatic changes are generally a bad idea.

If Prop 134 passes, AZ voters will forever lose as our elections can be manipulated by the Secretary of State, who gets to decide how many candidates appear on the general ballot. How? Prop 134 imports California Jungle Primaries into Arizona, which allows only one party to appear on the general election ballot - meaning your choice of different parties on the General Election goes away. You could only have choices from ONE party. Voters should have all party choices in November, not a single-party ballot.

This measure has been deceptively sold to voters. It is being funded by big money out of AZ and is designed to ensure their candidates, and perhaps only their candidates, appear on your general election ballot. And when other candidates appear, the complicated, confusing, and complex RCV scheme will allow their candidate to "win" even if they did not receive the most votes.

For everyone who believes in the sanctity of the straightforward voting process, it's time to reject RCV in our state.

Let's not make the same mistake Alaska did, let's not adopt failed ideas from California politicians and let's not allow New York special interests to manipulate Arizona elections. Vote NO on Prop 134!

I. G. "Gus" Beall Jr., Concerned AZ Voter, Self, Phoenix

Vote NO on Proposition 134.
Protect Direct Democracy!

Arizona has had the rights of initiative and referendum since it became a state in 1912. They were drafted into the first state constitution by Teddy Roosevelt style progressives concerned about the undue influence that special interests had had in the territorial government. Arizona's first governor, George W.P. Hunt said that these provisions are "the most definite expression ever

pronounced...of a social and political organization in which every citizen is the equal before the law of every other, and government is truly by consent of the governed.”

Since that time special interests have indeed tried to limit the citizens rights of Initiative and Referendum. This is but the latest attempt. The requirement to collect signatures from each of the 30 legislative districts in Arizona will make it practically impossible to put anything on the ballot since failure to collect the required number from even a single legislative district will doom the effort and give one district veto power over a measure that may have strong broad support statewide.

Don't let the special interests take away your rights. Vote No.

Cyndi Tuell, chair, Sierra Club - Grand Canyon Chapter, Tucson and Jim Vaaler, vice chair, Sierra Club - Grand Canyon Chapter, Phoenix

The League of Women Voters of Arizona strongly opposes Proposition 134. The Arizona Constitution enshrines Arizona citizens' right to initiate legislation through the petition process. The petition process requires collecting a specific number of valid signatures from registered voters, regardless of where in Arizona they live. Proposition 134 radically changes the signature requirements by requiring a minimum number of signatures from each of the 30 legislative districts.

Even if a majority of Arizona voters are in favor of a proposition, if even one of the 30 districts does not meet the necessary minimum number of petition signatures, the proposition will not be on the ballot, thus depriving all voters of the opportunity to make their voices heard. In contrast, state legislators can move an initiative to the ballot for voter approval by a simple majority, and without collecting signatures.

If passed, this proposition will make it overwhelmingly difficult, if not impossible, for citizens' initiatives to qualify for the ballot. As a result, Arizona voters' constitutional right to make laws will be irrevocably curtailed. Therefore, we urge you to help maintain the rights given to us by Arizona's founders.

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ARIZONA URGES YOU TO VOTE NO

Pinny Sheoran, President, League of Women Voters of Arizona, Scottsdale
Sponsored by League of Women Voters of Arizona

Arizona has a long and proud history of democratic self-governance. It's always been part of our state constitution that citizens have the right to make laws by drafting initiatives and placing them on the ballot. If we the people support a policy, we can make it the law of the land, even if our politicians won't or can't act. It was a ballot initiative that first gave women in Arizona the right to vote. And in recent years, Arizonans have used the ballot initiative process to legalize medical marijuana, outlaw predatory medical debt, and require special interests to disclose their

donors. If Proposition 134 had been in effect, all of those victories likely would have been impossible.

Over the last few years, the ballot initiative process has become more and more challenging for ordinary people to navigate. As educators, we experienced that first-hand in 2018 and 2020 as we sought to increase taxes on the rich to raise money for Arizona public schools. Proposition 134 would take this situation from bad to worse, making grassroots initiatives nearly impossible. Under Proposition 134, the residents of a single LD would be able to block a proposed policy, even if it's incredibly popular in Arizona as a whole.

Let's protect our right as citizens to make our voices heard. Vote NO on Proposition 134.

Marisol Garcia, President, Arizona Education Association, Phoenix

Prop. 134 will restrict and inhibit direct democracy in Arizona. In our state we are blessed with a constitution that allows us, as citizens, to change our laws. This is a check against concentrated political power in the hands of lawmakers. However every year we see attempts by the state legislature to limit our powers as citizens.

Citizens ballot initiatives are already expensive and difficult to propose. Prop. 134 will increase costs for ballot initiatives, meaning only the most wealthy and most elite citizens will be able to propose initiatives, limiting the voices of most Arizonans. Prop. 134 tries to solve a problem of concentrated populations making decisions for the whole state. This is not a problem with ballot initiatives in Arizona. In 2022 our state saw two citizens' initiatives on the ballot, both were passed by an overwhelming majority of voters, over 70 percent in both cases. Although citizens' initiatives may be a problem for some politicians, they are not a problem for citizens.

As citizens, we need to say no when the state legislature asks us to limit our ability to change our laws. Vote no.

Mr. Garrett Weaver, Self, Tucson

As a pro-public education advocacy organization, Save Our Schools Arizona strongly opposes Prop 134. Prop 134 would make it nearly impossible for citizens to pass our own laws — including desperately needed measures to increase local school funding — by forcing citizens to gather signatures from a percentage of voters in each and every one of Arizona's 30 legislative districts, not simply from all Arizona voters. The Legislature doesn't require a percentage of politicians from each district to vote for a bill in order to pass it. So why do they want to force the same requirement on everyday citizens?

These bought-and-sold politicians, and the dark-money lobbyists who control them, are not hiding that they want to make it harder for citizens to put initiatives on the ballot. They're frustrated that we're going around them to pass laws they don't like. If we fall for their subterfuge and approve Prop 134, all they'll have to do is pour a ton of money into one district to oppose— thus preventing voters, no matter how many of us actually signed to put that idea to a public vote, from ever having a say.

Arizonans have always been fiercely independent. Our founders so deeply valued our individual right to make our own laws that they wrote it into our state Constitution. But corrupt politicians can't stand the idea of us having a right they think should belong only to them. They've run out of ways to attack the process without asking us to amend away the very Constitution that explicitly gives us that right.

Arizona voters get the final word on whether initiatives make the ballot and become law. Not politicians. Not lobbyists. Let's keep it that way. Vote NO on Prop 134.

Beth Lewis, Executive Director, Save Our Schools Arizona, Chandler and Melinda Iyer, Policy Director, Save Our Schools Arizona, Phoenix

We urge voters to resoundingly defeat Proposition 134, which asks voters to amend the state Constitution to restrict Arizona's initiative and referendum process by requiring that ballot measures collect signatures from a percentage of voters in each of Arizona's 30 legislative districts: 10% for initiatives and 15% for a constitutional amendment.

This would effectively give any single district veto power over the rest, allowing any district in the state veto power over measures that have broad statewide support. Motivated by some lawmakers' increasing contempt for voters who bypass them to submit initiatives that lawmakers don't like, this flies in the face of Arizona's own constitution, which emphasizes that "all political power is inherent in the people." That's us, not an imperial legislature.

Laws are not passed with votes from every legislative district. Statewide ballot measures are not required to receive votes from every legislative district. It is illogical and harmful to require that ballot measures satisfy the impossibly high hurdle of collecting signatures from every district. Not only would this undercut our ability to put measures such as Stop Dark Money, a living minimum wage, and abortion access on the ballot, it would make such initiatives prohibitively expensive.

Lawmakers repeatedly try to dupe voters with measures like Proposition 134, seeking to trick them into voting away their own rights as Arizonans. We strongly urge a NO vote on Proposition 134.

Melinda Iyer, Policy Director, Civic Engagement Beyond Voting, Phoenix and Catherine Sigmon, Co-Founder, Civic Engagement Beyond Voting, Tempe

As a concerned voter, lifelong Arizonan, and healthcare professional for over seven years in the field, I am against Prop 134 for how it would undermine the voices of voters from all parts of the political spectrum.

Tanzida Zaman, Phoenix

Healthcare Rising Arizona is a member-led organization committed to fixing our healthcare problems through the citizens' ballot initiative process. Our volunteers have consistently turned in the most signatures of any ballot measure in state history, starting with the Predatory Debt Collection Protection Act and most recently with the Arizona Abortion Access Act.

But if Prop 134 becomes law, the barrier for average citizens to participate in the ballot measure process will be too great and direct democracy will suffer. Arizona already has incredibly hostile laws towards ballot measures, meaning that ballot measure campaigns must provide a buffer of almost double the amount of required signatures to get on the ballot. Prop 134 would change the existing requirement of collecting signatures from 10% (15% for constitutional amendments) of the statewide votes cast in the last election for Governor and instead require that the percentage signature threshold be collected proportionately in each of Arizona's 30 legislative districts. This is one of the most onerous burdens on signatures nationwide.

When government fails us, ordinary citizens need the right to bring issues directly to voters to decide. This measure was referred to the ballot by elected officials who hope to make it harder for citizens to engage in direct democracy. It does nothing to improve the quality of the process or ensure fair participation. It only serves to take power away from the average Arizonan.

We cannot allow this erosion of Arizonans' right to the ballot measure process to continue. Join us in voting No on Prop 134.

For a better healthcare future,

The Members of Healthcare Rising Arizona, Phoenix
Sponsored by Arizonans Fed Up with Failing Healthcare (Healthcare Rising AZ)

Prop 134 is an attack on the voices of Arizona.

Citizen-led ballot initiatives are an important tool that we use to self-govern. It is one way that citizens of Arizona can use their voices to impact laws in our state. When our lawmakers are too divided or they don't have the political incentive to pass laws that serve the people of Arizona, we have the ability to make change by gathering enough valid signatures to qualify an initiative for the ballot so that all of Arizona's voters may weigh in on it.

This process has been used effectively to provide transparency in campaign finance, protect consumers from predatory debt collection, and reduce gerrymandering through independent redistricting.

Currently, signatures can be collected from anywhere in the state to qualify a measure for consideration by voters. Prop 134 seeks to weaken or eliminate Arizonans' right to propose future reforms by requiring a high threshold of signatures to be collected in each and every one of Arizona's 30 Legislative Districts. This new requirement would mean that any LD could effectively serve as a VETO to the will of the majority of voters. The increased legal burden and expense would restrict the ability of citizens to participate in this process. This would further increase the reliance on special interest groups and wealthy donors in future efforts, taking away Arizonans' voices.

Protect Arizona's Voice and Vote NO on Prop 134.

Kazz Fernandes, Executive Director, Better Ballot Arizona, Mesa

Arizona has a proud tradition of being a trailblazer, whether it's pioneering the legalization of medical marijuana, eliminating predatory medical debt practices, or demanding transparency from special interest groups regarding their donors. These milestones wouldn't have been possible if Prop 134 had been enacted.

The Arizona Constitution grants voters the right (Article IV, Pt1, Sec1) to propose and decide on laws through ballot initiatives independently of the legislature. This crucial right allows voters to introduce measures, vote on them, and shape Arizona's laws.

Prop 134 jeopardizes this right by introducing stringent signature requirements for ballot initiatives. Presently, signatures from 10% (or 15% for constitutional amendments) of statewide voters in the last gubernatorial election are needed. Prop 134 would mandate that these signatures be collected proportionally from each of Arizona's 30 legislative districts, significantly complicating the process of getting initiatives on the ballot.

Launching a ballot initiative is already a demanding and costly endeavor, but it shouldn't be rendered nearly impossible. Prop 134 would erect even more obstacles, curtailing Arizonans' ability to engage in their democratic process.

Vote NO on Prop 134 to safeguard your right to propose and vote on laws.

Ylenia Aguilar, Phoenix

Prop 134 would impose such a significant burden on the signature requirement in the ballot initiative process that most measures wouldn't even make it to the ballot, effectively killing them. The measure would change the current requirement of collecting signatures from 10% (15% for constitutional amendments) of statewide votes cast in the last election for Governor to that percentage threshold be met in each of Arizona's 30 legislative districts.

Arizona has had initiative rights since it became a state in 1912. Since then, special interests have tried to limit citizens' rights, and Prop 134 is the latest attempt. The requirement to collect signatures from each of Arizona's 30 legislative districts will make it hopeless to place anything on the ballot.

Arizona was the first state to legalize medical marijuana, end predatory medical debt practices, and require special interest groups to disclose their donors. Citizen-led ballot measures also brought us the Smoke-Free Arizona Act, Arizona Minimum Wage, and the Citizens Clean Elections Commission. Prop 134 would likely have prevented all of these popular policies from reaching the ballot.

Vote NO on this measure.

Chris Herstam, Phoenix

Growing up in rural Illinois, I have a deep appreciation for small towns and farming communities. While I now live in Phoenix, the diversity of economies and communities in Arizona is what I love most about our state. Arizona also has a proud tradition of self-governance, where the collective will of the people has led to significant legislative successes. We've legalized medical marijuana, banned predatory medical debt practices, and demanded transparency from special interests regarding their donors. These achievements highlight the power of voter ballot initiatives (not to be confused with ballot referrals that are put on the ballot by the legislature, including this very proposition). Prop 134 threatens to undermine this process by making it excessively difficult for voter initiatives to reach the ballot, which takes away the liberties of ALL Arizonans.

As a lifelong Republican, I believe in small government and fiscal conservatism. Prop 134 grossly infringes on both these principles. The real intention behind this measure is to create insurmountable obstacles for grassroots initiatives, ensuring that only those backed by wealthy corporate donors can afford the legal defenses necessary to survive these challenges. The cost implications of Prop 134 are significant, especially for smaller and rural counties. These areas will need to invest in new equipment and hire additional staff to handle the increased workload of verifying thousands of signatures. This expense, potentially hundreds of thousands of dollars per election cycle, will strain already limited budgets and divert resources from other critical needs.

Prop 134 will only benefit wealthy special interests and add unnecessary bureaucracy to our elections process. It attacks the voter initiative process and attempts to silence everyday Arizonans. Please join me in voting NO on Prop 134

Lisa Hoberg, Phoenix

The ACLU of Arizona is a non-partisan, civil rights and liberties organization committed to protecting the voting rights of all Arizonans. The ACLU of Arizona urges a NO vote on Proposition 134 because it will undermine the ability of Arizonans to engage in the citizen initiative process and have a direct voice in our government.

Current Arizona law requires ballot initiatives to obtain signatures from 10% of all eligible voters to propose a law, and 15% of all eligible voters to propose a constitutional amendment. Proposition 134 alters this long-standing rule by requiring a citizen initiative to obtain the respective thresholds from eligible voters in all thirty legislative districts across the state. This will significantly drive up costs and deter future citizen initiatives.

Proponents argue this will give each legislative district an equal say in the initiative process – but we already have an equal say. Any person or community can initiate a citizen initiative and we

all have the opportunity to vote on those that make the ballot. Proposition 134 simply drives up the costs for citizen initiatives to reduce the power of the public.

Arizonans first established the citizen initiative process in 1912 to give the public a direct voice in our government. Through the citizen initiative process, Arizonans have proven that they are in the best position to decide what is right for Arizona.

Proposition 134 will make it harder for all Arizonans – rural or urban, Democrat, Republican, or Independent – to have a voice in our democracy. At a time when the legislature is more committed than ever to making government work only for the few, Proposition 134 reduces the power of every Arizonan and makes it harder to have a government for the people, responsive to the people. Vote NO.

Scott Greenwood, Executive Director, ACLU of Arizona, Phoenix
Sponsored by ACLU of Arizona

Prop 134 would impose such a significant burden on the signature requirement in the ballot initiative process that most measures wouldn't even make it to the ballot, effectively killing them. The measure would change the current requirement of collecting signatures from 10% (15% for constitutional amendments) of statewide votes cast in the last election for Governor to that percentage threshold be met in each of Arizona's 30 legislative districts.

Arizona has had initiative rights since it became a state in 1912. Since then, special interests have tried to limit citizens' rights, and Prop 134 is the latest attempt. The requirement to collect signatures from each of Arizona's 30 legislative districts will make it hopeless to place anything on the ballot.

Arizona was the first state to legalize medical marijuana, end predatory medical debt practices, and require special interest groups to disclose their donors. Citizen-led ballot measures also brought us the Smoke-Free Arizona Act, Arizona Minimum Wage, and the Citizens Clean Elections Commission. Prop 134 would likely have prevented all of these popular policies from ever reaching the ballot.

Janet Hamlin, Tempe

This is an effort to stifle the population's ability to bring referenda, ironically put on the ballot by a House and Senate majority who put multiple issues on the ballot just this term. The population's say in its government is paramount, we need more options to reign in excessive or extreme government, not less. Ballot measures are already extraordinarily difficult to put on the ballot and have been restricted multiple times over the past few years. A yes vote here would strangle the population's ability to put an initiative on the ballot... a check that is currently rarely used or available unless there are hundreds of thousands of proponents for placing it on the ballot. Let the citizens vote!

Steven Jackson, Scottsdale

The Arizona Constitution granted Arizona voters the power to engage in direct democracy through the voter initiative process. When the state legislature has failed to act, Arizona voters have used this power to pass laws to raise the minimum wage and increase funding for education.

Proposition 134 would amend the state constitution to add new burdens that require that a certain percentage of qualified voter signatures come from each Legislative District for a voter initiative to successfully appear on the ballot. This new signature requirement will make it more difficult for voter-led initiatives to appear on the ballot and would centralize more power in the hands of elected officials, and less power in the hands of the people.

Joseph Palomino, Director, Arizona Center for Economic Progress, Tempe
Sponsored by Arizona Center for Economic Progress

The power of the citizen initiative process lies in the fact that nearly any group of Arizona voters can come together to bring an issue to the ballot. Prop 134 would change the process so only the ultra-wealthy and powerful special interest groups would be able to gather enough signatures to bring a question to the ballot. Prop 134 makes it so that instead of reaching a general signature threshold, getting a question on the ballot would require an unrealistic amount per legislative district.

Requiring a large percentage of signatures for each legislative district is nearly impossible for regular Arizonans who want to participate in their democracy. Prop 134 also makes it extremely difficult for Rural Arizonans to bring pressing issues to the statewide ballot.

The ultra-wealthy with political power and special interest groups are not a true reflection of Arizona voters. They should not be the only ones who can afford to bring important priorities to the statewide ballot.

Prop 134 makes it harder for real Arizonans to utilize their civil liberties. Voting NO on Prop 134 helps keep Arizona's tradition of the citizen initiative process accessible and the will of the people alive.

Jennifer Guzman, Program Director, Common Cause Arizona, Phoenix

Do you ever wonder who comes up with these ideas and why all this junk is on your ballot? We can help answer that.

The Arizona Agenda is a daily reported newsletter that delivers a behind-the-scenes view of Arizona's political shenanigans and puts you, the voter, in those smoke-filled rooms where decisions are made.

We're here to fill you in on all the weird backstories and interesting nuggets from the Arizona Capitol and beyond. (Including fun facts like that you can write about anything in these ballot arguments. Isn't that wild? Someone should really make a law against using the publicity pamphlet to promote your newsletter...)

The Agenda was started by two local political reporters who left their jobs in corporate journalism to try something new.

We're an independent, nonpartisan, no-BS daily newsletter about Arizona politics that's actually fun to read.

We have subscribers from the Governor's Office to the Capitol's Freedom Caucus. But we don't write the Agenda for those political insiders.

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Sometimes, we get politicians drunk and film it.

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And if you're in Southern Arizona, check out our sister newsletter, the Tucson Agenda, which delivers the news you need to be an informed citizen south of the Gila River. Go to TucsonAgenda.com to subscribe.

Thanks! And good luck filling out the rest of this absurdly long ballot! (Check out the candidate guide on our website if you need help.)

Hank Stephenson, Co-Founder, Arizona Agenda, Phoenix

I am a veteran teacher and a recipient of the John J. Ross Award for Teacher Excellence in Law-Related Education (2021) presented by AFLSE.

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Arizona Legislators would never try to RESTRICT voter input, right?

WRONG, they're doing just that! We MUST vote NO on Prop 134!

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Did you know that if a "normal citizen" wants to bring an issue directly to the people for a vote, we CAN do that?

You have to be serious though! You'll need to collect over 384,000 legitimate signatures of registered voters to get a constitutional initiative on a ballot. (We've done it before when we restricted predatory medical debt practices and demanded that special interests disclose their donors.)

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Are you also aware that our AZ Legislators only need to get 16 Senators and 31 Representatives to put something on a ballot? That simple majority is how they're sneaking these 5 propositions onto our ballot.

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This Legislature PROPosal states that citizens will be REQUIRED to have 15% of EACH of the 30 Legislative District's voters sign to get it on a ballot...even people in the middle of nowhere on a Reservation!

So Legislators only need 47 votes to put it on the ballot, but ONE missing signature in one LD out of 384,000 legitimate signatures will keep Citizen Initiatives OFF the ballot!"

This ensures Legislators will maintain their monopoly on power and will prevent popular measures from ever being put in front of Arizona voters. What a great way to continue to serve special interest groups!

If the voters approve this proposition, we can't blame our Legislators if we can never get a proposed initiative into law again!

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PLEASE VOTE NO ON PROP 134! Allow citizens to take an issue directly to the voters on a ballot without ridiculous requirements!

Bonnie Hickman, Concerned Arizona Educator, MESA

Sponsored by Better Ballot Arizona

We each represent 3 different firms that span the political aisle.

We have managed many ballot initiatives in Arizona over multiple election cycles. We also uniquely have worked and qualified ballot initiatives in states that have different geographic requirements similar to this proposed legislation. And therefore we can attest first hand knowledge the logistics involved in collecting 10% of voters' signatures from each of Arizona's 30 legislative districts will cost millions of dollars... not to mention the cost taxpayers will have to bare when rural counties have to process thousands of signatures. We are rapidly moving away from a "citizens" initiative and only ensuring that well funded special interests can be successful.

It is also outlandish that 10% of voters in every legislative district were not asked if they even wanted this on the ballot - instead it was done by a referral to bypass them.

Join us in voting NO on Prop 134.

Jess Grennan, Meghan Cox, Eric Chalmers

Eric Chalmers, Phoenix

Chispa Arizona is strongly opposed to Prop 134. Chispa Arizona works to empower Latinx communities to influence policy, protect natural resources, and fight climate change. Through grassroots efforts and community engagement, we strive for clean air, safe water, and healthy neighborhoods, especially for those most affected by climate change.

Prop 134 would create the most restrictive signature requirements in the country. Only large political campaigns would have the resources to propose citizen measures, giving more power to the wealthy and corporations over our democracy.

The citizen initiative process is crucial to Arizona's democracy. It allows voters to shape the state's future by implementing clean energy standards or ensuring the right to clean water and air. This direct democracy makes Arizona healthier and more fair.

We must protect our ability to create a future with clean air and water through the citizen initiative process.

Please join Chispa Arizona in voting NO on Prop 134.

Jose Martinez Jr., Operations Director, Chispa AZ, Buckeye
Sponsored by Chispa AZ