

Kathleen A. Riebe proposes the following substitute bill:

Electronic Signature Collection Amendments

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Jordan D. Teuscher

Senate Sponsor: Jerry W Stevenson

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill amends the electronic signature gathering and verification process.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- defines a term;
- requires the device used to electronically gather signatures for an initiative petition, a referendum petition, or a candidate nomination petition to be capable of scanning and extracting certain data from a driver license, state identification card, or another form of valid voter identification;
 - beginning on January 1, 2028, requires the device described above to be capable of operating in an offline environment;
 - beginning on January 1, 2030:
 - requires the sponsors of an initiative or referendum petition, or an individual who circulates a candidate nomination petition, to gather signatures using the electronic signature gathering process; and
 - prohibits a person described above from gathering signatures manually;
 - clarifies electronic signature-gathering security requirements by distinguishing between baseline device security configuration standards and ongoing cyber-security procedures governing system operation, monitoring, and maintenance, as established by the lieutenant governor;
 - requires the lieutenant governor to submit an annual report to the Government Operations Interim Committee, beginning no later than October 1, 2026, and continuing no later than October 1 of each year through 2029;
 - adds a repeal date for sections related to manual signature gathering;
 - beginning on January 1, 2030, authorizes an individual to directly access and

29 electronically sign a petition through an online petition portal developed and
 30 administered by the lieutenant governor;

- 31 ▶ includes a coordination clause to standardize a defined term in this bill with the same
- 32 term in H.B. 32, Signature Gathering and Verification Amendments; and
- 33 ▶ makes technical and conforming changes.

34 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

35 None

36 **Other Special Clauses:**

37 This bill provides a coordination clause.

38 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

39 AMENDS:

- 40 **20A-7-304.5**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2023, Chapter 107
- 41 **20A-7-502.7**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 448
- 42 **20A-7-602.7**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 448
- 43 **20A-7-602.8**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, First Special Session, Chapter 16
- 44 **20A-7-604.5**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2023, Chapter 107
- 45 **20A-21-101**, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2022, Chapter 325
- 46 **20A-21-201**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 381, 448
- 47 **63I-1-220**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Third Special Session, Chapter 5

48 ENACTS:

- 49 **20A-21-202**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

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

- 51 **20A-21-201 (05/06/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 381, 448

52

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

54 Section 1. Section **20A-7-304.5** is amended to read:

55 **20A-7-304.5 . Posting referendum information.**

- 56 (1) On the day on which the lieutenant governor complies with Subsection 20A-7-304(3),
- 57 or provides the sponsors with access to the [website] system defined in Section
- 58 20A-21-101, the lieutenant governor shall post the following information together in a
- 59 conspicuous place on the lieutenant governor's website:
- 60 (a) the referendum petition;
- 61 (b) a copy of the law that is the subject of the referendum petition; and
- 62 (c) information describing how an individual may remove the individual's signature

63 from the referendum petition.

64 (2) The lieutenant governor shall:

65 (a) promptly update the information described in Subsection (1) if the information
66 changes; and

67 (b) maintain the information described in Subsection (1) on the lieutenant governor's
68 website until the referendum fails to qualify for the ballot or is passed or defeated at
69 an election.

70 Section 2. Section **20A-7-502.7** is amended to read:

71 **20A-7-502.7 . Referability to voters.**

72 (1) Within 20 calendar days after the day on which an eligible voter files an initiative
73 application under Section 20A-7-502, counsel for the county, city, or town to which the
74 initiative pertains shall:

75 (a) review the proposed law that is the subject of the initiative application to determine
76 whether the law is legally referable to voters; and

77 (b) notify the first three sponsors, in writing, whether the proposed law is:

78 (i) legally referable to voters; or

79 (ii) rejected as not legally referable to voters.

80 (2) A proposed law that is the subject of an initiative application is legally referable to
81 voters unless:

82 (a) the proposed law:

83 (i) is patently unconstitutional;

84 (ii) is nonsensical;

85 (iii) is administrative, rather than legislative, in nature;

86 (iv) could not become law if passed; [or]

87 (v) contains more than one subject as evaluated in accordance with Subsection
88 20A-7-502(3); or

89 [~~(b)~~] (vi) is identical or substantially similar to a legally referable proposed law sought
90 by an initiative application submitted to the local clerk, under Section 20A-7-502,
91 within two years before the day on which the initiative application for the current
92 proposed law is filed;

93 [~~(e)~~] (b) the subject of the proposed law is not clearly expressed in the law's title; or

94 [~~(d)~~] (c) the initiative application was not timely filed or does not comply with the
95 requirements of this part.

96 (3) After the end of the 20-calendar-day period described in Subsection (1), a county, city,

97 or town may not:

98 (a) reject a proposed initiative as not legally referable to voters; or

99 (b) bring a legal action, other than to appeal a court decision, challenging a proposed

100 initiative on the grounds that the proposed initiative is not legally referable to voters.

101 (4) If a county, city, or town rejects a proposed initiative, a sponsor of the proposed

102 initiative may, within 10 days after the day on which a sponsor is notified under

103 Subsection (1)(b), appeal the decision to:

104 (a) a district court; or

105 (b) the Supreme Court, if the Supreme Court has original jurisdiction over the appeal.

106 (5) If, on appeal, the court determines that the law proposed by the initiative application is

107 legally referable to voters, the local clerk shall comply with Subsection 20A-7-504(3), or

108 give the sponsors access to the [website] system defined in Section 20A-21-101, within

109 five calendar days after the day on which the determination, and any appeal of the

110 determination, is final.

111 Section 3. Section **20A-7-602.7** is amended to read:

112 **20A-7-602.7 . Referability to voters of local law other than land use law.**

113 (1) Within 20 calendar days after the day on which an eligible voter files a referendum

114 application under Section 20A-7-602 for a local law other than a land use law, counsel

115 for the county, city, or town to which the referendum pertains shall:

116 (a) review the referendum application to determine whether the proposed referendum is

117 legally referable to voters; and

118 (b) notify the first three sponsors, in writing, whether the proposed referendum is:

119 (i) legally referable to voters; or

120 (ii) rejected as not legally referable to voters.

121 (2) For a local law other than a land use law, a proposed referendum is legally referable to

122 voters unless:

123 (a) the proposed referendum challenges an action that is administrative, rather than

124 legislative, in nature;

125 (b) the proposed referendum challenges more than one law passed by the local

126 legislative body; or

127 (c) the referendum application was not timely filed or does not comply with the

128 requirements of this part.

129 (3) After the end of the 20-calendar-day period described in Subsection (1), a county, city,

130 or town may not, for a local law other than a land use law:

- 131 (a) reject a proposed referendum as not legally referable to voters; or
- 132 (b) except as provided in Subsection (4), challenge, in a legal action or otherwise, a
- 133 proposed referendum on the grounds that the proposed referendum is not legally
- 134 referable to voters.
- 135 (4)(a) If, under Subsection (1)(b)(ii), a county, city, or town rejects a proposed
- 136 referendum concerning a local law other than a land use law, a sponsor of the
- 137 proposed referendum may, within 10 days after the day on which a sponsor is
- 138 notified under Subsection (1)(b), challenge or appeal the decision to:
- 139 (i) the Supreme Court, by means of an extraordinary writ, if possible; or
- 140 (ii) a district court, if the sponsor is prohibited from pursuing an extraordinary writ
- 141 under Subsection (4)(a)(i).
- 142 (b) Failure of a sponsor to timely challenge or appeal a rejection under Subsection (4)(a)
- 143 terminates the referendum.
- 144 (5) If, on a challenge or appeal, the court determines that the proposed referendum
- 145 described in Subsection (4) is legally referable to voters, the local clerk shall comply
- 146 with Subsection 20A-7-604(3), or give the sponsors access to the [website] system
- 147 defined in Section 20A-21-101, within five calendar days after the day on which the
- 148 determination, and any challenge or appeal of the determination, is final.
- 149 Section 4. Section **20A-7-602.8** is amended to read:
- 150 **20A-7-602.8 . Referability to voters of local land use law.**
- 151 (1) Within 20 calendar days after the day on which a referendum eligible voter files an
- 152 application under Section 20A-7-602 for a land use law, counsel for the county, city, or
- 153 town to which the referendum pertains shall:
- 154 (a) review the referendum application to determine whether the proposed referendum is
- 155 legally referable to voters; and
- 156 (b) notify the first three sponsors, in writing, whether the proposed referendum is:
- 157 (i) legally referable to voters; or
- 158 (ii) rejected as not legally referable to voters.
- 159 (2)(a) Subject to Subsection (2)(b), for a land use law, a proposed referendum is legally
- 160 referable to voters unless:
- 161 (i) the proposed referendum challenges an action that is administrative, rather than
- 162 legislative, in nature;
- 163 (ii) the proposed referendum challenges a land use decision, rather than a land use
- 164 regulation, as those terms are defined in Section 10-20-102 or 17-79-102;

- 165 (iii) the proposed referendum challenges more than one law passed by the local
 166 legislative body; or
- 167 (iv) the referendum application was not timely filed or does not comply with the
 168 requirements of this part.
- 169 (b) In addition to the limitations of Subsection (2)(a), a proposed referendum is not
 170 legally referable to voters for a:
- 171 (i) municipal land use law, as defined in Section 20A-7-101, if the land use law was
 172 passed by a unanimous vote of the local legislative body; or
- 173 (ii) transit area land use law, as defined in Section 20A-7-601, if the transit area land
 174 use law was passed by a two-thirds vote of the local legislative body.
- 175 (3) After the end of the 20-calendar-day period described in Subsection (1), a county, city,
 176 or town may not, for a land use law:
- 177 (a) reject a proposed referendum as not legally referable to voters; or
- 178 (b) except as provided in Subsection (4), challenge, in a legal action or otherwise, a
 179 proposed referendum on the grounds that the proposed referendum is not legally
 180 referable to voters.
- 181 (4)(a) If a county, city, or town rejects a proposed referendum concerning a land use
 182 law, a sponsor of the proposed referendum may, within seven days after the day on
 183 which a sponsor is notified under Subsection (1)(b), challenge or appeal the decision
 184 to:
- 185 (i) the Supreme Court, by means of an extraordinary writ, if possible; or
- 186 (ii) a district court, if the sponsor is prohibited from pursuing an extraordinary writ
 187 under Subsection (4)(a)(i).
- 188 (b) Failure of a sponsor to timely challenge or appeal a rejection under Subsection (4)(a)
 189 terminates the referendum.
- 190 (5) If, on challenge or appeal, the court determines that the proposed referendum is legally
 191 referable to voters, the local clerk shall comply with Subsection 20A-7-604(3), or give
 192 the sponsors access to the [website] system defined in Section 20A-21-101, within five
 193 calendar days after the day on which the determination, and any challenge or appeal of
 194 the determination, is final.
- 195 Section 5. Section **20A-7-604.5** is amended to read:
- 196 **20A-7-604.5 . Posting referendum information.**
- 197 (1) On the day on which the local clerk complies with Subsection 20A-7-604(3), or gives
 198 the sponsors access to the [website] system defined in Section 20A-21-101, the local

199 clerk shall post the following information together in a conspicuous place on the local
200 clerk's website:

- 201 (a) the referendum petition;
- 202 (b) a copy of the law that is the subject of the referendum petition; and
- 203 (c) information describing how an individual may remove the individual's signature
204 from the referendum petition.

205 (2) The local clerk shall:

- 206 (a) promptly update the information described in Subsection (1) if the information
207 changes; and
- 208 (b) maintain the information described in Subsection (1) on the local clerk's website
209 until the referendum fails to qualify for the ballot or is passed or defeated at an
210 election.

211 Section 6. Section **20A-21-101** is amended to read:

212 **20A-21-101 . Definitions.**

213 As used in this chapter:

- 214 (1) "Approved device" means a device described in Subsection 20A-21-201(4).
- 215 (2) "Candidate qualification process" means the process, described in Section 20A-9-403 or
216 20A-9-408, of gathering signatures to seek the nomination of a registered political party.
- 217 (3) "Electronic candidate qualification process" means the same as that term is defined in
218 Section 20A-9-101.
- 219 (4) "Electronic initiative process" means the same as that term is defined in Section
220 20A-7-101.
- 221 (5) "Electronic referendum process" means the same as that term is defined in Section
222 20A-7-101.
- 223 (6) "Manual candidate qualification process" means the same as that term is defined in
224 Section 20A-9-101.
- 225 (7) "Petition" means:
 - 226 (a) as it relates to the electronic initiative process or the electronic referendum process,
227 the electronic record that an individual signs to indicate the individual is in favor of
228 placing the initiative or referendum on the ballot; [or]
 - 229 (b) as it relates to electronic candidate qualification process, the electronic record that an
230 individual signs to indicate the individual is in favor of placing an individual's name
231 on the ballot to run for a particular elective office[-] ; or
 - 232 (c) as it relates to the online petition portal, the electronic record that an individual signs

233 to indicate the individual is in favor of:

234 (i) placing an initiative or referendum on the ballot; or

235 (ii) placing an individual's name on the ballot to run for a particular elective office.

236 (8) "Online petition portal" means the web-based interface designed by the lieutenant
 237 governor for electronically collecting the signature and other information of a voter
 238 under Section 20A-21-201.

239 [(8)] (9) "Signature" means:

240 (a) as it relates to a signature gathered for an initiative or referendum, the same as that
 241 term is defined in Section 20A-7-101; or

242 (b) as it relates to a signature gathered for the candidate qualification process, the same
 243 as that term is defined in Section 20A-9-101.

244 [(9)] (10)(a) [~~"Website"~~] "System" means:

245 [(a)] (i) as it relates to the electronic initiative process or the electronic referendum
 246 process, the [~~website~~] web-based or application-based interface designated by the
 247 lieutenant governor for collecting the signatures and other information relating to
 248 the electronic initiative process or the electronic referendum process; or

249 [(b)] (ii) as it relates to the electronic candidate qualification process, [~~a website~~] the
 250 web-based or application-based interface designated by the lieutenant governor
 251 for collecting the signatures and other information relating to the electronic
 252 candidate qualification process.

253 (b) "System" does not include the online petition portal.

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

255 Section 7. Section **20A-21-201** is amended to read:

256 **20A-21-201 . Electronic signature gathering for an initiative, a referendum, or**
 257 **candidate qualification.**

258 [(1) After] Subject to Subsection (14):

259 (1)(a) after filing a petition for a statewide initiative or a statewide referendum, and
 260 before gathering signatures, the sponsors shall, after consulting with the Office of the
 261 Lieutenant Governor, sign a form provided by the Office of the Lieutenant Governor
 262 indicating whether the sponsors will gather signatures manually, electronically, or
 263 both[-] ;

264 [(2)] (b) [~~After~~] after filing a petition for a local initiative or a local referendum, and
 265 before gathering signatures, the sponsors shall, after consulting with the local clerk's
 266 office, sign a form provided by the local clerk's office indicating whether the

267 sponsors will gather signatures manually, electronically, or both[-] ; or
 268 ~~[(3)]~~ (c) ~~[After]~~ after a candidate files a notice of intent to gather signatures to qualify for
 269 a ballot, and before gathering signatures, the candidate shall, after consulting with the
 270 election officer, sign a form provided by the election officer indicating whether the
 271 candidate will gather signatures manually, electronically, or both.

272 ~~[(4)]~~ (2) To gather a signature electronically, a signature-gatherer shall:

273 (a) use a device provided by the signature-gatherer or a sponsor of the petition that:

274 (i) is approved by the lieutenant governor;

275 (ii) is capable of uploading to the system the personal identifying information relating
 276 to an individual who signs the petition;

277 ~~[(ii)]~~ ~~(iii)~~ except as provided in ~~[Subsection (4)(a)(iii), does not store a signature or~~
 278 ~~any other information relating to an individual signing the petition in any location~~
 279 ~~other than the location used by the website to store the information]~~ Subsections
 280 (2)(a)(iv) and (v), does not, on the device, store the information described in
 281 Subsection (2)(a)(ii);

282 ~~[(iii)]~~ ~~(iv)~~ beginning on January 1, 2028, is capable of operating offline by
 283 temporarily storing, on the device, the information described in Subsection
 284 (2)(a)(ii) that would otherwise be uploaded in real time to the system;

285 ~~(v)~~ ~~[does not, on the device, store a signature or any other information relating to an~~
 286 ~~individual signing the petition except for the minimum time necessary to upload~~
 287 ~~information to the website]~~ when connected to a wireless communication
 288 technology, does not, on the device, retain the information described in Subsection
 289 (2)(a)(ii) for longer than is necessary to upload the information to the system;

290 ~~[(iv)]~~ (vi) is capable of scanning, reading, and extracting to the device:

291 (A) the driver license number from a driver license;

292 (B) the state identification card number from a state identification card; or

293 (C) an image of another form of valid voter identification;

294 ~~(vii)~~ ~~[does not contain any applications, software, or data other than those approved~~
 295 ~~by the lieutenant governor]~~ complies with device configuration and security
 296 requirements established by the lieutenant governor to prevent unauthorized
 297 access or interference with the electronic signature-gathering process; and

298 ~~[(v)]~~ ~~(viii)~~ ~~[complies with cyber-security and other security protocols required by the~~
 299 ~~lieutenant governor]~~ follows cyber-security and other security procedures required
 300 by the lieutenant governor for the operation, monitoring, and maintenance of the

- 301 system;
- 302 (b) use the approved device to securely access [~~a website~~] the system designated by the
303 lieutenant governor, directly, or via an application designated by the lieutenant
304 governor; and
- 305 (c) while connected to the [~~website~~] system, present the approved device to an individual
306 considering signing the petition and, while the signature-gatherer is in the physical
307 presence of the individual:
- 308 (i) wait for the individual to reach each screen presented to the individual on the
309 approved device; and
- 310 (ii) wait for the individual to advance to each subsequent screen by clicking on the
311 acknowledgement at the bottom of the screen.
- 312 [~~(5)~~] (3) Each screen shown on an approved device as part of the signature-gathering process
313 shall appear as a continuous electronic document that, if the entire document does not
314 appear on the screen at once, requires the individual viewing the screen to, before
315 advancing to the next screen, scroll through the document until the individual reaches
316 the end of the document.
- 317 [~~(6)~~] (4) After advancing through each screen required for the petition, the signature process
318 shall proceed as follows:
- 319 (a) except as provided in Subsection [~~(6)(b)~~] (4)(b):
- 320 (i) the individual desiring to sign the petition shall present the individual's driver
321 license or state identification card to the signature-gatherer;
- 322 (ii) the signature-gatherer shall verify that the individual pictured on the driver
323 license or state identification card is the individual signing the petition;
- 324 (iii) the signature-gatherer shall scan [~~or enter~~] the driver license number or state
325 identification card number through the approved device; and
- 326 (iv) immediately after the signature-gatherer complies with Subsection [~~(6)(a)(iii)~~]
327 (4)(a)(iii), the [~~website~~] system shall determine whether the individual desiring to
328 sign the petition is eligible to sign the petition;
- 329 (b) if the individual desiring to sign the petition is unable to provide a driver license or
330 state identification card to the signature gatherer:
- 331 (i) the individual may present other valid voter identification;
- 332 (ii) if the valid voter identification contains a picture of the individual, the
333 signature-gatherer shall verify that the individual pictured is the individual signing
334 the petition;

- 335 (iii) if the valid voter identification does not contain a picture of the individual, the
336 signature-gatherer shall, to the extent reasonably practicable, use the individual's
337 address or other available means to determine whether the identification relates to
338 the individual presenting the identification;
- 339 (iv) the signature-gatherer shall scan an image of the valid voter identification and
340 immediately upload the image to the [website] system; and
- 341 (v) the individual:
- 342 (A) shall enter the individual's address; and
- 343 (B) may, at the discretion of the individual, enter the individual's date of birth or
344 age after the individual clicks on the screen acknowledging that they have read
345 and understand the following statement, "Birth date or age information is not
346 required, but may be used to verify your identity with voter registration
347 records. If you choose not to provide it, your signature may not be verified as a
348 valid signature if you change your address before your signature is verified or
349 if the information you provide does not match your voter registration records.";
- 350 and
- 351 (c) after completing the process described in Subsection [~~(6)(a)~~] (4)(a) or (b), the screen
352 shall:
- 353 (i) except for a petition to qualify a candidate for the ballot, give the individual
354 signing the petition the opportunity to enter the individual's email address after the
355 individual reads the following statement, "If you provide your email address, you
356 may receive an email with additional information relating to the petition you are
357 signing."; and
- 358 (ii)(A) if the [website] system determines, under Subsection [~~(6)(a)(iv)~~] (4)(a)(iv),
359 that the individual is eligible to sign the petition, permit the individual to enter
360 the individual's name as the individual's electronic signature and, immediately
361 after the signature-gatherer timely complies with Subsection (10), certify the
362 signature; or
- 363 (B) if the individual provides valid voter identification under Subsection [~~(6)(b)~~]
364 (4)(b), permit the individual to enter the individual's name as the individual's
365 electronic signature.
- 366 [~~(7)~~] (5) If an individual provides valid voter identification under Subsection [~~(6)(b)~~] (4)(b),
367 the county clerk shall, within seven calendar days after the day on which the individual
368 submits the valid voter identification, certify the signature if:

- 369 (a) the individual is eligible to sign the petition;
 370 (b) the identification provided matches the information on file; and
 371 (c) the signature-gatherer timely complies with Subsection ~~[(10)]~~ (8).

372 ~~[(8)]~~ (6) For each signature submitted under this section, the ~~[website]~~ system shall record:

- 373 (a) the information identifying the individual who signs;
 374 (b) the date the signature was collected; and
 375 (c) the name of the signature-gatherer.

376 ~~[(9)]~~ (7) An individual who is a signature-gatherer may not sign a petition unless another
 377 individual acts as the signature-gatherer when the individual signs the petition.

378 ~~[(10)]~~ (8) Except for a petition for a candidate to seek the nomination of a registered political
 379 party, each individual who gathers a signature under this section shall, within one business day
 380 after the day on which the individual gathers a signature, electronically sign and submit the
 381 following statement to the ~~[website]~~ system:

382 "VERIFICATION OF SIGNATURE-GATHERER

383 State of Utah, County of _____

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

385 I am at least 18 years old;

386 All the signatures that I collected on [Date signatures were gathered] were signed by
 387 individuals who professed to be the individuals whose signatures I gathered, and each of the
 388 individuals signed the petition in my presence;

389 I did not knowingly make a misrepresentation of fact concerning the law or proposed
 390 law to which the petition relates;

391 I believe that each individual has signed the individual's name and written the
 392 individual's residence correctly, that each signer has read and understands the law to which the
 393 petition relates, and that each signer is registered to vote in Utah;

394 Each signature correctly reflects the date on which the individual signed the petition; and

395 I have not paid or given anything of value to any individual who signed this petition to
 396 encourage that individual to sign it."

397 ~~[(11)]~~ (9) Except for a petition for a candidate to seek the nomination of a registered
 398 political party:

- 399 (a) the county clerk may not certify a signature that is not timely verified in accordance
 400 with Subsection ~~[(10)]~~ (8); and
 401 (b) if a signature certified by a county clerk under Subsection ~~[(6)(e)(ii)(A)]~~ (4)(c)(ii)(A)
 402 is not timely verified in accordance with Subsection ~~[(10)]~~ (8), the county clerk shall:

- 403 (i) revoke the certification;
- 404 (ii) remove the signature from the posting described in Subsection 20A-7-217(4),
- 405 20A-7-315(4), 20A-7-516(4), or 20A-7-616(4); and
- 406 (iii) update the totals described in Subsections 20A-7-217(5)(a)(ii),
- 407 20A-7-315(5)(a)(ii), 20A-7-516(5)(a)(ii), and 20A-7-616(5)(a)(ii).

408 ~~[(12)]~~ (10) For a petition for a candidate to seek the nomination of a registered political party,

409 each individual who gathers a signature under this section shall, within one business day after

410 the day on which the individual gathers a signature, electronically sign and submit the

411 following statement to the lieutenant governor in the manner specified by the lieutenant

412 governor:

413 "VERIFICATION OF SIGNATURE-GATHERER

414 State of Utah, County of _____

415 I, _____, of _____, hereby state that:

416 I am at least 18 years old;

417 All the signatures that I collected on [Date signatures were gathered] were signed by

418 individuals who professed to be the individuals whose signatures I gathered, and each of the

419 individuals signed the petition in my presence;

420 I believe that each individual has signed the individual's name and written the

421 individual's residence correctly and that each signer is registered to vote in Utah; and

422 Each signature correctly reflects the date on which the individual signed the petition."

423 ~~[(13)]~~ (11) For a petition for a candidate to seek the nomination of a registered political

424 party, the election officer may not certify a signature that is not timely verified in

425 accordance with Subsection ~~[(12)]~~ (10).

426 (12) The lieutenant governor shall submit a report regarding electronic signature gathering

427 to the Government Operations Interim Committee:

428 (a) no later than October 1, 2026; and

429 (b) annually thereafter, no later than October 1 of each year, through and including

430 October 1, 2029.

431 (13) Each report described in Subsection (12) shall include:

432 (a) for the most recent primary election cycle, the number of candidates for elective

433 office who used manual signature gathering, electronic signature gathering, or both

434 methods;

435 (b) for each statewide initiative or referendum for which signatures were gathered during

436 the most recent reporting year, the number of petitions in which manual signature

- 437 gathering was used, electronic signature gathering was used, or both methods were
438 used;
- 439 (c) a summary of any security threats or vulnerabilities identified by the lieutenant
440 governor relating to electronic signature gathering, including a description of
441 mitigation steps taken, if any;
- 442 (d) a description of any technical issues or operational difficulties encountered in the
443 electronic signature gathering process that may require legislative, administrative, or
444 technological remedies;
- 445 (e) information relating to the accuracy and reliability of electronic signature
446 verification, including the rate at which electronically gathered signatures were
447 accepted or rejected;
- 448 (f) any fiscal or administrative impacts on the Office of the Lieutenant Governor or the
449 office of an election officer related to electronic signature gathering; and
- 450 (g) any other information the lieutenant governor determines relevant to evaluating the
451 transition from manual to electronic signature gathering.
- 452 (14) The lieutenant governor shall, no later than December 31, 2029:
- 453 (a) create and administer an online petition portal that allows an individual to directly
454 access, review, and electronically sign a petition; and
- 455 (b) make rules, in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative
456 Rulemaking Act, governing the use and ongoing administration of the online petition
457 portal.
- 458 (15) The online petition portal shall:
- 459 (a) comply with cyber-security requirements established by the lieutenant governor to
460 prevent unauthorized access or interference with the electronic signature-gathering
461 process;
- 462 (b) verify an individual's identity and eligibility to sign a petition in a manner that is
463 consistent with the signature certification requirements described in this section for
464 an approved device; and
- 465 (c) before certifying an individual's signature, require the individual to submit a
466 verification statement to the lieutenant governor in accordance with rules made by
467 the lieutenant governor under Subsection (14)(b).
- 468 (16)(a) Notwithstanding Subsections (1) through (6), an individual may, beginning on
469 January 1, 2030, electronically sign a petition through the online petition portal.
- 470 (b) A signature submitted through the online petition portal is subject to the same

471 deadlines applicable to a signature submitted under this section using an approved
 472 device.

473 Section 8. Section **20A-21-202** is enacted to read:

474 **20A-21-202 . Electronic signature gathering -- Exclusive method of collecting**
 475 **signatures.**

476 (1) Beginning on January 1, 2030, the sponsors of a statewide or local initiative petition:

477 (a) shall gather signatures using the electronic initiative process; and

478 (b) may not gather signatures manually.

479 (2) Beginning on January 1, 2030, the sponsors of a statewide or local referendum petition:

480 (a) shall gather signatures using the electronic referendum process; and

481 (b) may not gather signatures manually.

482 (3) Beginning on January 1, 2030, an individual who gathers signatures for a candidate
 483 nomination petition:

484 (a) shall gather signatures using the electronic candidate qualification process; and

485 (b) may not gather signatures using the manual candidate qualification process.

486 Section 9. Section **63I-1-220** is amended to read:

487 **63I-1-220 . Repeal dates: Title 20A.**

488 (1) [Reserved.] Section 20A-7-105, Manual petition processes -- Obtaining signatures --
 489 Verification -- Submitting the petition -- Certification of signatures -- Transfer to
 490 lieutenant governor -- Removal of signature, is repealed January 1, 2030.

491 (2) Section 20A-7-203, Manual initiative process -- Form of initiative petition and signature
 492 sheets, is repealed January 1, 2030.

493 (3) Section 20A-7-204, Manual initiative process -- Circulation requirements -- Lieutenant
 494 governor to provide sponsors with materials, is repealed January 1, 2030.

495 (4) Section 20A-7-303, Manual referendum process -- Form of referendum petition and
 496 signature sheets, is repealed January 1, 2030.

497 (5) Section 20A-7-304, Manual referendum process -- Circulation requirements --
 498 Lieutenant governor to provide sponsors with materials, is repealed January 1, 2030.

499 (6) Section 20A-7-503, Manual initiative process -- Form of initiative petition and signature
 500 sheet, is repealed January 1, 2030.

501 (7) Section 20A-7-504, Manual initiative process -- Circulation requirements -- Local clerk
 502 to provide sponsors with materials, is repealed January 1, 2030.

503 (8) Section 20A-7-603, Manual referendum process -- Form of referendum petition and
 504 signature sheet, is repealed January 1, 2030.

- 505 (9) Section 20A-7-604, Manual referendum process -- Circulation requirements -- Local
506 clerk to provide sponsors with materials, is repealed January 1, 2030.
- 507 (10) Subsection 20A-9-405(3), regarding the manual candidate nomination process, is
508 repealed January 1, 2030.
- 509 (11) Subsection 20A-9-405(5), regarding the manual candidate nomination process, is
510 repealed January 1, 2030.
- 511 (12) Subsection 20A-9-408(9), regarding the manual candidate nomination process, is
512 repealed January 1, 2030.
- 513 (13) Section 20A-9-408.3, Submission of candidate signature packet -- Requirements for
514 submission -- Signature packet chain of custody and storage, is repealed January 1, 2030.

515 **Section 10. Effective Date.**

516 This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.

517 **Section 11. Coordinating H.B. 223 with H.B. 32.**

518 If H.B. 223, Electronic Signature Collection Amendments, and H.B. 32, Signature
519 Gathering and Verification Amendments, both pass and become law, the Legislature intends
520 that, on May 6, 2026, Subsection 20A-21-201(10), enacted in H.B. 32, be amended to read:
521 "(10) Except for a petition for a candidate to seek the nomination of a registered political
522 party, each individual who gathers a signature under this section shall, within one business day
523 after the day on which the individual gathers a signature, electronically sign and submit the
524 circulator verification sheet described in Subsection 20A-1-1004(1) to the system."