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

1 2	State of Arkansas 95th General Assembly	A Bill	
3	Regular Session, 2025		SENATE BILL 209
4	1050101, 2020		SERVITE DIEL 20)
5	By: Senator K. Hammer		
6	By: Representative Underwoo	d	
7	5 1		
8		For An Act To Be Entitled	
9	AN ACT TO A	AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING INITIATIVE	
10	PETITIONS A	AND REFERENDUM PETITIONS; TO DISQUALIF	Ϋ́
11	SIGNATURES	OBTAINED BY A CANVASSER UNDER CERTAIN	I
12	CIRCUMSTANCES; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER		
13	PURPOSES.		
14			
15			
16		Subtitle	
17	TO DI	SQUALIFY SIGNATURES OBTAINED BY A	
18	CANVA	SSER UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES;	
19	AND T	O DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.	
20			
21	BE IT ENACTED BY THE G	ENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANS	AS:
22			
23	SECTION 1. Arkan	nsas Code § 7-9-103, concerning the si	gning of a
24	petition, penalty for falsification, and notice of suspected forgery for		
25	initiative petitions an	nd referendum petitions, is amended to	add an
26	additional subsection	to read as follows:	
27	<u>(e)(1)</u> The Secre	etary of State shall not count signatu	res collected and
28	witnessed by a canvass	er if the Secretary of State finds by	<u>a preponderance</u>
29	of the evidence that the	<u>he canvasser has violated Arkansas law</u>	<u>'s regarding</u>
30	<u>canvassing</u> , perjury, fo	orgery, or fraudulent practices in the	procurement of
31	<u>petition signatures or</u>	any provision of the Arkansas Constit	ution applicable
32	to the collection of s	ignatures on an initiative petition or	referendum
33	petition during the cu		
34		subsection shall not constrain the dut	ies and authority
35	of the Secretary of Sta	ate as set forth in Arkansas law.	
36			



1	SECTION 2. DO NOT CODIFY. <u>SEVERABILITY. The provisions of this act</u>			
2	are declared to be severable and the invalidity of any provision of this act			
3	shall not affect other provisions of the act which can be given effect			
4	without the invalid provision.			
5				
6	SECTION 3. DO NOT CODIFY. <u>EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and</u>			
7	determined by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the process			
8	for citizens to propose initiated acts and amendments to the Arkansas			
9	Constitution is critical to a well-functioning democracy in this state; that			
10	it is of the utmost importance that the integrity of the initiative process			
11	be strengthened through this act so that petitioners and voters maintain a			
12	high degree of confidence in the soundness of their right to legislate as			
13	citizens of Arkansas; and that this act is immediately necessary because any			
14	delay in the implementation of this act would disrupt the initiative process			
15	for the 2026 general election, which would have a detrimental effect on the			
16	public peace, health, and safety of Arkansas. Therefore, an emergency is			
17	declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for the			
18	preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective			
19	<u>on:</u>			
20	(1) The date of its approval by the Governor;			
21	(2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor,			
22	the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the			
23	bill; or			
24	(3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is			
25	overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.			
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28	APPROVED: 3/12/25			
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