

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.
Act 273 of the Regular Session

1 State of Arkansas
2 95th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2025
4

A Bill

SENATE BILL 209

5 By: Senator K. Hammer
6 By: Representative Underwood
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

8
9 AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING INITIATIVE
10 PETITIONS AND REFERENDUM PETITIONS; TO DISQUALIFY
11 SIGNATURES OBTAINED BY A CANVASSER UNDER CERTAIN
12 CIRCUMSTANCES; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER
13 PURPOSES.
14
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Subtitle

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17 TO DISQUALIFY SIGNATURES OBTAINED BY A
18 CANVASSER UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES;
19 AND TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.
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21 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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23 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 7-9-103, concerning the signing of a
24 petition, penalty for falsification, and notice of suspected forgery for
25 initiative petitions and referendum petitions, is amended to add an
26 additional subsection to read as follows:

27 (e)(1) The Secretary of State shall not count signatures collected and
28 witnessed by a canvasser if the Secretary of State finds by a preponderance
29 of the evidence that the canvasser has violated Arkansas laws regarding
30 canvassing, perjury, forgery, or fraudulent practices in the procurement of
31 petition signatures or any provision of the Arkansas Constitution applicable
32 to the collection of signatures on an initiative petition or referendum
33 petition during the current election cycle.

34 (2) This subsection shall not constrain the duties and authority
35 of the Secretary of State as set forth in Arkansas law.
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1 SECTION 2. DO NOT CODIFY. SEVERABILITY. The provisions of this act
2 are declared to be severable and the invalidity of any provision of this act
3 shall not affect other provisions of the act which can be given effect
4 without the invalid provision.

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6 SECTION 3. DO NOT CODIFY. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and
7 determined by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the process
8 for citizens to propose initiated acts and amendments to the Arkansas
9 Constitution is critical to a well-functioning democracy in this state; that
10 it is of the utmost importance that the integrity of the initiative process
11 be strengthened through this act so that petitioners and voters maintain a
12 high degree of confidence in the soundness of their right to legislate as
13 citizens of Arkansas; and that this act is immediately necessary because any
14 delay in the implementation of this act would disrupt the initiative process
15 for the 2026 general election, which would have a detrimental effect on the
16 public peace, health, and safety of Arkansas. Therefore, an emergency is
17 declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for the
18 preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective
19 on:

- 20 (1) The date of its approval by the Governor;
21 (2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor,
22 the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the
23 bill; or
24 (3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is
25 overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.

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28 **APPROVED: 3/12/25**
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