

By: Representatives McCray, Paden, Summers,  
Scott, Denton, Hines, Nelson, Thompson,  
Watson

To: Constitution

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 17

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO SECTION  
2 273, MISSISSIPPI CONSTITUTION OF 1890, TO PROVIDE THAT FOR AN  
3 INITIATIVE PETITION TO BE PLACED UPON THE BALLOT, THE QUALIFYING  
4 TOTAL OF SIGNATURES MUST COMPRISE AN EQUAL NUMBER OF CERTIFIED  
5 SIGNATURES FROM ALL CURRENT CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS; AND FOR  
6 RELATED PURPOSES.

7 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF  
8 MISSISSIPPI, That the following amendment to the Mississippi  
9 Constitution of 1890 is proposed to the qualified electors of the  
10 state:

11 Amend Section 273, Mississippi Constitution of 1890, to read  
12 as follows:

13 "Section 273. (1) Amendments to this Constitution may be  
14 proposed by the Legislature or by initiative of the people.

15 (2) Whenever two-thirds (2/3) of each house of the  
16 Legislature, which two-thirds (2/3) shall consist of not less than  
17 a majority of the members elected to each house, shall deem any  
18 change, alteration or amendment necessary to this Constitution,  
19 such proposed amendment, change or alteration shall be read and  
20 passed by two-thirds (2/3) vote of each house, as herein provided;



21 public notice shall then be given by the Secretary of State at  
22 least thirty (30) days preceding an election, at which the  
23 qualified electors shall vote directly for or against such change,  
24 alteration or amendment, and if more than one (1) amendment shall  
25 be submitted at one (1) time, they shall be submitted in such  
26 manner and form that the people may vote for or against each  
27 amendment separately; and, notwithstanding the division of the  
28 Constitution into sections, the Legislature may provide in its  
29 resolution for one or more amendments pertaining and relating to  
30 the same subject or subject matter, and may provide for one or  
31 more amendments to an article of the Constitution pertaining and  
32 relating to the same subject or subject matter, which may be  
33 included in and voted on as one (1) amendment; and if it shall  
34 appear that a majority of the qualified electors voting directly  
35 for or against the same shall have voted for the proposed change,  
36 alteration or amendment, then it shall be inserted as a part of  
37 the Constitution by proclamation of the Secretary of State  
38 certifying that it received the majority vote required by the  
39 Constitution; and the resolution may fix the date and direct the  
40 calling of elections for the purposes hereof.

41 (3) The people reserve unto themselves the power to propose  
42 and enact constitutional amendments by initiative. An initiative  
43 to amend the Constitution may be proposed by a petition signed  
44 over a twelve-month period by qualified electors equal in number  
45 to at least twelve percent (12%) of the votes for all candidates



46 for Governor in the last gubernatorial election. \* \* \* The  
47 qualifying total of signatures must comprise an equal number of  
48 certified signatures from all current congressional districts.  
49 The certified signatures of qualified electors from the current  
50 congressional districts shall be counted towards the total number  
51 of signatures required to qualify an initiative petition for  
52 placement upon the ballot. An excess number of signatures  
53 from \* \* \* any current congressional district shall not be  
54 considered by the Secretary of State in determining whether the  
55 petition qualifies for placement on the ballot.

56 (4) The sponsor of an initiative shall identify in the text  
57 of the initiative the amount and source of revenue required to  
58 implement the initiative. If the initiative requires a reduction  
59 in any source of government revenue, or a reallocation of funding  
60 from currently funded programs, the sponsor shall identify in the  
61 text of the initiative the program or programs whose funding must  
62 be reduced or eliminated to implement the initiative. Compliance  
63 with this requirement shall not be a violation of the subject  
64 matter requirements of this section of the Constitution.

65 (5) The initiative process shall not be used:

66 (a) For the proposal, modification or repeal of any  
67 portion of the Bill of Rights of this Constitution;

68 (b) To amend or repeal any law or any provision of the  
69 Constitution relating to the Mississippi Public Employees'  
70 Retirement System;



71           (c) To amend or repeal the constitutional guarantee  
72 that the right of any person to work shall not be denied or  
73 abridged on account of membership or nonmembership in any labor  
74 union or organization; or

75           (d) To modify the initiative process for proposing  
76 amendments to this Constitution.

77           (6) The Secretary of State shall file with the Clerk of the  
78 House and the Secretary of the Senate the complete text of the  
79 certified initiative on the first day of the regular session. A  
80 constitutional initiative may be adopted by a majority vote of  
81 each house of the Legislature. If the initiative is adopted,  
82 amended or rejected by the Legislature; or if no action is taken  
83 within four (4) months of the date that the initiative is filed  
84 with the Legislature, the Secretary of State shall place the  
85 initiative on the ballot for the next statewide general election.

86           The chief legislative budget officer shall prepare a fiscal  
87 analysis of each initiative and each legislative alternative. A  
88 summary of each fiscal analysis shall appear on the ballot.

89           (7) If the Legislature amends an initiative, the amended  
90 version and the original initiative shall be submitted to the  
91 electors. An initiative or legislative alternative must receive a  
92 majority of the votes thereon and not less than forty percent  
93 (40%) of the total votes cast at the election at which the measure  
94 was submitted to be approved. If conflicting initiatives or  
95 legislative alternatives are approved at the same election, the



96 initiative or legislative alternative receiving the highest number  
97 of affirmative votes shall prevail.

98 (8) If an initiative measure proposed to the Legislature has  
99 been rejected by the Legislature and an alternative measure is  
100 passed by the Legislature in lieu thereof, the ballot titles of  
101 both such measures shall be so printed on the official ballots  
102 that a voter can express separately two (2) preferences: First,  
103 by voting for the approval of either measure or against both  
104 measures, and, secondly, by voting for one (1) measure or the  
105 other measure. If the majority of those voting on the first issue  
106 is against both measures, then both measures fail, but in that  
107 case the votes on the second issue nevertheless shall be carefully  
108 counted and made public. If a majority voting on the first issue  
109 is for the approval of either measure, then the measure receiving  
110 a majority of the votes on the second issue and also receiving not  
111 less than forty percent (40%) of the total votes cast at the  
112 election at which the measure was submitted for approval shall be  
113 law. Any person who votes for the ratification of either measure  
114 on the first issue must vote for one (1) of the measures on the  
115 second issue in order for the ballot to be valid. Any person who  
116 votes against both measures on the first issue may vote but shall  
117 not be required to vote for any of the measures on the second  
118 issue in order for the ballot to be valid. Substantially the  
119 following form shall be \* \* \* in compliance with this subsection:

120 INITIATED BY PETITION AND ALTERNATIVE BY LEGISLATURE



121 Initiative Measure No. \_\_\_\_\_, entitled (here insert the  
122 ballot title of the initiative measure).

123 Alternative Measure No. \_\_\_\_\_ A, entitled (here insert  
124 the ballot title of the alternative measure).

125 VOTE FOR APPROVAL OF EITHER, OR AGAINST BOTH:

126 FOR APPROVAL OF EITHER Initiative No. \_\_\_\_\_

127 OR Alternative No. \_\_\_\_\_ A ..... ( )

128 AGAINST Both Initiative No. \_\_\_\_\_

129 AND Alternative No. \_\_\_\_\_ A ..... ( )

130 AND VOTE FOR ONE

131 FOR Initiative Measure No. \_\_\_\_\_ ..... ( )

132 FOR Alternative Measure No. \_\_\_\_\_ A ..... ( )

133 (9) No more than five (5) initiative proposals shall be  
134 submitted to the voters on a single ballot, and the first five (5)  
135 initiative proposals submitted to the Secretary of State with  
136 sufficient petitions shall be the proposals which are submitted to  
137 the voters. The sufficiency of petitions shall be decided in the  
138 first instance by the Secretary of State, subject to review by the  
139 Supreme Court of the state, which shall have original and  
140 exclusive jurisdiction over all such cases.

141 (10) An initiative approved by the electors shall take  
142 effect thirty (30) days from the date of the official declaration  
143 of the vote by the Secretary of State, unless the measure provides  
144 otherwise.



145           (11) If any amendment to the Constitution proposed by  
146 initiative petition is rejected by a majority of the qualified  
147 electors voting thereon, no initiative petition proposing the  
148 same, or substantially the same, amendment shall be submitted to  
149 the electors for at least two (2) years after the date of the  
150 election on such amendment.

151           (12) The Legislature shall provide by law the manner in  
152 which initiative petitions shall be circulated, presented and  
153 certified. To prevent signature fraud and to maintain the  
154 integrity of the initiative process the state has a compelling  
155 interest in insuring that no person shall circulate an initiative  
156 petition or obtain signatures on an initiative petition unless the  
157 person is a resident of this state at the time of circulation.  
158 For the purposes of this subsection the term 'resident' means a  
159 person who is domiciled in Mississippi as evidenced by an intent  
160 to maintain a principal dwelling place in Mississippi indefinitely  
161 and to return to Mississippi if temporarily absent, coupled with  
162 an act or acts consistent with that intent. Every person who  
163 circulates an initiative petition shall print and sign his name on  
164 each page of an initiative petition, or on a separate page  
165 attached to each page, certifying that he was a resident of this  
166 state at the time of circulating the petition. The Secretary of  
167 State shall refuse to accept for filing any page of an initiative  
168 petition upon which the signatures appearing thereon were obtained  
169 by a person who was not a resident of this state at the time of



170 circulating the petition, and an initiative measure shall not be  
171 placed on the ballot if the Secretary of State determines that  
172 without such signatures the petition clearly bears an insufficient  
173 number of signatures. The provisions of this subsection (12)  
174 shall be applicable to all initiative measures that have not been  
175 placed on the ballot at the time this proposed amendment is  
176 ratified by the electorate.

177 (13) The Legislature may enact laws to carry out the  
178 provisions of this section but shall in no way restrict or impair  
179 the provisions of this section or the powers herein reserved to  
180 the people."

181 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this proposed amendment shall be  
182 submitted by the Secretary of State to the qualified electors at  
183 an election to be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday  
184 of November 2024, as provided by Section 273 of the Constitution  
185 and by general law.

186 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the explanation of this proposed  
187 amendment for the ballot shall read as follows: "This proposed  
188 constitutional amendment provides that the qualifying total of  
189 signatures must comprise an equal number of certified signatures  
190 from all current congressional districts to qualify an initiative  
191 petition for placement upon the ballot."

