

**SUBSTITUTE FOR
SENATE BILL NO. 531**

A bill to amend 1954 PA 116, entitled
"Michigan election law,"
by amending sections 482, 544c, 552a, 590h, 685, 957, and 958 (MCL
168.482, 168.544c, 168.552a, 168.590h, 168.685, 168.957, and
168.958), section 482 as amended by 2018 PA 608, sections 544c,
590h, and 685 as amended by 2018 PA 650, section 552a as added by
1995 PA 261, and section 957 as amended by 2018 PA 120, and by
adding sections 482f and 547.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

- 1 Sec. 482. (1) Each petition under this section must be 8-1/2
2 inches by 14 inches in size.
- 3 (2) If the measure to be submitted proposes a constitutional
4 amendment, initiation of legislation, or referendum of legislation,



the heading of each part of the petition must be prepared in the following form and printed in capital letters in 14-point boldfaced type:

INITIATIVE PETITION
AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION
OR
INITIATION OF LEGISLATION
OR
REFERENDUM OF LEGISLATION
PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION

(3) A summary in not more than 100 words of the purpose of the proposed amendment or question proposed must follow and be printed in 12-point type. The full text of the amendment so proposed must follow the summary and be printed in 8-point type. If the proposal would alter or abrogate an existing provision of the constitution, the petition must so state and the provisions to be altered or abrogated must be inserted, preceded by the words:

"Provisions of existing constitution altered or abrogated by the proposal if adopted."

(4) The following statement must appear beneath the petition heading:

"We, the undersigned qualified and registered electors, **and** residents in the _____ congressional district ~~in-of~~ the state of Michigan, respectively petition for (amendment to constitution) (initiation of legislation) (referendum of legislation) (other appropriate description).".

(5) The following warning must be printed in 12-point type immediately above the place for signatures, on each part of the petition:



WARNING

~~A person~~ **An individual** who knowingly ~~signs this petition more than once,~~ signs a name other than ~~his or her~~ **the individual's** own name, signs ~~when~~ **if** not a qualified and registered elector, or sets opposite ~~his or her~~ **the individual's** signature on a petition, a date other than the actual date the signature was affixed, is violating the provisions of the Michigan election law.

(6) Subject to subsections (7) and (8), the remainder of the petition form must be as provided following the warning to electors signing the petition in section 544c(1). In addition, the petition must comply with the requirements of section 544c(2).

(7) Each petition under this section must provide at the top of the page check boxes and statements printed in 12-point type to clearly indicate whether the circulator of the petition is a paid signature gatherer or a volunteer signature gatherer.

(8) Each petition under this section must clearly indicate below the statement required under subsection (7) and be printed in 12-point type that if the petition circulator does not comply with all of the requirements of this act for petition circulators, any signature obtained by that petition circulator on that petition is invalid and will not be counted.

Sec. 482f. If a petition under section 482 contains the signature of the same elector 2 or more times, only the first valid signature of that elector shall be counted.

Sec. 544c. (1) A nominating petition must be 8-1/2 inches by 14 inches in size. On a nominating petition, the words "nominating petition" must be printed in 24-point boldface type. "We, the undersigned," et cetera must be printed in 8-point type. "Warning" and language in the warning must be printed in 12-point boldface



type. The balance of the petition must be printed in 8-point type. The name, address, and party affiliation of the candidate and the office for which petitions are signed must be printed in type not larger than 24-point. The petition must be in the following form:

NOMINATING PETITION

(PARTISAN)

We, the undersigned, registered and qualified voters of the city or township of , in the county (strike 1) of and state of Michigan, nominate, , (Name of Candidate) , (Street Address or Rural Route) (City or Township) as a candidate of the party for the office of , , (District, if any) to be voted for at the primary election to be held on the day of , 20

WARNING

~~A person~~ **An individual** who knowingly signs more petitions for the same office than there are ~~persons~~ **individuals** to be elected to the office, ~~signs a petition more than once,~~ or signs a name other than ~~his or her~~ **the individual's** own is violating the provisions of the Michigan election law.

Printed	Street Address					
Name and	or					Date of Signing
Signature	Rural Route	Zip Code	Mo.	Day	Year	



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

numbered lines as above

CERTIFICATE OF CIRCULATOR

The undersigned circulator of the above petition asserts that ~~he or she~~ **the circulator** is 18 years of age or older and a United States citizen; that each signature on the petition was signed in ~~his or her~~ **the circulator's** presence; ~~that he or she has neither caused nor permitted a person to sign the petition more than once and has no knowledge of a person signing the petition more than once;~~ and that, to ~~his or her~~ **the circulator's** best knowledge and belief, each signature is the genuine signature of the ~~person~~ **individual** purporting to sign the petition, the ~~person~~ **individual** signing the petition was at the time of signing a registered elector of the city or township listed in the heading of the petition, and the elector was qualified to sign the petition.

Circulator—Do not sign or date certificate until after circulating petition.

____ If the circulator is not a resident of Michigan, the circulator shall make a cross or check mark on the line provided, otherwise each signature on this petition sheet is invalid and the signatures will not be counted by a filing official. By making a cross or check mark on the line provided, the undersigned circulator asserts that ~~he or she~~ **the circulator** is not a resident of Michigan and agrees to accept the jurisdiction of this state for the purpose of any legal proceeding or hearing that concerns a petition sheet executed by the circulator and agrees that legal



process served on the secretary of state or a designated agent of the secretary of state has the same effect as if personally served on the circulator.

(Printed Name and Signature of Circulator) (Date)

~~(Complete (Residence Address including Zip Code) (Street and Number or Rural~~

~~Route))~~ Do not enter a post office box

~~(City or Township, State, Zip Code)~~

~~(County of Registration, if Registered to Vote, of a Circulator who is not a Resident of Michigan)~~ **(If Circulator is not a Resident of Michigan and is Registered to Vote, County and State of Registration)**

Warning-A circulator knowingly making a false statement in the above certificate, ~~a person~~ **an individual** not a circulator who signs as a circulator, or ~~a person~~ **an individual** who signs a name other than ~~his or her~~ **the individual's** own as circulator is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(2) The petition must be in a form providing a space for the circulator and each elector who signs the petition to print ~~his or her~~ **the circulator's or elector's** name. The secretary of state shall prescribe the location of the space for the printed name. The failure of the circulator or an elector who signs the petition to print ~~his or her~~ **the circulator's or elector's** name, to print ~~his or her~~ **the circulator's or elector's** name in the location prescribed by the secretary of state, or to enter a zip code or ~~his~~



1 ~~or her~~ **the circulator's or elector's** correct zip code does not
2 affect the validity of the signature of the circulator or the
3 elector who signs the petition. A printed name located in the space
4 prescribed for printed names does not constitute the signature of
5 the circulator or elector. If an elector does not include ~~his or~~
6 ~~her~~ **the elector's** signature, ~~his or her~~ **the elector's** street
7 address or rural route, or the date of signing on the petition as
8 required under subsection (1), the elector's signature is invalid
9 and must not be counted by a filing official.

10 (3) If the circulator of a petition under section 482, a
11 qualifying petition for an office named in section 590b(4), or a
12 petition to form a new political party under section 685 is not a
13 resident of this state, the circulator shall indicate where
14 provided on the certificate of circulator that ~~he or she~~ **the**
15 **circulator** agrees to accept the jurisdiction of this state for the
16 purpose of any legal proceeding or hearing initiated under section
17 476, 552, 590f(2), or 685 that concerns a petition sheet executed
18 by the circulator and agrees that legal process served on the
19 secretary of state or a designated agent of the secretary of state
20 has the same effect as if personally served on the circulator.

21 (4) If the secretary of state or a designated agent of the
22 secretary of state is served with legal process as described in
23 subsection (3), the secretary of state shall promptly notify the
24 circulator by personal service or certified mail at the
25 circulator's residential address as indicated in the certificate of
26 circulator.

27 (5) The circulator of a petition shall sign and date the
28 certificate of circulator before the petition is filed. A
29 circulator shall not obtain electors' signatures after the



1 circulator has signed and dated the certificate of circulator. A
2 filing official shall not count electors' signatures that were
3 obtained after the date the circulator signed the certificate or
4 that are contained in a petition that the circulator did not sign
5 and date.

6 (6) Except as provided in section 544d, a petition sheet must
7 not be circulated in more than 1 city or township and each signer
8 of a petition sheet must be a registered elector of the city or
9 township indicated in the heading of the petition sheet. The
10 invalidity of 1 or more signatures on a petition does not affect
11 the validity of the remainder of the signatures on the petition.

12 (7) An individual shall not sign more nominating petitions for
13 the same office than there are ~~persons~~**individuals** to be elected to
14 the office. An individual who violates this subsection is guilty of
15 a misdemeanor.

16 (8) An individual shall not do any of the following:

17 (a) Sign a petition with a name other than ~~his or her~~**the**
18 **individual's** own.

19 (b) Make a false statement in a certificate on a petition.

20 (c) If not a circulator, sign a petition as a circulator.

21 (d) Sign a name as circulator other than ~~his or her~~**the**
22 **individual's** own.

23 (9) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (10), an
24 individual who violates subsection (8) is guilty of a misdemeanor
25 punishable by a fine of not more than \$500.00, ~~or~~ imprisonment for
26 not more than 93 days, or both.

27 (10) An individual shall not sign a petition with multiple
28 names. An individual who violates this subsection is guilty of a
29 felony.



1 (11) If after a canvass and a hearing on a petition under
2 section 476 or 552 the board of state canvassers determines that an
3 individual has knowingly and intentionally failed to comply with
4 subsection (8) or (10), the board of state canvassers may impose 1
5 or more of the following sanctions:

6 (a) Disqualify obviously fraudulent signatures on a petition
7 form on which the violation of subsection (8) or (10) occurred,
8 without checking the signatures against local registration records.

9 (b) Disqualify from the ballot a candidate who committed,
10 aided or abetted, or knowingly allowed the violation of subsection
11 (8) or (10) on a petition to nominate that candidate.

12 (12) If an individual violates subsection (8) or (10) and the
13 affected petition sheet is filed, each of the following who knew of
14 the violation of subsection (8) or (10) before the filing of the
15 affected petition sheet and who failed to report the violation to
16 the secretary of state, the filing official, if different, the
17 attorney general, a law enforcement officer, or the county
18 prosecuting attorney is guilty of a misdemeanor ~~—~~punishable by a
19 fine of not more than \$500.00, ~~or~~ imprisonment for not more than 1
20 year, or both:

21 (a) The circulator of the petition, if different than the
22 individual who violated subsection (8) or (10).

23 (b) If the petition is a nominating petition, the candidate
24 whose nomination is sought.

25 (c) If the petition is a petition for a ballot question or
26 recall, the organization or other person sponsoring the petition
27 drive.

28 (13) If after a canvass and a hearing on a petition under
29 section 476 or 552 the board of state canvassers determines that an



1 individual has violated subsection (12), the board of state
2 canvassers may impose 1 or more of the following sanctions:

3 (a) Impose on the organization or other person sponsoring the
4 petition drive an administrative fine of not more than \$5,000.00.

5 (b) Charge the organization or other person sponsoring the
6 petition drive for the costs of canvassing a petition form on which
7 a violation of subsection (8) or (10) occurred.

8 (c) Disqualify an organization or other person described in
9 subdivision (a) from collecting signatures on a petition for a
10 period of not more than 4 years.

11 (d) Disqualify obviously fraudulent signatures on a petition
12 form on which a violation of subsection (8) or (10) occurred
13 without checking the signatures against local registration records.

14 (e) Disqualify from the ballot a candidate who committed,
15 aided or abetted, or knowingly allowed a violation of subsection
16 (8) or (10) on a petition to nominate that candidate.

17 (14) If an individual refuses to comply with a subpoena of the
18 board of state canvassers in an investigation of an alleged
19 violation of subsection (8), (10), or (12), the board may hold the
20 canvass of the petitions in abeyance until the individual complies.

21 (15) ~~A person~~ **An individual** who aids or abets another in an
22 act that is prohibited by this section is guilty of that act.

23 (16) The provisions of this section except as otherwise
24 expressly provided apply to all petitions circulated under
25 authority of the election law.

26 **Sec. 547. If a nominating petition contains the signature of**
27 **the same elector 2 or more times, only the first valid signature of**
28 **that elector shall be counted.**

29 Sec. 552a. (1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this act



1 to the contrary, a petition or a signature is not invalid solely
 2 because the designation of city or township has not been made on
 3 the petition form if a city and an adjoining township have the same
 4 name.

5 (2) Notwithstanding any other provision of this act to the
 6 contrary, if a ~~person~~**an individual** who signs a petition uses ~~his~~
 7 ~~or her~~**the individual's** mailing address on the petition and that
 8 mailing address incorporates the political jurisdiction in which
 9 the ~~person~~**individual** is registered to vote, that signature ~~shall~~
 10 **must** be counted if the signature is otherwise determined to be
 11 genuine and valid under this act.

12 (3) Notwithstanding any other provision of this act to the
 13 contrary, if a circulator who signs a petition uses the
 14 circulator's mailing address on the petition and that mailing
 15 address incorporates the political jurisdiction in which the
 16 circulator is registered to vote, the circulator's signature is not
 17 invalid solely because the circulator signed the petition with a
 18 mailing address rather than a residence address.

19 Sec. 590h. (1) A qualifying petition for a candidate without
 20 political party affiliation must be the same size and printed in
 21 the same type sizes as required in section 544c. The petition must
 22 be in the following form:

23 QUALIFYING PETITION

24 (CANDIDATE WITHOUT PARTY AFFILIATION)

25 We, the undersigned, registered and qualified ~~voters~~**electors** of
 26 the ~~city or township of~~, in the county of

27 ~~(strike 1)~~

28 ~~and~~ state of Michigan, nominate ~~—.....~~,

29 (Name of Candidate)



.....,
 (Street Address or R.R.) (City or Township)
 as a candidate without party affiliation for the office of
 in
 (Title of Office and District)
 order that the name of the candidate be placed without party
 affiliation on the ballot for the election to be held on
 the day of , 20.... .

WARNING

Whoever knowingly signs more petitions for the same office
 than there are ~~persons~~**individuals** to be elected to the office or
 signs a name other than ~~his or her~~**the individual's** own **name** is
 violating the Michigan election law.

(2) The balance of the qualifying petition form must be
 substantially as set forth in section 544c. A qualifying petition
 for a candidate without party affiliation must not contain a
 reference to a political party.

(3) An individual shall not knowingly sign more petitions for
 the same office than there are ~~persons~~**individuals** to be elected to
 the office. An individual who violates this subsection is guilty of
 a misdemeanor.

(4) An individual shall not do any of the following:

(a) Sign a qualifying petition with a name other than ~~his or~~
~~her~~**the individual's** own **name**.

(b) Make a false statement in a certificate on a qualifying
 petition.

(c) If not a circulator, sign a qualifying petition as a
 circulator.



1 (d) Sign a name as circulator other than ~~his or her~~ **the**
2 **individual's** own **name**.

3 (5) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (6), an
4 individual who violates subsection (4) is guilty of a misdemeanor
5 punishable by a fine of not more than \$500.00, ~~or~~ imprisonment for
6 not more than 93 days, or both.

7 (6) An individual shall not sign a qualifying petition with
8 multiple names. An individual who violates this subsection is
9 guilty of a felony.

10 (7) If an individual signs a qualifying petition in violation
11 of this section, any signature by that individual on the petition
12 is invalid and must not be counted.

13 **(8) If a qualifying petition for a candidate without political**
14 **party affiliation contains the signature of the same elector 2 or**
15 **more times, only the first valid signature of that elector shall be**
16 **counted.**

17 Sec. 685. (1) The name of a candidate of a new political party
18 must not be printed ~~upon~~ **on** the official ballots of an election
19 unless the chairperson and secretary of the state central committee
20 of the party files with the secretary of state, not later than 4
21 p.m. of the one hundred-tenth day before the general November
22 election, a certificate signed by the chairperson and secretary of
23 the state central committee bearing the name of the party, together
24 with petitions bearing the signatures of registered and qualified
25 electors equal to not less than 1% of the total number of votes
26 cast for all candidates for governor at the last election in which
27 a governor was elected. The petitions must be signed by at least
28 100 registered electors in each of at least 1/2 of the
29 congressional districts of this state. All signatures on the



petitions must be obtained not more than 180 days immediately before the date of filing.

(2) After the date on which a petition is filed, the secretary of state shall not accept additional petition sheets for that petition. The validity and authenticity of the signatures may be determined in the same manner as provided for initiative and referendum petitions in section 9 of article II of the state constitution of 1963. An official declaration of the sufficiency or insufficiency of a petition filed under this section must be made by the board of state canvassers not later than 60 days before the general November election.

(3) The petitions must be in substantially the following form:

PETITION TO FORM NEW POLITICAL PARTY

We, the undersigned, duly registered electors of the city, township of county of

~~(strike one)~~

state of Michigan, residing at the places set opposite our names, respectfully request the secretary of state, in accordance with section 685 of the Michigan election law, 1954 PA 116, MCL 168.685, to place the names of the candidates of the party on the ballot at the election.

Warning: ~~A person~~ **An individual** who knowingly signs petitions to organize more than 1 new state political party, ~~signs a petition to organize a new state political party more than once,~~ or signs a name other than ~~his or her~~ **the individual's** own **name** is violating the provisions of the Michigan election law.

.....
.....



1
2

3 (4) The balance of the petition form must be substantially as
4 set forth in section 544c. The size of all organizing petitions
5 must be 8-1/2 inches by 13 inches and must be printed in the
6 following type sizes: The words "petition to form new political
7 party" and the name of the proposed political party must be in 24-
8 point boldface type; the word "warning" and the language contained
9 in the warning must be in 12-point boldface type.

10 (5) Petitions circulated under this section may be circulated
11 on a countywide basis. A petition that is circulated countywide
12 must be on a form prescribed by the secretary of state.

13 (6) If the principal candidate of a political party receives a
14 vote equal to less than 1% of the total number of votes cast for
15 the successful candidate for the office of secretary of state at
16 the last preceding general November election in which a secretary
17 of state was elected, that political party shall not have the name
18 of any candidate printed on the ballots at the next ensuing general
19 November election, and a column must not be provided on the ballots
20 for that party. A disqualified party may again qualify and have the
21 names of ~~its~~**that party's** candidates printed in a separate party
22 column on each election ballot in the manner set forth in
23 subsection (1) for the qualification of new parties. As used in
24 this subsection, "principal candidate of a political party" means
25 the candidate who receives the greatest number of votes of all
26 candidates of that political party for that election.

27 (7) A political party that complied with this section is
28 subject to section 686a in order to have the name of that party and
29 ~~its~~**that party's** candidates appear on the general election ballot.

(8) An individual shall not knowingly sign a petition to



1 organize more than 1 new state political party. ~~or sign a petition~~
 2 ~~to organize a new state political party more than once.~~ An
 3 individual who violates this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor.

4 (9) An individual shall not do any of the following:

5 (a) Sign a petition to form a new political party with a name
 6 other than ~~his or her~~ **the individual's** own **name**.

7 (b) Make a false statement in a certificate on a petition to
 8 form a new political party.

9 (c) If not a circulator, sign a petition to form a new
 10 political party as a circulator.

11 (d) Sign a name as circulator other than ~~his or her~~ **the**
 12 **individual's** own **name**.

13 (10) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (11), an
 14 individual who violates subsection (9) is guilty of a misdemeanor
 15 punishable by a fine of not more than \$500.00, ~~or~~ imprisonment for
 16 not more than 93 days, or both.

17 (11) An individual shall not sign a petition to form a new
 18 political party with multiple names. An individual who violates
 19 this subsection is guilty of a felony.

20 (12) If an individual signs a petition to form a new political
 21 party in violation of this section, any signature by that
 22 individual on the petition is invalid and must not be counted.

23 **(13) If a petition to form a new state political party**
 24 **contains the signature of the same elector 2 or more times, only**
 25 **the first valid signature of that elector shall be counted.**

26 Sec. 957. (1) ~~A person~~ **An individual** circulating a recall
 27 petition ~~shall~~ **must** state in the certificate of circulator ~~his or~~
 28 ~~her~~ **the individual's** residence address and that ~~he or she~~ **the**
 29 **individual** is 18 years of age or older and a United States citizen.



1 In addition, the certificate of circulator must indicate all of the
2 following:

3 (a) That signatures appearing ~~upon~~**on** the recall petition were
4 not obtained through fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation. ~~and that~~
5 ~~he or she has neither caused nor permitted a person to sign the~~
6 ~~recall petition more than once and has no knowledge of a person~~
7 ~~signing the recall petition more than once.~~

8 (b) That all signatures to the recall petition were affixed in
9 ~~his or her~~**the individual's** presence.

10 (c) That, to the best of ~~his or her~~**the individual's**
11 knowledge, information, and belief, the signers of the recall
12 petition are qualified and registered electors and the signatures
13 appearing on the recall petition are the genuine signatures of the
14 ~~persons~~**individuals** signing the recall petition.

15 (2) ~~A person~~**An individual** who knowingly makes a false
16 statement in the certificate of circulator is guilty of a
17 misdemeanor.

18 Sec. 958. (1) A **recall** petition sheet ~~shall~~**must** contain only
19 the signatures of qualified and registered electors of the city or
20 township listed in its heading.

21 (2) For recall of a village officer, the **recall** petition ~~shall~~
22 **must** be signed by qualified and registered electors of the village.

23 (3) A qualified and registered elector may sign the **recall**
24 petition sheet in any location at which the **recall** petition sheet
25 is available.

26 (4) A **recall** petition is not invalid if ~~it~~**the recall petition**
27 contains the signature of ~~a person~~**an individual** who is not a
28 qualified and registered elector of the appropriate city, township,
29 or village listed in the heading of that **recall** petition sheet.



1 (5) If a recall petition contains the signature of the same
2 elector 2 or more times, only the first valid signature of that
3 elector shall be counted.

4 Enacting section 1. This amendatory act takes effect January
5 1, 2027.