

STATE OF NEW YORK

3777

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 30, 2021

Introduced by Sens. GRIFFO, HELMING -- read twice and ordered printed,
and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Judiciary

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY

proposing the addition of a new article 20 to the constitution, in
relation to providing for initiative and referendum and recall

1 Section 1. Resolved (if the Assembly 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 AND RECALL

6 Section 1. 1. The initiative is the power of the electors to propose
7 statutes and amendments to the constitution and to adopt or reject them.

8 2. An initiative measure may be proposed by presenting to the secre-
9 tary of state a petition that sets forth the text of the proposed stat-
10 ute or amendment to the constitution and is certified to have been
11 signed by electors equal in number to five percent in the case of a
12 statute, and eight percent in the case of an amendment to the constitu-
13 tion, of the votes for all candidates for governor at the last gubern-
14 atorial election.

15 3. The secretary of state shall then submit the measure at the next
16 general election held at least one hundred thirty-one days after it
17 qualifies or at any special statewide election held prior to that gener-
18 al election. The governor may call a special statewide election for the
19 measure.

20 4. An initiative measure embracing more than one subject may not be
21 submitted to the electors or have any effect.

22 5. An initiative measure shall not include or exclude any political
23 subdivision of the state from the application or effect of its
24 provisions based upon approval or disapproval of the initiative measure,
25 or based upon the casting of a specified percentage of votes in favor of
26 the measure, by the electors of that political subdivision.

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

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1 6. An initiative measure shall not contain alternative or cumulative
2 provisions wherein one or more of those provisions would become law
3 depending upon the casting of a specified percentage of votes for or
4 against the measure.

5 § 2. 1. The referendum is the power of the electors to approve or
6 reject statutes or parts of statutes except statutes calling elections
7 and statutes providing for tax levies or appropriations for usual
8 current expenses of the state.

9 2. A referendum measure may be proposed by presenting to the secretary
10 of state, within ninety days after the effective date of the statute, a
11 petition certified to have been signed by electors equal in number to
12 five percent of the votes for all candidates for governor at the last
13 gubernatorial election, asking that the statute or part of it be submit-
14 ted to the electors. In the case of a statute enacted by a bill passed
15 by the legislature on or before the date the legislature adjourns in the
16 second calendar year of the biennium of the legislative session, and in
17 the possession of the governor after that date, the petition may not be
18 presented on or after January first next following the effective date
19 unless a copy of the petition is submitted to the attorney general
20 pursuant to subdivision four of section three of this article before
21 January first.

22 3. The secretary of state shall then submit the measure at the next
23 general election held at least thirty-one days after it qualifies or at
24 a special statewide election held prior to that general election. The
25 governor may call a special statewide election for the measure.

26 § 3. 1. An initiative statute or referendum approved by a majority of
27 votes thereon takes effect the day after the election unless the measure
28 provides otherwise. If a referendum petition is filed against a part of
29 a statute the remainder shall not be delayed from going into effect.

30 2. If provisions of two or more measures approved at the same election
31 conflict, those of the measure receiving the highest affirmative vote
32 shall prevail.

33 3. The legislature may amend or repeal referendum statutes. It may
34 amend or repeal an initiative statute by another statute that becomes
35 effective only when approved by the electors unless the initiative stat-
36 ute permits amendment or repeal without their approval.

37 4. Prior to circulation of an initiative or referendum petition for
38 signatures, a copy shall be submitted to the attorney general who shall
39 prepare a title and summary of the measure as provided by law.

40 5. The legislature shall provide the manner in which petitions shall
41 be circulated, presented, and certified, and measures submitted to the
42 electors.

43 § 4. 1. Initiative and referendum powers may be exercised by the elec-
44 tors of each city or county under procedures that the legislature shall
45 provide. Except as provided in subdivisions two and three of this
46 section, this section does not affect a city having a charter.

47 2. A city or county initiative measure shall not include or exclude
48 any part of the city or county from the application or effect of its
49 provisions based upon approval or disapproval of the initiative measure,
50 or based upon the casting of a specified percentage of votes in favor of
51 the measure, by the electors of the city or county or any part thereof.

52 3. A city or county initiative measure shall not contain alternative
53 or cumulative provisions wherein one or more of those provisions would
54 become law depending upon the casting of a specified percentage of votes
55 for or against the measure.

1 § 5. No amendment to the constitution, and no statute proposed to the
2 electors by the legislature or by initiative, that names any individual
3 to hold any office, or names or identifies any private corporation to
4 perform any function or to have any power or duty, may be submitted to
5 the electors or have any effect.

6 § 6. Recall is the power of the electors to remove an elective offi-
7 cer.

8 § 7. 1. Recall of a state officer is initiated by delivering to the
9 secretary of state a petition alleging reason for recall. Sufficiency of
10 reason is not reviewable. Proponents have one hundred sixty days to file
11 signed petitions.

12 2. A petition to recall a statewide officer must be signed by electors
13 equal in number to twelve percent of the last vote for the office, with
14 signatures from each of five counties equal in number to one percent of
15 the last vote for the office in the county. Signatures to recall
16 senators, members of the assembly, and judges of supreme courts and
17 trial courts must equal in number twenty percent of the last vote for
18 the office.

19 3. The secretary of state shall maintain a continuous count of the
20 signatures certified to that office.

21 § 8. 1. An election to determine whether to recall an officer and, if
22 appropriate, to elect a successor shall be called by the governor and
23 held not less than sixty days nor more than eighty days from the date of
24 certification of sufficient signatures.

25 2. A recall election may be conducted within one hundred eighty days
26 from the date of certification of sufficient signatures in order that
27 the election may be consolidated with the next regularly scheduled
28 election occurring wholly or partially within the same jurisdiction in
29 which the recall election is held, if the number of voters eligible to
30 vote at that next regularly scheduled election equal at least fifty
31 percent of all the voters eligible to vote at the recall election.

32 3. If the majority vote on the question is to recall, the officer is
33 removed and, if there is a candidate, the candidate who receives a
34 plurality is the successor. The officer may not be a candidate, nor
35 shall there be any candidacy for an office filed pursuant to section two
36 of article six.

37 § 9. The legislature shall provide for circulation, filing, and
38 certification of petitions, nomination of candidates, and the recall
39 election.

40 § 10. If recall of the governor or secretary of state is initiated,
41 the recall duties of that office shall be performed by the lieutenant
42 governor or comptroller, respectively.

43 § 11. A state officer who is not recalled shall be reimbursed by the
44 state for the officer's recall election expenses legally and personally
45 incurred. Another recall may not be initiated against the officer until
46 six months after the election.

47 § 12. The legislature shall provide for recall of local officers. This
48 section does not affect counties and cities whose charters provide for
49 recall.

50 § 2. Resolved (if the Assembly concur), That the foregoing amendment
51 be 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.