

Preamble from Colorado Constitution: “All political power is vested in and derived from the people; all government, of right, originates from the people, is founded upon their will only, and is instituted solely for the good of the whole from whom all government of right derives its powers.”

- The people’s right to the initiative was added to our constitution by an overwhelming vote of the people in 1910, 76 percent voting in favor. This was the era of trusts and corporate monopoly.
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- Its purpose was to provide citizens with a powerful constitutional right to deal directly with an unresponsive or corrupt government.
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- The state constitution has been amended only 48 times by citizen initiative in the 116 years since the initiative was added to the constitution in 1910 and 83 times by amendments referred by the legislature
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- In 2014, 145 initiatives were filed with the state, only 4 got the requisite signatures to get on the ballot, but none were approved by the people. (when a large number of initiatives are introduced in any election year, it is primarily an indication of discontent with the political system and its leaders.)
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- Statutorily, Coloradoans have 6 months to get the requisite signatures, presently about 120,000 registered voters. Citizens in other states have up to 2 years
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- A 2% approval on Amendment 71--a requirement in each of the state’s 35 senatorial districts before an initiative could even get on the ballot—means even one senate district could be a veto
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- Many important reforms in state government have come by means of the initiative: GOCO funds for protecting public lands; term limits; the sunshine laws that open up government meetings and documents to public oversight; home rule; the right of recall.
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- Note that the corporate proponents of 71 will not have to meet the 55 percent requirement they want to set for the rest of us either and were unable to gather 2% of signatures from each state senate district even though they spent \$915,000 in this effort.
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- Amendment 71 would make it essentially impossible for **all** of Colorado citizens – rural, western slope and front range – to bring ballot initiatives.
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- If the legislature were to guarantee a statutory initiative a life of at least 5 years without repeal or meddling then it might be used more.
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- If the signature requirements were simultaneously lowered this too might encourage statutory initiatives. .

Vote NO on 71 and demand a public conversation on how to make the initiative more useful and still provide the public with a needed control on unresponsive or corrupt government.

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