



What is the Ohio Ballot Board?

The Ohio Ballot Board is housed within the Office of the Secretary of State. The board has several responsibilities, including certifying ballot language for any proposed constitutional amendments (citizen-initiated and general-assembly initiated), initiated statutes, and referenda. The board is also tasked with informing voters of all proposed ballot issues.

<https://www.ohiosos.gov/legislation-and-ballot-issues/ballot-board/>

Who sits on the Ohio Ballot Board?

The Ohio Ballot Board is a five-member board chaired by the Secretary of State. The remaining four members are appointed, and no more than two of the appointed members can be the same political party. The Ohio Senate President, Ohio Senate Minority Leader, Ohio House Speaker, and Ohio House Minority Leader each appoint one member. Members on the Ohio Ballot Board serve four-year terms. <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3505.061>

What are the four types of statewide ballot issues that go before the Ohio Ballot Board?

<https://www.ohiosos.gov/legislation-and-ballot-issues/putting-an-issue-on-the-ballot/>

- **Constitutional Amendment: Citizen-initiated:** This option is commonly referred to as a citizen-led ballot initiative. This initiative would put an issue directly to voters and, if passed, would amend the Ohio State Constitution. There are tremendous obstacles to amending the constitution through a citizen-led ballot initiative, including collecting hundreds of thousands of signatures in order to get the initiative on the ballot in the first place.
- **Constitutional Amendment: General Assembly-initiated:** Similar to the citizen-led ballot initiative, this option puts an issue directly to voters and, if passed, would amend the Ohio State Constitution. The main difference between this option and the citizen-led option is that it is driven by members of the Ohio General Assembly, rather than the people.
- **Initiated Statute:** Initiated Statute is an opportunity for Ohioans to put an issue directly to voters through a proposed state law.
- **Referendum:** A referendum is a ballot issue put directly to voters that seeks to challenge a bill that the OGA recently passed, and the Governor signed into law.

What role does the Ohio Ballot Board play in the citizen-led ballot initiative process?

As mentioned, the Ohio Ballot Board is responsible for certifying ballot language for any proposed constitutional amendments. Citizen-led initiatives must first submit the language of the proposed amendment to the Ohio Attorney General's office, where the AG must certify the language is "fair and truthful." Once this step is completed, the work of the Ballot Board begins. The Ballot Board's primary responsibility is to certify an initiative contains only one proposal before going on the ballot. If the Ballot Board determines an initiative contains more than one proposal, the board shall split the initiative into as many separate proposals they deem necessary. This is often referred to the "single subject" rule. They have ten days to make this determination.

These steps must be met before citizens can begin gathering the hundreds of thousands signatures needed to get on the ballot. <https://www.ohiosos.gov/legislation-and-ballot-issues/putting-an-issue-on-the-ballot/citizen-initiated-constitutional-amendment/>