

1 **Initiative and Referendum Signature Gathering and Removal Amendments**

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Karen M. Peterson

Senate Sponsor: Calvin R. Musselman

3 **LONG TITLE**

4 **General Description:**

5 This bill addresses petition signature gathering and removal.

6 **Highlighted Provisions:**

7 This bill:

- 8 ▸ requires an individual who gathers a statement requesting removal of a petition signer's
9 signature to be at least 18 years old;
- 10 ▸ beginning on May 6, 2026, requires a paid signature removal statement gatherer to:
 - 11 • display a badge disclosing certain information while gathering the statement; and
 - 12 • verify, on the statement, certain information about the individual who signs the
13 statement;
- 14 ▸ beginning on May 6, 2026, requires a signature removal statement, if collected by a paid
15 gatherer, to include a notice that removing the signer's signature may prevent the
16 initiative or referendum from appearing on the ballot;
- 17 ▸ prohibits a person from paying a person to gather a signature removal statement unless
18 the payment is based on an hourly rate;
- 19 ▸ prohibits a person from using an initiative or referendum petition signer's email address
20 for any non-petition related purpose;
- 21 ▸ prohibits a voter from submitting a signature removal statement by mail using prepaid
22 postage;
- 23 ▸ creates an exception to the prohibition described above if a signature removal statement
24 submitted by mail using prepaid postage is postmarked on or before the effective date of
25 this bill;
- 26 ▸ provides that, in certain circumstances, a county clerk may not refuse to certify an
27 initiative or referendum petition signature solely because the date written next to the

- 28 signature contains a one-calendar-year error;
- 29 ▸ expands existing criminal penalties in relation to the initiative and referendum process by
- 30 prohibiting an individual from:
- 31 • making certain misrepresentations while the individual gathers petition signatures or
- 32 signature removal statements; or
- 33 • providing or offering to provide money, prepaid postage, or any direct financial
- 34 benefit to an individual to remove the individual's signature from a petition;
- 35 ▸ includes a coordination clause creating an exception to the prohibition in H.B. 32,
- 36 Signature Gathering and Verification Amendments, on certifying a petition signature
- 37 dated after the submission deadline when the date qualifies for the one-calendar-year
- 38 error provision created by this bill; and
- 39 ▸ makes technical and conforming changes.

40 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

41 None

42 **Other Special Clauses:**

43 This bill provides a special effective date.

44 This bill provides a coordination clause.

45 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

46 AMENDS:

47 **20A-1-1003**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 442

48 **20A-7-105**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 448

49 **20A-7-106**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 381

50 **20A-7-213**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 442

51 **20A-7-216**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 448

52 **20A-7-312**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 442

53 **20A-7-314**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 448

54 **20A-7-512**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 442

55 **20A-7-515**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 448

56 **20A-7-612**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 442

57 **20A-7-615**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 448

58 ENACTS:

59 **20A-7-104.5**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

60 **Utah Code Sections affected by Coordination Clause:**

61 **20A-7-105**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 448

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Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **20A-1-1003** is amended to read:

20A-1-1003 . Signature removal -- Statement required.

(1) A voter who signs a petition may have the voter's signature removed from the petition by submitting to the clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed.

(2)(a)(i) [The] Subject to Subsection (2)(a)(iii), the statement described in Subsection (1) shall include:

- (A) the name or description of the petition from which the voter seeks to remove the voter's signature;
- (B) the name of the voter;
- (C) the resident address at which the voter is registered to vote;
- (D) except as otherwise provided in Section 20A-7-106, the voter's signature; and
- (E) the date of the signature described in Subsection (2)(a)(i)(D).

(ii) To increase the likelihood of the voter's signature being identified and removed, the statement may include the voter's birth date or age.

(iii) Beginning on May 6, 2026, if an individual is paid to collect a statement described in Subsection (1), the statement shall include, in addition to the information described in Subsection (2)(a)(i):

- (A) the following printed notice, appearing immediately adjacent to the voter's signature: "I understand that by signing this statement, the [name or description of petition] may not appear on the ballot."; and
- (B) the following verification to be completed by the individual who collects the statement:

"VERIFICATION OF SIGNATURE REMOVAL STATEMENT
GATHERER:

I, _____, hereby state, under penalty of perjury, that:

I am at least 18 years old;

The name that appears on this statement was signed by an individual who professed to a voter who signed the [name or description of petition]; and

The individual signed the individual's name on this statement in my presence or, in the case of an individual with a qualifying disability, I have signed this statement on the individual's behalf, at the direction of the individual and in the individual's presence, by entering the initials "AV" as the

96 individual's signature.

97 _____

98 (Name) (Date)."

99 (b)(i) [~~Except as provided in Subsection 20A-7-216(5)(a), 20A-7-314(5)(a),~~

100 ~~20A-7-515(4)(b), or 20A-7-615(4)(b), a] A voter may not submit a statement~~

101 described in Subsection (1) by mail using prepaid postage, email, or other

102 electronic means.

103 (ii) Notwithstanding Subsection (2)(b)(i), a clerk may accept a statement described in

104 Subsection (1) submitted by mail using prepaid postage if the statement is

105 postmarked on or before the effective date of this bill.

106 (c) In order for the signature to be removed, the clerk must receive the statement

107 described in Subsection (1) no later than the deadline described in the provision of

108 law governing the petition.

109 (d) A voter may only remove a signature from a petition in accordance with this section

110 and the provision of law governing the petition.

111 (e) A clerk shall analyze a signature, for purposes of removing a signature from a

112 petition, in accordance with Subsection (3).

113 (3) Except to the extent otherwise required under Section 20A-7-106, the clerk shall use the

114 following procedures to determine whether to remove an individual's signature from a

115 petition after receiving a timely, valid statement requesting removal of the signature:

116 (a) if the signer's name and address shown on the statement and the petition exactly

117 match a name and address shown on the official register and the individual's

118 signature on the statement is reasonably consistent with the individual's signature on

119 the statewide voter registration database, the clerk shall remove the signature from

120 the petition;

121 (b) if there is no exact match of an address and a name, the clerk shall remove the

122 signature from the petition if:

123 (i) the address on the statement and the address provided by the individual with the

124 individual's petition signature match the address of an individual on the official

125 register with a substantially similar name; and

126 (ii) the individual's signature on the statement is reasonably consistent with the

127 signature on the statewide voter registration database of the individual described

128 in Subsection (3)(b)(i); and

129 (c) if there is no match of an address and a substantially similar name, the clerk shall

- 130 remove the signature from the petition if:
- 131 (i) the birth date or age on the statement and the birth date or age provided by the
- 132 individual with the individual's petition signature match the birth date or age of an
- 133 individual on the official register with a substantially similar name; and
- 134 (ii) the individual's signature on the statement is reasonably consistent with the
- 135 signature on the statewide voter registration database of the individual described
- 136 in Subsection (3)(b)(i).
- 137 (4) If a signature does not qualify for removal under Subsection (3)(a), (b), or (c), or, if
- 138 applicable, Section 20A-7-106, the clerk may not remove the signature from the petition.
- 139 Section 2. Section **20A-7-104.5** is enacted to read:

140 **20A-7-104.5 . Signature removal statement gatherers -- Badge -- Information --**

141 **Payment.**

- 142 (1) An individual who gathers a statement described in Section 20A-1-1003 requesting
- 143 removal of a signature from an initiative petition or referendum petition shall be at least
- 144 18 years old.
- 145 (2) Beginning on May 6, 2026, an individual described in Subsection (1) who is paid to
- 146 gather a statement shall, while gathering a statement, display a badge on the front of the
- 147 individual's torso that complies with the following, ensuring that the information on the
- 148 badge is clearly visible to the individual from whom the statement is sought:
- 149 (a) the badge shall be printed in black ink on white cardstock and laminated; and
- 150 (b) the information on the badge shall be in at least 24-point type and include the
- 151 following information:
- 152 (i) an identification number that is unique to the individual gathering the statement,
- 153 assigned by:
- 154 (A) for a statewide initiative or referendum, the lieutenant governor; or
- 155 (B) for a local initiative or referendum, the local clerk;
- 156 (ii) the title of the initiative or referendum petition to which the statement relates;
- 157 (iii) the words "Paid Signature Removal Statement Gatherer"; and
- 158 (iv) the name of the person or entity paying the individual to gather the statement.
- 159 (3) A person may not pay an individual to gather a signature removal statement under this
- 160 chapter unless the payment is based on an hourly rate.

161 *The following section is affected by a coordination clause at the end of this bill.*

162 Section 3. Section **20A-7-105** is amended to read:

163 **20A-7-105 . Manual petition processes -- Obtaining signatures -- Verification --**

164 **Submitting the petition -- Certification of signatures -- Transfer to lieutenant governor --**
 165 **Removal of signature.**

- 166 (1) This section applies only to the manual initiative process and the manual referendum
 167 process.
- 168 (2) As used in this section:
- 169 (a) "Local petition" means:
- 170 (i) a manual local initiative petition described in Part 5, Local Initiatives - Procedures;
 171 or
 172 (ii) a manual local referendum petition described in Part 6, Local Referenda -
 173 Procedures.
- 174 (b) "Packet" means an initiative packet or referendum packet.
- 175 (c) "Petition" means a local petition or statewide petition.
- 176 (d) "Statewide petition" means:
- 177 (i) a manual statewide initiative petition described in Part 2, Statewide Initiatives; or
 178 (ii) a manual statewide referendum petition described in Part 3, Statewide Referenda.
- 179 (3)(a) A Utah voter may sign a statewide petition if the voter is a legal voter.
- 180 (b) A Utah voter may sign a local petition if the voter:
- 181 (i) is a legal voter; and
 182 (ii) resides in the local jurisdiction.
- 183 (4)(a) The sponsors shall ensure that the individual in whose presence each signature
 184 sheet was signed:
- 185 (i) is at least 18 years old;
 186 (ii) verifies each signature sheet by completing the verification printed on the last
 187 page of each packet; and
 188 (iii) is informed that each signer is required to read and understand:
- 189 (A) for an initiative petition, the law proposed by the initiative; or
 190 (B) for a referendum petition, the law that the referendum seeks to overturn.
- 191 (b) An individual may not sign the verification printed on the last page of a packet if the
 192 individual signed a signature sheet in the packet.
- 193 (5)(a) The sponsors, or an agent of the sponsors, shall submit a signed and verified
 194 packet to the county clerk of the county in which the packet was circulated before 5
 195 p.m. no later than the earlier of:
- 196 (i) for a statewide initiative:
 197 (A) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which

- 198 the first individual signs the initiative packet;
- 199 (B) the last business day that is no more than 316 calendar days after the day on
200 which the application for the initiative petition is filed; or
- 201 (C) the February 15 immediately before the next regular general election
202 immediately after the application is filed under Section 20A-7-202;
- 203 (ii) for a statewide referendum:
- 204 (A) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which
205 the first individual signs the referendum packet; or
- 206 (B) the first business day that is at least 40 calendar [-]days after the day on which
207 the legislative session at which the law passed ends;
- 208 (iii) for a local initiative:
- 209 (A) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which
210 the first individual signs the initiative packet;
- 211 (B) the last business day that is no more than 316 calendar days after the day on
212 which the application is filed;
- 213 (C) the April 15 immediately before the next regular general election immediately
214 after the application is filed under Section 20A-7-502, if the local initiative is a
215 county initiative; or
- 216 (D) the April 15 immediately before the next municipal general election
217 immediately after the application is filed under Section 20A-7-502, if the local
218 initiative is a municipal initiative; or
- 219 (iv) for a local referendum:
- 220 (A) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which
221 the first individual signs the referendum packet; or
- 222 (B) the first business day that is at least 45 calendar days after the day on which
223 the sponsors receive the items described in Subsection 20A-7-604(3) from the
224 local clerk.
- 225 (b) A person may not submit a packet after the applicable deadline described in
226 Subsection (5)(a).
- 227 (c) Before delivering an initiative packet to the county clerk under this Subsection (5),
228 the sponsors shall send an email to each individual who provides a legible, valid
229 email address on the signature sheet that includes the following:
- 230 (i) the subject of the email shall include the following statement, "Notice Regarding
231 Your Petition Signature"; and

232 (ii) the body of the email shall include the following statement in 12-point type:

233 "You signed a petition for the following initiative:

234 [insert title of initiative]

235 To access a copy of the initiative petition, the initiative, the fiscal impact statement, and
 236 information on the deadline for removing your signature from the petition, please visit the
 237 following link: [insert a uniform resource locator that takes the individual directly to the page
 238 on the lieutenant governor's or county clerk's website that includes the information referred to
 239 in the email]."

240 (d) For a statewide initiative, the sponsors shall, no later than 5 p.m. on the day on which
 241 the sponsors submit the last initiative packet to the county clerk, submit to the
 242 lieutenant governor:

243 (i) a list containing:

244 (A) the name and email address of each individual the sponsors sent, or caused to
 245 be sent, the email described in Subsection (5)(c); and

246 (B) the date the email was sent;

247 (ii) a copy of the email described in Subsection (5)(c); and

248 (iii) the following written verification, completed and signed by each of the sponsors:

249 "Verification of initiative sponsor State of Utah, County of _____ I, _____,
 250 of _____, hereby state, under penalty of perjury, that:

251 I am a sponsor of the initiative petition entitled _____; and

252 I sent, or caused to be sent, to each individual who provided a legible, valid email
 253 address on a signature sheet submitted to the county clerk in relation to the initiative petition,
 254 the email described in Utah Code Subsection 20A-7-105(5)(c).

255 _____
 256 (Name) (Residence Address) (Date).":[-]

257 (e) For a local initiative, the sponsors shall, no later than 5 p.m. on the day on which the
 258 sponsors submit the last initiative packet to the local clerk, submit to the local clerk
 259 the items described in Subsection (5)(d).

260 (f) Signatures gathered for an initiative petition are not valid if the sponsors do not
 261 comply with Subsection (5)(c), (d), or (e).

262 (6)(a) Within 21 calendar days after the day on which the county clerk receives the
 263 packet, the county clerk shall:

264 (i) use the procedures described in Section 20A-1-1002, or 20A-7-106 if applicable,
 265 to determine whether each signer is a legal voter and, as applicable, the

- 266 jurisdiction where the signer is registered to vote;
- 267 (ii) for a statewide initiative or a statewide referendum:
- 268 (A) certify on the petition whether each name is that of a legal voter;
- 269 (B) post the name, voter identification number, and date of signature of each legal
- 270 voter certified under Subsection (6)(a)(ii)(A) on the lieutenant governor's
- 271 website, in a conspicuous location designated by the lieutenant governor; and
- 272 (C) deliver the verified packet to the lieutenant governor; and
- 273 (iii) for a local initiative or a local referendum:
- 274 (A) certify on the petition whether each name is that of a legal voter who is
- 275 registered in the jurisdiction to which the initiative or referendum relates;
- 276 (B) post the name, voter identification number, and date of signature of each legal
- 277 voter certified under Subsection (6)(a)(iii)(A) on the lieutenant governor's
- 278 website, in a conspicuous location designated by the lieutenant governor; and
- 279 (C) deliver the verified packet to the local clerk.
- 280 (b) For a local initiative or local referendum, the local clerk shall post a link in a
- 281 conspicuous location on the local government's website to the posting described in
- 282 Subsection (6)(a)(iii)(B):
- 283 (i) for a local initiative, during the period of time described in Subsection
- 284 20A-7-507(3)(a); or
- 285 (ii) for a local referendum, during the period of time described in Subsection
- 286 20A-7-607(2)(a)(i).
- 287 (7)(a) The county clerk may not certify a signature under Subsection [~~(6)~~] (6)(a):
- 288 [~~(a)~~] (i) on a packet that is not verified in accordance with Subsection (4); or
- 289 [~~(b)~~] (ii) that does not have a date of signature next to the signature.
- 290 (b) A county clerk may not refuse to certify a signature under Subsection (6)(a) or
- 291 otherwise reject the packet solely because the date written next to the signature
- 292 contains a one-calendar-year error if the date, adjusted by one calendar year, would
- 293 fall within the period that:
- 294 (i) begins on the day on which the first individual signs the packet under Subsection
- 295 (5)(a); and
- 296 (ii) ends on the day on which the packet is submitted.
- 297 (c) Certification of a signature described in Subsection (7)(b) does not change the date
- 298 on which the first individual signs the packet for purposes of calculating a deadline
- 299 under Subsection (5)(a).

- 300 (8)(a) A voter who signs a statewide initiative petition may have the voter's signature
301 removed from the petition by, in accordance with Section 20A-1-1003, submitting to
302 the county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed no later
303 than 5 p.m. the earlier of:
- 304 (i) for an initiative packet received by the county clerk before December 1:
 - 305 (A) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which
 - 306 the voter signs the signature removal statement; or
 - 307 (B) the first business day that is at least 90 calendar days after the day on which
 - 308 the lieutenant governor posts the voter's name under Subsection 20A-7-207(2);
 - 309 or
 - 310 (ii) for an initiative packet received by the county clerk on or after December 1:
 - 311 (A) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which
 - 312 the voter signs the signature removal statement; or
 - 313 (B) the first business day that is at least 45 calendar days after the day on which
 - 314 the lieutenant governor posts the voter's name under Subsection 20A-7-207(2).
- 315 (b) A voter who signs a statewide referendum petition may have the voter's signature
316 removed from the petition by, in accordance with Section 20A-1-1003, submitting to
317 the county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed no later
318 than 5 p.m. the earlier of:
- 319 (i) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which the
 - 320 voter signs the statement requesting removal; or
 - 321 (ii) the first business day that is at least 45 calendar days after the day on which the
 - 322 lieutenant governor posts the voter's name under Subsection 20A-7-307(2).
- 323 (c) A voter who signs a local initiative petition may have the voter's signature removed
324 from the petition by, in accordance with Section 20A-1-1003, submitting to the
325 county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed no later than
326 5 p.m. the earlier of:
- 327 (i) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which the
 - 328 voter signs the signature removal statement;
 - 329 (ii) the first business day that is at least 90 calendar days after the day on which the
 - 330 local clerk posts the voter's name under Subsection 20A-7-507(2);
 - 331 (iii) the last business day that is no more than 316 calendar days after the day on
 - 332 which the application is filed; or
 - 333 (iv)(A) for a county initiative, April 15 immediately before the next regular

- 334 general election immediately after the application is filed under Section
335 20A-7-502; or
- 336 (B) for a municipal initiative, April 15 immediately before the next municipal
337 general election immediately after the application is filed under Section
338 20A-7-502.
- 339 (d) A voter who signs a local referendum petition may have the voter's signature
340 removed from the petition by, in accordance with Section 20A-1-1003, submitting to
341 the county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed no later
342 than 5 p.m. the earlier of:
- 343 (i) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which the
344 voter signs the statement requesting removal; or
- 345 (ii) the first business day that is at least 45 calendar days after the day on which the
346 local clerk posts the voter's name under Subsection 20A-7-607(2)(a).
- 347 (e) In order for the signature to be removed, the county clerk must receive the statement
348 described in this Subsection (8) before 5 p.m. no later than the applicable deadline
349 described in this Subsection (8).
- 350 (f) A county clerk shall analyze a signature, for purposes of removing a signature from a
351 petition, in accordance with Subsection 20A-1-1003(3).
- 352 (9)(a) If the county clerk timely receives a statement requesting signature removal under
353 Subsection (8) and determines that the signature should be removed from the petition
354 under Subsection 20A-1-1003(3), the county clerk shall:
- 355 (i) ensure that the voter's name, voter identification number, and date of signature are
356 not included in the posting described in Subsection (6)(a)(ii)(B) or (iii)(B); and
- 357 (ii) remove the voter's signature from the signature packets and signature packet
358 totals.
- 359 (b) The county clerk shall comply with Subsection (9)(a) before the later of:
- 360 (i) the deadline described in Subsection (6)(a); or
- 361 (ii) two business days after the day on which the county clerk receives a statement
362 requesting signature removal under Subsection (8).
- 363 (10) A person may not retrieve a packet from a county clerk, or make any alterations or
364 corrections to a packet, after the packet is submitted to the county clerk.
- 365 (11) A person may not use an email address provided by the signer of an initiative petition
366 or a referendum petition for any purpose other than a purpose described in this chapter.
- 367 Section 4. Section **20A-7-106** is amended to read:

368 **20A-7-106 . Petition signature or removal for an individual with a disability.**

- 369 (1) If a voter who desires to sign a petition is, due to a qualifying disability under the
 370 Americans with Disabilities Act, unable to fill out the signature sheet or to sign the
 371 voter's name consistently, the voter may:
- 372 (a) inform the individual gathering signatures that, due to a qualifying disability under
 373 the Americans with Disabilities Act, the voter is unable to fill out the signature sheet
 374 or to sign the voter's name consistently; and
- 375 (b) direct the individual gathering signatures to:
- 376 (i) fill out the form on the signature sheet with the information provided by the voter;
 377 and
- 378 (ii) in place of the registered voter's signature:
- 379 (A) place the initials "AV" to indicate that the county clerk must use an alternate
 380 verification process to verify the validity of the voter's signature; and
- 381 (B) place next to the initials described in Subsection (1)(b)(ii)(A) a phone number,
 382 email address, or other method that the county clerk may use to contact the
 383 voter to verify the identity of the voter.
- 384 (2) If a voter who desires to remove the voter's signature from a petition is, due to a
 385 qualifying disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act, unable to sign the
 386 voter's name consistently, the voter may, instead of signing the statement described in
 387 Section 20A-1-1003:
- 388 (a) place the initials "AV" to indicate that the county clerk must use an alternate
 389 verification process to verify the validity of the voter's signature; and
- 390 (b) include in the statement a phone number, email address, or other method that the
 391 county clerk may use to contact the voter to verify the identity of the voter.
- 392 (3) An individual who, in the course of gathering a signature under Subsection (1) or
 393 gathering a statement requesting removal of a signature under Subsection (2), obtains a
 394 voter's email address may not use the email address for any purpose.
- 395 [~~3~~] (4) The alternate verification process described in this section includes:
- 396 (a) the process described in Subsection 20A-3a-401(9)(b); or
- 397 (b) another process established by rule, made by the director of elections within the
 398 Office of the Lieutenant Governor, in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah
 399 Administrative Rulemaking Act.
- 400 Section 5. Section **20A-7-213** is amended to read:
- 401 **20A-7-213 . Misconduct of electors and officers -- Penalty.**

- 402 (1) It is unlawful for an individual to:
- 403 (a) sign any name other than the individual's own to an initiative petition or a statement
- 404 described in Subsection 20A-7-105(8) or 20A-7-216(4);
- 405 (b) knowingly sign the individual's name more than once for the same initiative at one
- 406 election;
- 407 (c) knowingly indicate that an individual who signed an initiative petition signed the
- 408 initiative petition on a date other than the date that the individual signed the initiative
- 409 petition;
- 410 (d) sign an initiative petition knowing the individual is not a legal voter; or
- 411 ~~[(e) on behalf of a voter described in Section 20A-7-106, place the initials "AV" or enter~~
- 412 ~~any information on a signature sheet or statement described in Section 20A-7-106, if~~
- 413 ~~the individual:]~~
- 414 ~~[(i) does not obtain the voluntary direction or consent of the voter;]~~
- 415 ~~[(ii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter lacks the mental capacity to give~~
- 416 ~~the voter's direction or consent;]~~
- 417 ~~[(iii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter does not understand the purpose~~
- 418 ~~or nature of the action taken by the individual on behalf of the voter;]~~
- 419 ~~[(iv) intentionally or knowingly deceives the voter into providing the direction or~~
- 420 ~~consent of the voter; or]~~
- 421 ~~[(v) intentionally or knowingly enters false information on the signature sheet or~~
- 422 ~~statement; or]~~
- 423 ~~[(f)]~~ (e) knowingly and willfully violate any provision of this part.
- 424 (2) It is unlawful for an individual to sign the verification for an initiative packet, or to
- 425 electronically sign the verification for a signature under Subsection 20A-21-201(10),
- 426 knowing that:
- 427 (a) the signature date associated with the individual's signature for the initiative petition
- 428 is not the date that the individual signed the initiative petition;
- 429 (b) the individual has not witnessed the signatures of those individuals whose signatures
- 430 the individual collects or submits; or
- 431 (c) one or more individuals who signed the initiative petition are not registered to vote in
- 432 Utah.
- 433 (3) It is unlawful for an individual to:
- 434 (a) pay an individual to sign an initiative petition;
- 435 ~~[(b) pay an individual to remove the individual's signature from an initiative petition;]~~

- 436 (b) pay an individual, or provide or offer to provide money, prepaid postage, or any
 437 other direct financial benefit to an individual, to remove the individual's signature
 438 from an initiative petition;
- 439 (c) accept payment to sign an initiative petition;[-or]
- 440 (d) accept payment to have the individual's name removed from an initiative petition[-] ;
- 441 (e) make a misrepresentation that is likely to deceive, or misrepresent that the individual
 442 is affiliated with or acting on behalf of a governmental entity, while the individual
 443 gathers or attempts to gather:
- 444 (i) a signature for an initiative petition; or
 445 (ii) a statement described in Section 20A-1-1003 requesting removal of a signature
 446 from an initiative petition; or
- 447 (f) on behalf of a voter described in Section 20A-7-106, place the initials "AV" or enter
 448 any information on a signature sheet or statement described in Section 20A-7-106, if
 449 the individual:
- 450 (i) does not obtain the voluntary direction or consent of the voter;
 451 (ii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter lacks the mental capacity to give
 452 the voter's direction or consent;
- 453 (iii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter does not understand the purpose
 454 or nature of the action taken by the individual on behalf of the voter;
- 455 (iv) intentionally or knowingly deceives the voter into providing the direction or
 456 consent of the voter; or
- 457 (v) intentionally or knowingly enters false information on the signature sheet or
 458 statement.

459 (4) A violation of this section is a class A misdemeanor.

460 Section 6. Section **20A-7-216** is amended to read:

461 **20A-7-216 . Electronic initiative process -- Obtaining signatures -- Request to**
 462 **remove signature.**

463 (1) This section applies to the electronic initiative process.

464 (2) A Utah voter may sign an initiative petition if the voter is a legal voter.

465 (3) The sponsors shall ensure that the signature-gatherer who collects a signature from an
 466 individual:

467 (a) verifies that the individual is at least 18 years old and meets the residency
 468 requirements of Section 20A-2-105; and

469 (b) is informed that each signer is required to read and understand the law proposed by

- 470 the initiative.
- 471 (4) A voter who signs an initiative petition may have the voter's signature removed from the
472 initiative petition by, in accordance with Section 20A-1-1003, submitting to the county
473 clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed before 5 p.m. no later
474 than the earlier of:
- 475 (a) for an electronic signature gathered before December 1:
- 476 (i) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which the
477 voter signs the signature removal statement; or
- 478 (ii) the first business day that is at least 90 calendar days after the day on which the
479 county clerk posts the voter's name under Subsection 20A-7-217(4); or
- 480 (b) for an electronic signature gathered on or after December 1:
- 481 (i) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which the
482 voter signs the signature removal statement; or
- 483 (ii) the first business day that is at least 45 calendar days after the day on which the
484 county clerk posts the voter's name under Subsection 20A-7-217(4).
- 485 (5)(a)(i) A voter may not submit a signature removal statement described in
486 Subsection (4) by mail using prepaid postage, email, or other electronic means;
487 ~~unless the lieutenant governor establishes a signature removal process that is~~
488 ~~consistent with the requirements of this section and Section 20A-21-201~~].
- 489 (ii) Notwithstanding Subsection (5)(a)(i), a county clerk may accept a signature
490 removal statement submitted by mail using prepaid postage if the statement is
491 postmarked on or before the effective date of this bill.
- 492 (b) A person may only remove an electronic signature from an initiative petition in
493 accordance with this section.
- 494 (c) A county clerk shall analyze a holographic signature, for purposes of removing an
495 electronic signature from an initiative petition, in accordance with Subsection
496 20A-1-1003(3).
- 497 Section 7. Section **20A-7-312** is amended to read:
- 498 **20A-7-312 . Misconduct of electors and officers -- Penalty.**
- 499 (1) It is unlawful for any person to:
- 500 (a) sign any name other than the person's own to a referendum petition;
- 501 (b) knowingly sign the person's name more than once for the same referendum petition
502 at one election;
- 503 (c) knowingly indicate that a person who signed a referendum petition signed the

- 504 referendum petition on a date other than the date that the person signed the petition;
- 505 (d) sign a referendum petition knowing the person is not a legal voter; or
- 506 (e) knowingly and willfully violate any provision of this part.
- 507 (2) It is unlawful for any person to sign the verification for a referendum packet, or to
- 508 electronically sign the verification for a signature under Subsection 20A-21-201(10)
- 509 knowing that:
- 510 (a) the signature date associated with the person's signature for the referendum petition
- 511 is not the date that the person signed the referendum petition;
- 512 (b) the person has not witnessed the signatures of those persons whose signatures the
- 513 person collects or submits; or
- 514 (c) one or more individuals who sign the referendum petition are not registered to vote
- 515 in Utah.
- 516 (3) It is unlawful for ~~[any person]~~ an individual to:
- 517 (a) pay ~~[a person]~~ an individual to sign a referendum petition;
- 518 ~~[(b) pay a person to remove the person's signature from a referendum petition;]~~
- 519 (b) pay an individual, or provide or offer to provide money, prepaid postage, or any
- 520 other direct financial benefit to an individual, to remove the individual's signature
- 521 from a referendum petition;
- 522 (c) accept payment to sign a referendum petition;
- 523 (d) accept payment to have the ~~[person's]~~ individual's name removed from a referendum
- 524 petition;~~[-or]~~
- 525 (e) make a misrepresentation that is likely to deceive, or misrepresent that the individual
- 526 is affiliated with or acting on behalf of a governmental entity, while the individual
- 527 gathers or attempts to gather:
- 528 (i) a signature for a referendum petition; or
- 529 (ii) a statement described in Section 20A-1-1003 requesting removal of a signature
- 530 from a referendum petition; or
- 531 ~~[(e)]~~ (f) on behalf of a voter described in Section 20A-7-106, place the initials "AV" or
- 532 enter any information on a signature sheet or statement described in Section
- 533 20A-7-106, if the individual:
- 534 (i) does not obtain the voluntary direction or consent of the voter;
- 535 (ii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter lacks the mental capacity to give
- 536 the voter's direction or consent;
- 537 (iii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter does not understand the purpose

- 538 or nature of the action taken by the individual on behalf of the voter;
539 (iv) intentionally or knowingly deceives the voter into providing the direction or
540 consent of the voter; or
541 (v) intentionally or knowingly enters false information on the signature sheet or
542 statement.

543 (4) Any person violating this section is guilty of a class A misdemeanor.

544 Section 8. Section **20A-7-314** is amended to read:

545 **20A-7-314 . Electronic referendum process -- Obtaining signatures -- Request to**
546 **remove signature.**

547 (1) This section applies to the electronic referendum process.

548 (2) A Utah voter may sign a referendum petition if the voter is a legal voter.

549 (3) The sponsors shall ensure that the signature-gatherer who collects a signature from an
550 individual:

551 (a) verifies that the individual is at least 18 years old and meets the residency
552 requirements of Section 20A-2-105; and

553 (b) is informed that each signer is required to read and understand the law that is the
554 subject of the referendum petition.

555 (4) A voter who signs a referendum petition may have the voter's signature removed from
556 the referendum petition by, in accordance with Section 20A-1-1003, submitting to the
557 county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed before 5 p.m.
558 no later than the earlier of:

559 (a) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which the voter
560 signs the statement requesting removal; or

561 (b) the first business day that is at least 45 calendar days after the day on which the
562 lieutenant governor posts the voter's name under Subsection 20A-7-315(4).

563 (5)(a)(i) A voter may not submit a signature removal statement described in
564 Subsection (4) by mail using prepaid postage, email, or other electronic means;
565 ~~unless the lieutenant governor establishes a signature removal process that is~~
566 ~~consistent with the requirements of this section and Section 20A-21-201].~~

567 (ii) Notwithstanding Subsection (5)(a)(i), a county clerk may accept a signature
568 removal statement submitted by mail using prepaid postage if the statement is
569 postmarked on or before the effective date of this bill.

570 (b) A person may only remove an electronic signature from a referendum petition in
571 accordance with this section.

572 (c) A county clerk shall analyze a holographic signature, for purposes of removing an
 573 electronic signature from a referendum petition, in accordance with Subsection
 574 20A-1-1003(3).

575 Section 9. Section **20A-7-512** is amended to read:

576 **20A-7-512 . Misconduct of electors and officers -- Penalty.**

577 (1) It is unlawful for any individual to:

- 578 (a) sign any name other than the individual's own name to an initiative petition or a
 579 statement described in Subsection 20A-7-105(8) or 20A-7-515(4);
- 580 (b) knowingly sign the individual's name more than once for the same initiative at one
 581 election;
- 582 (c) knowingly indicate that an individual who signed an initiative petition signed the
 583 initiative petition on a date other than the date that the individual signed the initiative
 584 petition;
- 585 (d) sign an initiative petition knowing the individual is not a legal voter; or
- 586 (e) knowingly and willfully violate any provision of this part.

587 (2) It is unlawful for an individual to sign the verification for an initiative packet, or to
 588 electronically sign the verification for a signature under Subsection 20A-21-201(10),
 589 knowing that:

- 590 (a) the signature date associated with the individual's signature for the initiative petition
 591 is not the date that the individual signed the initiative petition;
- 592 (b) the individual has not witnessed the signatures of the individuals whose signatures
 593 the individual collects or submits; or
- 594 (c) one or more individuals who signed the initiative petition are not registered to vote in
 595 Utah.

596 (3) It is unlawful for an individual to:

- 597 (a) pay an individual to sign an initiative petition;
- 598 ~~[(b) pay an individual to remove the individual's signature from an initiative petition;]~~
- 599 (b) pay an individual, or provide or offer to provide money, prepaid postage, or any
 600 other direct financial benefit to an individual, to remove the individual's signature
 601 from an initiative petition;
- 602 (c) accept payment to sign an initiative petition;
- 603 (d) accept payment to have the individual's name removed from an initiative petition;~~[-or]~~
- 604 (e) make a misrepresentation that is likely to deceive, or misrepresent that the individual
 605 is affiliated with or acting on behalf of a governmental entity, while the individual

- 606 gathers or attempts to gather:
- 607 (i) a signature for an initiative petition; or
- 608 (ii) a statement described in Section 20A-1-1003 requesting removal of a signature
- 609 from an initiative petition; or
- 610 [(e)] (f) on behalf of a voter described in Section 20A-7-106, place the initials "AV" or
- 611 enter any information on a signature sheet or statement described in Section
- 612 20A-7-106, if the individual:
- 613 (i) does not obtain the voluntary direction or consent of the voter;
- 614 (ii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter lacks the mental capacity to give
- 615 the voter's direction or consent;
- 616 (iii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter does not understand the purpose
- 617 or nature of the action taken by the individual on behalf of the voter;
- 618 (iv) intentionally or knowingly deceives the voter into providing the direction or
- 619 consent of the voter; or
- 620 (v) intentionally or knowingly enters false information on the signature sheet or
- 621 statement.
- 622 (4) A violation of this section is a class A misdemeanor.
- 623 Section 10. Section **20A-7-515** is amended to read:
- 624 **20A-7-515 . Electronic initiative process -- Obtaining signatures -- Request to**
- 625 **remove signature.**
- 626 (1) This section applies to the electronic initiative process.
- 627 (2) A Utah voter may sign a local initiative petition if the voter is a legal voter and resides
- 628 in the local jurisdiction.
- 629 (3) The sponsors shall ensure that the signature-gatherer who collects a signature from an
- 630 individual:
- 631 (a) verifies that the individual is at least 18 years old and meets the residency
- 632 requirements of Section 20A-2-105; and
- 633 (b) is informed that each signer is required to read and understand the law proposed by
- 634 the initiative.
- 635 (4)(a) A voter who signs an initiative petition may have the voter's signature removed
- 636 from the initiative petition by, in accordance with Section 20A-1-1003, submitting to
- 637 the county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed before 5
- 638 p.m. no later than the earlier of:
- 639 (i) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which the

- 640 voter signs the signature removal statement;
- 641 (ii) the first business day that is at least 90 calendar days after the day on which the
- 642 local clerk posts the voter's name under Subsection 20A-7-516(4);
- 643 (iii) the first business day that is at least 316 calendar days after the day on which the
- 644 initiative application is filed; or
- 645 (iv)(A) for a county initiative, April 15 immediately before the next regular
- 646 general election immediately after the initiative application is filed under
- 647 Section 20A-7-502; or
- 648 (B) for a municipal initiative, April 15 immediately before the next municipal
- 649 general election immediately after the initiative application is filed under
- 650 Section 20A-7-502.
- 651 (b)(i) A voter may not submit a signature removal statement described in Subsection
- 652 (4)(a) by mail using prepaid postage, email, or other electronic means~~[, unless the~~
- 653 ~~lieutenant governor establishes a signature removal process that is consistent with~~
- 654 ~~the requirements of this section and Section 20A-21-201].~~
- 655 (ii) Notwithstanding Subsection (4)(b)(i), a county clerk may accept a signature
- 656 removal statement submitted by mail using prepaid postage if the statement is
- 657 postmarked on or before the effective date of this bill.
- 658 (c) A person may only remove an electronic signature from an initiative petition in
- 659 accordance with this section.
- 660 (d) A county clerk shall analyze a holographic signature, for purposes of removing an
- 661 electronic signature from an initiative petition, in accordance with Subsection
- 662 20A-1-1003(3).
- 663 Section 11. Section **20A-7-612** is amended to read:
- 664 **20A-7-612 . Misconduct of electors and officers -- Penalty.**
- 665 (1) It is unlawful for an individual to:
- 666 (a) sign a name other than the individual's own name to any referendum petition;
- 667 (b) knowingly sign the individual's name more than once for the same referendum at one
- 668 election;
- 669 (c) knowingly indicate that an individual who signed a referendum petition signed the
- 670 referendum petition on a date other than the date that the individual signed the
- 671 referendum petition;
- 672 (d) sign a referendum petition knowing that the individual is not a legal voter;
- 673 (e) in connection with circulating a referendum petition, represent that a document is an

- 674 official government document if the individual knows or has reason to know that the
675 document is not an official government document; or
- 676 (f) knowingly and willfully violate any provision of this part.
- 677 (2) It is unlawful for an individual to sign the verification for a referendum packet, or to
678 electronically sign the verification for a signature under Subsection 20A-21-201(10),
679 knowing that:
- 680 (a) the signature date associated with the individual's signature for the referendum
681 petition is not the date that the individual signed the referendum petition;
- 682 (b) the individual has not witnessed the signatures the individual collects or submits; or
- 683 (c) one or more individuals whose signatures appear in the referendum packet is not
684 registered to vote in Utah.
- 685 (3) It is unlawful for an individual to:
- 686 (a) pay an individual to sign a referendum petition;
- 687 ~~[(b) pay an individual to remove the individual's signature from a referendum petition;]~~
- 688 (b) pay an individual, or provide or offer to provide money, prepaid postage, or any
689 other direct financial benefit to an individual, to remove the individual's signature
690 from a referendum petition;
- 691 (c) accept payment to sign a referendum petition;
- 692 (d) accept payment to have the individual's name removed from a referendum petition;[
693 or]
- 694 (e) make a misrepresentation that is likely to deceive, or misrepresent that the individual
695 is affiliated with or acting on behalf of a governmental entity, while the individual
696 gathers or attempts to gather:
- 697 (i) a signature for a referendum petition; or
- 698 (ii) a statement described in Section 20A-1-1003 requesting removal of a signature
699 from a referendum petition; or
- 700 ~~[(e)]~~ (f) on behalf of a voter described in Section 20A-7-106, place the initials "AV" or
701 enter any information on a signature sheet or statement described in Section
702 20A-7-106, if the individual:
- 703 (i) does not obtain the voluntary direction or consent of the voter;
- 704 (ii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter lacks the mental capacity to give
705 the voter's direction or consent;
- 706 (iii) believes or has reason to believe that the voter does not understand the purpose
707 or nature of the action taken by the individual on behalf of the voter;

708 (iv) intentionally or knowingly deceives the voter into providing the direction or
709 consent of the voter; or

710 (v) intentionally or knowingly enters false information on the signature sheet or
711 statement.

712 (4) A violation of this section is a class A misdemeanor.

713 (5) The county attorney or municipal attorney shall prosecute any violation of this section.

714 Section 12. Section **20A-7-615** is amended to read:

715 **20A-7-615 . Electronic referendum process -- Obtaining signatures -- Request to**
716 **remove signature.**

717 (1) This section applies to the electronic referendum process described in Section
718 20A-21-201.

719 (2) A Utah voter may sign a local referendum petition if the voter is a legal voter and
720 resides in the local jurisdiction.

721 (3) The sponsors shall ensure that the signature-gatherer who collects a signature from an
722 individual:

723 (a) verifies that the individual is at least 18 years old and meets the residency
724 requirements of Section 20A-2-105; and

725 (b) is informed that each signer is required to read and understand the law that is the
726 subject of the referendum petition.

727 (4)(a) A voter who signs a referendum petition may have the voter's signature removed
728 from the referendum petition by, in accordance with Section 20A-1-1003, submitting
729 to the county clerk a statement requesting that the voter's signature be removed
730 before 5 p.m. no later than the earlier of:

731 (i) the first business day that is at least 30 calendar days after the day on which the
732 voter signs the statement requesting removal; or

733 (ii) the first business day that is at least 45 calendar days after the day on which the
734 local clerk posts the voter's name under Subsection 20A-7-616(3).

735 (b)(i) A voter may not submit a signature removal statement described in Subsection
736 (4)(a) by mail using prepaid postage, email, or other electronic means~~[, unless the~~
737 ~~lieutenant governor establishes a signature removal process that is consistent with~~
738 ~~the requirements of this section and Section 20A-21-201].~~

739 (ii) Notwithstanding Subsection (4)(b)(i), a county clerk may accept a signature
740 removal statement submitted by mail using prepaid postage if the statement is
741 postmarked on or before the effective date of this bill.

742 (c) A person may only remove an electronic signature from a referendum petition in
743 accordance with this section.

744 (d) A county clerk shall analyze a holographic signature, for purposes of removing an
745 electronic signature from a referendum petition, in accordance with Subsection
746 20A-1-1003(3).

747 **Section 13. Effective Date.**

748 This bill takes effect:

749 (1) except as provided in Subsection (2), May 6, 2026; or

750 (2) if approved by two-thirds of all members elected to each house:

751 (a) upon approval by the governor;

752 (b) without the governor's signature, the day following the constitutional time limit of
753 Utah Constitution, Article VII, Section 8; or

754 (c) in the case of a veto, the date of veto override.

755 **Section 14. Coordinating H.B. 242 with H.B. 32.**

756 If H.B. 242, Initiative and Referendum Signature Gathering and Removal Amendments,

757 and H.B. 32, Signature Gathering and Verification Amendments, both pass and become law,

758 the Legislature intends that, on May 6, 2026, Subsection 20A-7-105(7)(c), enacted in H.B. 32,

759 be renumbered to Subsection 20A-7-105(7)(a)(iii) and be amended to read:

760 "(iii) except as provided in Subsection (7)(b), if the date of signature is later than the

761 applicable deadline described in Subsection (5)(a)."