6816

2009-2010 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

March 12, 2009

Introduced by M. of A. KOLB, RAIA, ERRIGO, TOBACCO, CORWIN, CONTE, GIGLIO, P. LOPEZ, WALKER -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. BARCLAY, HAWLEY, SAYWARD, TOWNSEND -- read once and referred to the Committee on Judiciary

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY

proposing an amendment to the constitution, in relation to providing for initiative and referendum petitions for electors

1 Section 1. Resolved (if the Senate concur), That article 20 of the 2 constitution be renumbered article 21 and a new article 20 be added to 3 read as follows:

> ARTICLE XX INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM

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6 LEGISLATIVE POWER SHALL BE VESTED IN THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, BUT THE PEOPLE RESERVE TO THEMSELVES THE POWER TO PROPOSE LAWS AND AMENDMENTS TO 7 8 CONSTITUTION AND TO ADOPT OR REJECT THEM AT THE POLLS IF AFTER THE 9 SUBMITTING THE SAME ACCORDING TO THE METHOD PROVIDED HEREIN TO THE LEGISLATURE THAT BODY FAILS TO TAKE POSITIVE ACTION, AND ALSO RESERVE 10 THE POWER, AT THEIR OWN OPTION, TO SO ADOPT OR REJECT 11 ANY ACT, OR OF ANY ACT, PASSED BY THE LEGISLATURE. THESE RESERVED 12 SECTION OR PART 13 POWERS ARE THE INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM.

14 SECTION 1. AN INITIATIVE OR REFERENDUM PETITION SHALL SET FORTH THE 15 FULL TEXT OF THE LAW OR AMENDMENT, HEREINAFTER DESIGNATED AS THE MEAS-16 URE, WHICH IS PROPOSED BY THE PETITION.

17 S 2. (A) AN INITIATIVE IS THE POWER OF THE ELECTORS TO PROPOSE AMEND-18 MENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND TO PROPOSE LAWS AND TO ADOPT OR REJECT 19 THEM.

(B) A REFERENDUM IS THE POWER OF THE ELECTORS TO APPROVE OR REJECT
LAWS OR PARTS OF LAWS, EXCEPT LAWS CALLING ELECTIONS; PROVIDED, HOWEVER,
THE EXCEPTION CONTAINED IN THIS SUBDIVISION SHALL NOT BE INTERPRETED OR
HELD TO RESTRICT ANY POWERS GRANTED TO THE ELECTORS IN SUBDIVISION (A)
OF THIS SECTION.

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[] is old law to be omitted.

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1 S 3. NO INITIATIVE OR REFERENDUM MEASURE MAY BE PROPOSED WHICH IS 2 BEYOND THE REACH OF THE STATE LEGISLATURE ITSELF; OR THE OPERATION OF 3 WHICH IS RESTRICTED TO A PARTICULAR TOWN, CITY, OR OTHER POLITICAL 4 SUBDIVISION WHICH IS NOT STATEWIDE; OR NAMING ANY PERSON TO HOLD PUBLIC 5 OFFICE; OR ABOLISHING A STATE AGENCY; OR APPROPRIATING SPECIFIC SUMS OF 6 MONEY FROM THE TREASURY.

7 S 4. AN INITIATIVE OR REFERENDUM MEASURE EMBRACING MORE THAN ONE 8 SUBJECT MAY NOT BE SUBMITTED TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL NOR HAVE ANY 9 EFFECT.

10 S 5. AN INITIATIVE OR REFERENDUM PETITION SHALL BE PROPOSED BY AT LEAST TWO HUNDRED FIFTY SPONSORS WHO ARE REGISTERED VOTERS IN THE STATE 11 OF NEW YORK. ONE SPONSOR SHALL BE DESIGNATED CHAIRPERSON BY THE 12 PETI-TIONING COMMITTEE AND SHALL REPRESENT THE COMMITTEE. NO SOONER THAN 13 14 JANUARY FIRST OF THE YEAR PRECEDING THE CONVENING OF THE LEGISLATIVE 15 SESSION IN WHICH THE MEASURE WILL BE INTRODUCED, THE PROPOSAL SHALL BE 16 SUBMITTED TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL SHALL RENDER AN 17 TO ITS CONSTITUTIONALITY IF A STATUTE, OR ITS EFFECT UPON OPINION AS OTHER PROVISIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION IF AN AMENDMENT AND ALSO RENDER HIS 18 19 OR HER ADVICE AS TO THE FORM OF THE PROPOSED MEASURE AND AS TO ITS SUIT-ABILITY TO ACCOMPLISH ITS PURPOSE. HE OR SHE SHALL ALSO CERTIFY THAT THE 20 21 MEASURE IS NOT SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME IN CONTENT OR INTENT AS ANY MEAS-22 WHICH HAS BEEN QUALIFIED FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE VOTERS IN LIKE MANNER URE 23 AT EITHER OF THE TWO PRECEDING BIENNIAL STATE ELECTIONS, AND THAT IΤ 24 CONTAINS ONLY SUBJECTS NOT EXCLUDED FROM THE POPULAR INITIATIVE OR 25 REFERENDUM. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S DETERMINATION SHALL BE MADE WITHIN 26 THIRTY DAYS AFTER RECEIPT OF SAME. THE MEASURE SHALL THEN BE SUBMITTED 27 TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR APPROVAL OF FORM AND PREPARATION OF A 28 PETITION TITLE REPRESENTING THE INTENT OF THE PROPOSAL. THE SECRETARY 29 OF STATE SHALL PREPARE, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE 30 SPONSORING COMMITTEE, AN UNBIASED, NON-ARGUMENTATIVE SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSAL NOT TO EXCEED ONE HUNDRED WORDS WHICH SHALL APPEAR ON THE 31 PETITIONS. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SHALL PROVIDE BLANKS CONTAINING THE 32 SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED MEASURE FOR THE USE OF SUBSEQUENT SIGNERS. 33 34 ACTION BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE SHALL BE COMPLETED WITHIN THIRTY DAYS 35 OF RECEIPT OF THE PETITION FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

S 6. THE PETITIONING COMMITTEE ASSUMES FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR 36 THE 37 CIRCULATION OF THE PETITIONS. ONLY REGISTERED VOTERS OF NEW YORK STATE 38 MAY CARRY OR SIGN PETITIONS. PETITION BEARERS SHALL CARRY A COPY OF THE FULL TEXT OF THE INITIATIVE OR REFERENDUM. PETITIONS SHALL BE CIRCULATED 39 40 OBTAIN SIGNATURES OF ELECTORS EOUAL IN NUMBER TO SIX PERCENT OF THE ТΟ ELECTORS WHO VOTED FOR GOVERNOR IN THE LAST GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION 41 IF THE MEASURE IS A STATUTE, OR EIGHT PERCENT IF THE MEASURE AMENDS THE 42 43 CONSTITUTION. NO MORE THAN FIVE PERCENT OF THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF SIGNA-TURES SHALL COME FROM ANY ONE COUNTY OF THE STATE. THE PETITIONS 44 SHALL 45 BE FILED WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE AT LEAST TEN DAYS BEFORE THE LEGIS-LATURE CONVENES AT THE BEGINNING OF ITS ANNUAL SESSION. THE SECRETARY OF 46 47 STATE SHALL SUBMIT THE MEASURE TO BOTH HOUSES OF THE LEGISLATURE WITHIN 48 THIRTY DAYS OF RECEIPT OF SAME, FOLLOWING CERTIFICATION OF SIGNATURES IN 49 A LIKE MANNER AS EMPLOYED IN CERTIFYING THOSE OF AN INDEPENDENT CANDI-50 FOR STATEWIDE OFFICE. THE LEGISLATURE SHALL PROVIDE THE MANNER IN DATE 51 WHICH PETITIONS SHALL BE CIRCULATED, PRESENTED AND CERTIFIED, AND MEAS-URES SUBMITTED TO THE ELECTORS WITHIN A TWO YEAR PASSAGE OF THIS AMEND-52 53 MENT TO THE CONSTITUTION.

54 S 7. IF THE MEASURE INTRODUCED BY INITIATIVE OR REFERENDUM IS A STAT-55 UTE AND IS PASSED BY BOTH HOUSES OF THE LEGISLATURE AND APPROVED BY THE 56 GOVERNOR IT SHALL BECOME A LAW; HOWEVER, THE GOVERNOR MAY VETO THE MEAS-

URE. BOTH HOUSES OF THE LEGISLATURE MUST PASS THE MEASURE WITHIN SIX 1 MONTHS AFTER RECEIPT OF THE MEASURE FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE OR OVER-2 RIDE A GUBERNATORIAL VETO OF THE MEASURE WITHIN THE SAME TIME PERIOD. IF 3 4 THE LEGISLATURE FAILS TO DO SO THE SECRETARY OF STATE SHALL SUBMIT THE 5 MEASURE TO THE VOTERS AT THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION IF SUCH SUBMISSION 6 SHALL BE DEMANDED BY A SUPPLEMENTARY PETITION CERTIFIED TO HAVE BEEN 7 SIGNED BY ELECTORS IN EOUAL NUMBER TO ONE PER CENTUM OF THE NUMBER OF 8 VOTES CAST FOR ALL CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNOR AT THE LAST GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION AND FILED WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE WITHIN ONE HUNDRED TWENTY 9 10 DAYS AFTER SUCH PROPOSED LAW OR REFERENDUM SHALL HAVE BEEN REJECTED OR PASSED IN AN AMENDED FORM BY THE LEGISLATURE OR AFTER THE EXPIRATION OF 11 SUCH TERM OF FOUR MONTHS, IF NO ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN THEREON. NO ELEC-12 TOR SHALL BE DISQUALIFIED FROM SIGNING SUCH SUPPLEMENTARY PETITION BY 13 REASON OF HAVING FIRST SIGNED THE PETITION AS HEREINBEFORE PROVIDED 14 IN SECTION. IF THE MEASURE IS AMENDED BY THE LEGISLATURE AND PASSES 15 THIS 16 BOTH HOUSES BOTH THE AMENDED MEASURE AND THE ORIGINAL MEASURE SHALL BE PUT ON THE BALLOT. THE ELECTORS MAY CHOOSE ONE OR REJECT BOTH. 17

8. IF THE MEASURE IS A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT IT SHALL BE SUBMIT-18 S 19 TED TO THE LEGISLATURE FOR PASSAGE. IF THE MEASURE FAILS TO PASS EITHER 20 HOUSE OF THE LEGISLATURE IN ITS ORIGINAL FORM, IN THE TWO YEAR TERM IN 21 WHICH IT IS FIRST INTRODUCED, OR, IF THE MEASURE IN ITS ORIGINAL FORM FAILS TO PASS EITHER HOUSE OF THE NEXT SEPARATELY ELECTED LEGISLATURE IN 22 EITHER YEAR OF ITS TWO YEAR TERM AFTER HAVING BEEN PASSED BY THE PREVI-23 OUSLY ELECTED LEGISLATURE, THE PETITIONING COMMITTEE SHALL PRESENT TO 24 25 THE SECRETARY OF STATE WITHIN NINETY DAYS OF A NEGATIVE VOTE OF EITHER HOUSE ON THE PROPOSED MEASURE OR UPON ADJOURNMENT WITHOUT ACTION ON THE 26 27 PROPOSED MEASURE AN ADDITIONAL NUMBER OF SIGNATURES, WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT BE DUPLICATES OF THE SIGNATURES ON THE ORIGINAL PETITION, EQUAL TO 28 FOUR PERCENT OF THOSE VOTING IN THE LAST GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION, WITH NO 29 MORE THAN FIVE PERCENT OF THESE COMING FROM ANY ONE COUNTY OF THE STATE. 30 UPON RECEIPT OF THE ADDITIONAL SIGNATURES THE SECRETARY OF STATE 31 SHALL 32 HAVE FIFTEEN DAYS TO CERTIFY THEIR VALIDITY. HE OR SHE SHALL THEN SUBMIT 33 THE MEASURE TO THE VOTERS AT THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION, PROVIDED THAT THE SAID ELECTION IS TO BE HELD MORE THAN FOUR WEEKS FOLLOWING FILING OF 34 35 THE ADDITIONAL SIGNATURES TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

36 S 9. INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM MEASURES MAY NOT BE REPEALED BY THE 37 LEGISLATURE FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS EXCEPT BY A TWO-THIRDS VOTE OF 38 BOTH HOUSES OR UNLESS SUCH LAW OR REFERENDUM PERMITS AMENDMENT OR REPEAL 39 SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE ELECTORS OR WITHOUT THE APPROVAL OF THE 40 ELECTORS.

S 10. IF IN THE OPINION OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, ANY TWO INITIATIVE OR
REFERENDUM MEASURES APPROVED BY THE PEOPLE IN THE SAME ELECTION ARE IN
CONFLICT, THE ONE HAVING THE HIGHER NUMBER OF AFFIRMATIVE VOTES AT SUCH
ELECTION SHALL GOVERN. A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT APPROVED AT ANY
ELECTION SHALL GOVERN ANY LAW APPROVED AT THE SAME ELECTION.

46 S 11. AN INITIATIVE OR REFERENDUM MEASURE APPROVED BY A MAJORITY OF 47 THE VOTES CAST THEREON SHALL TAKE EFFECT ONE DAY AFTER THE DATE OF THE 48 CANVASS OF SUCH VOTE BECOMES OFFICIAL UNLESS THE MEASURE PROVIDES 49 OTHERWISE.

50 S 2. Resolved (if the Senate concur), That the foregoing amendment be 51 referred to the first regular legislative session convening after the 52 next succeeding general election of members of the assembly, and, in 53 conformity with section 1 of article 19 of the constitution, be 54 published for 3 months previous to the time of such election.