Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law. Act 274 of the Regular Session

1 2	State of Arkansas 95th General Assembly A Bill	
3	Regular Session, 2025 SENATE BILL	210
4		
5	By: Senator K. Hammer	
6	By: Representative Underwood	
7		
8	For An Act To Be Entitled	
9	AN ACT TO CREATE THE REQUIRE EXAMINING OF	
10	AUTHORITATIVE DOCUMENTS ACT; TO AMEND THE LAW	
11	CONCERNING INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM PETITIONS; TO	
12	REQUIRE THE SIGNER TO READ THE BALLOT TITLE OF THE	
13	PETITION IN THE PRESENCE OF A CANVASSER; TO DECLARE	
14	AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.	
15		
16		
17	Subtitle	
18	TO REQUIRE THE SIGNER TO READ THE BALLOT	
19	TITLE OF THE PETITION IN THE PRESENCE OF	
20	A CANVASSER; AND TO DECLARE AN	
21	EMERGENCY.	
22		
23	BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:	
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25	SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. <u>Title.</u>	
26	This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Require Examining of	:
27	Authoritative Documents Act".	
28		
29	SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 7-9-103(a)(1)(A), concerning the signing	of
30	initiative and referendum petitions, is amended to read as follows:	
31	(a)(l)(A) A After reading the ballot title of the petition in the	
32	presence of the canvasser or having the ballot title of the petition read	
33	aloud to him or her in the presence of the canvasser, a person who is a	
34	registered voter of this state may sign his or her own name and print his o	r
35	her own name, address, birth date, and the date of signing on an initiative	:
36	or referendum petition in his or her own proper handwriting, and not	



1 otherwise, to order an initiative or referendum vote upon a proposed amendment or a proposed or referred act. 2 3 4 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 7-9-103(c), concerning misdemeanor offenses 5 for a person acting as a canvasser, notary, sponsor, or agent of a sponsor, 6 is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as follows: 7 (10) As a canvasser, knowingly accepts a signature when the 8 person signing the petition has not read the ballot title of the petition in 9 the presence of the canvasser or the ballot title of the petition has not 10 been read aloud to the person in the presence of the canvasser. 11 12 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 7-9-109(a) is amended to read as follows: 13 (a) Each petition containing signatures shall be verified in substantially the following form by the canvasser's affidavit thereon as a 14 part thereof: "State of Arkansas 15 16 County of I, (print name of canvasser), being duly sworn, state that each of the 17 18 foregoing persons signed his or her own name to this sheet of the petition in 19 my presence. To the best of my knowledge and belief, each signature is 20 genuine and each signer is a registered voter of the State of Arkansas, 21 _____ County, or City or Incorporated Town of _____. At all 22 times during the circulation of this signature sheet, an exact copy of the 23 popular name, ballot title, and text was attached to the signature sheet, and 24 each signer read the ballot title of the petition or had the ballot title of 25 the petition read to the signer in my presence. My current residence address 26 is correctly stated below. 27 Signature _____ 28 Current residence _____ Indicate one: _____ Paid Canvasser _____ 29 Volunteer/Unpaid Canvasser 30 31 Subscribed and sworn to before me this day of 32 ____, 20_____ Signature _____ 33 34 Clerk, Notary, Judge, or J.P. Seal _____". 35 36

1	SECTION 5. 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 6. 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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