

**RAISE**



**THE**

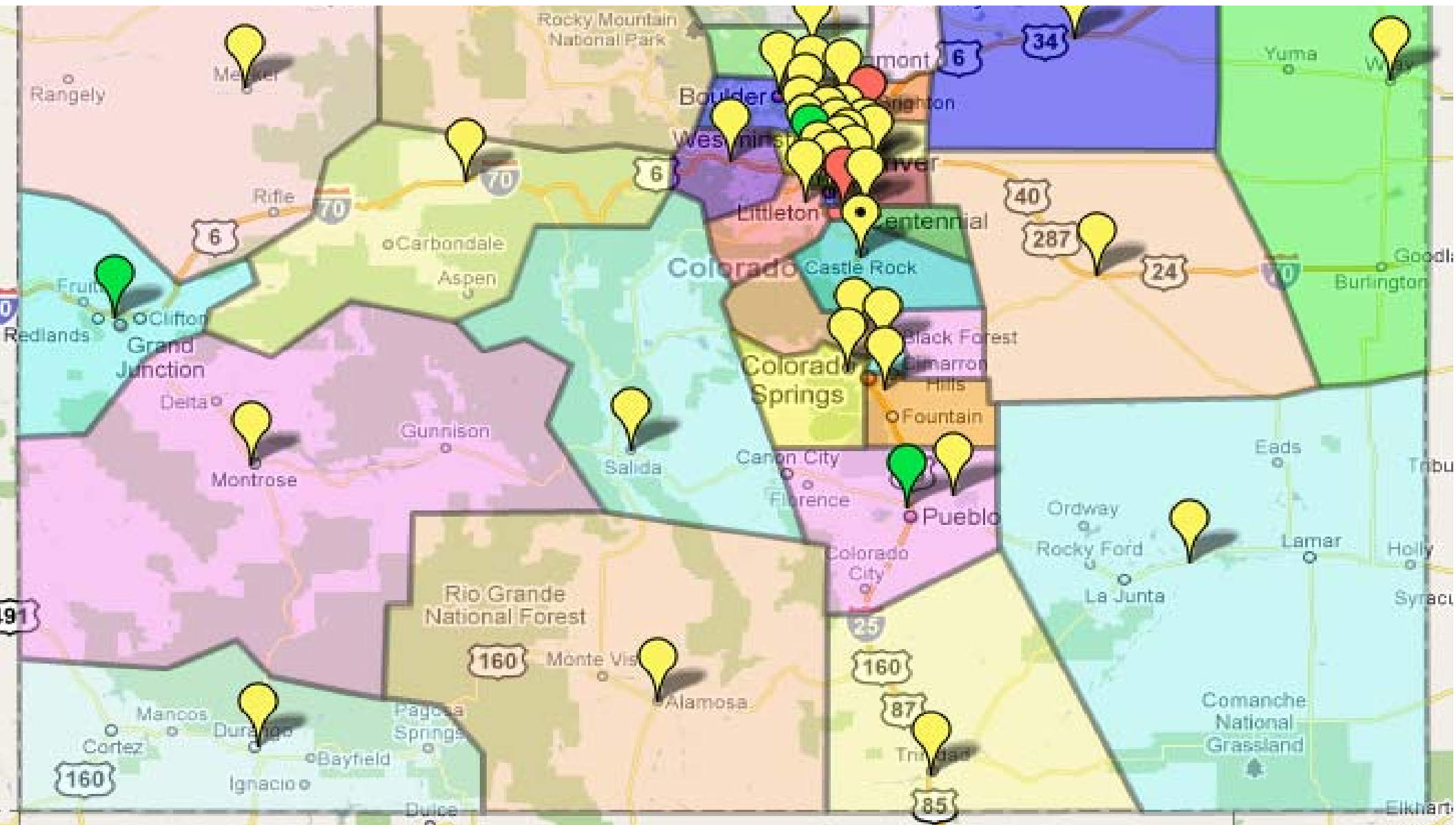
**BAR**



**PROTECT OUR CONSTITUTION**

**Seeking to balance  
protection of our  
constitutional rights  
with equitable access  
for citizen-initiated  
amendments to our  
constitution.**

**Amendment 71 represents a consensus recommendation which grew out of a non-partisan conversation with over 10,000 Coloradoans statewide in 2015.**



# What's the problem?

- 1. Colorado has one of the most easily-amended state constitutions, requiring:**
  - Fewer petition signatures than any state except North Dakota.**
  - No involvement from anyone other than those in the largest city in the process of qualifying constitutional amendments for the ballot.**
  - No more than a simple-majority to amend our constitution.**
  - The same process for amending our constitution as we require for amending state law. (Only Nebraska has this same low bar.)**

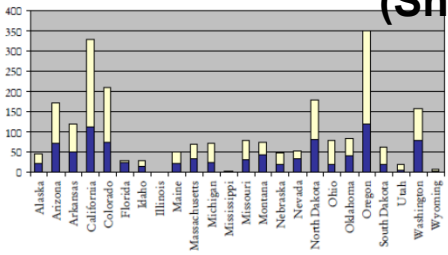
**And because Colorado has one of the most easily-amended state constitutions, we've seen more citizen initiatives on our ballot than any other state except Oregon and California!**

**Our state is used as a political Petri dish by out-of-state special interest groups who are pushing a policy agenda and want to get a foothold in a state constitution.**

...Therefore, we've seen **MORE** citizen initiatives than any state except CA and OR.

Number of Initiatives to Date by State

(Shaded areas of each bar denotes number of measures approved.)



**Colorado**

2

3

1

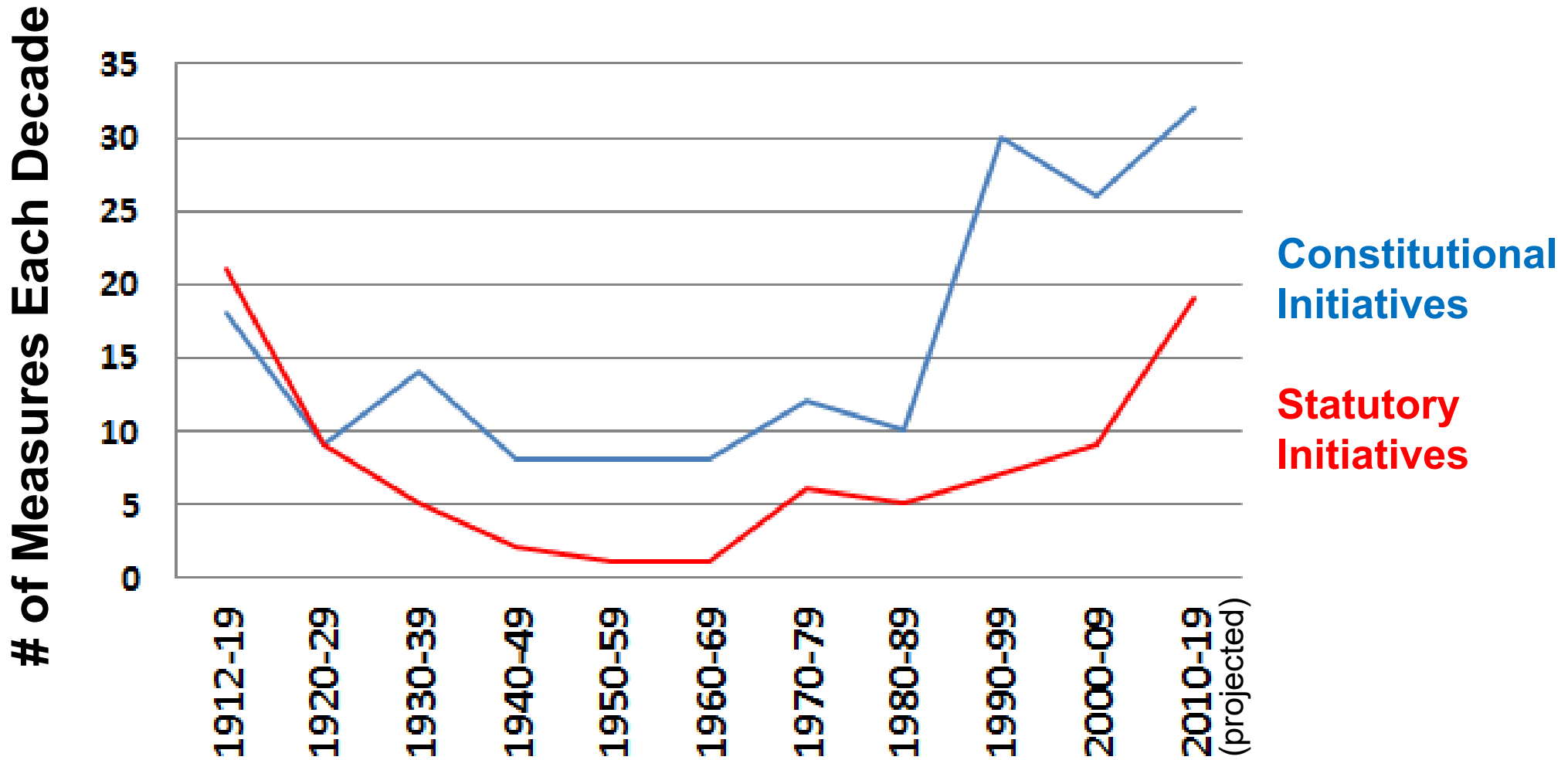
# What's the problem?

2. Every state EXCEPT Colorado and Nebraska require a higher threshold for passing amendments to their CONSTITUTION than they do for passing amendments to their LAWS.

Since it's just as easy for citizens to amend our state CONSTITUTION as it is to amend state LAWS, initiative proponents are incentivized to pursue amendments to our CONSTITUTION rather than state LAWS, and this is creating an increasingly inflexible and conflicted framework for our state.

We've amended our constitution over 150 times, whereas the US constitution has only been amended 27 times ... and it's a hundred years older.

# Colorado's Increasing Initiative Trend



**NOTE: These are NOT cumulative values.**

# What's the problem?

- 3. Because Colorado doesn't require that petition signatures be gathered from anywhere but the largest city, most of Colorado is excluded from the process of deciding on what amendments should be considered to their constitution.**

**We require our citizens in Durango, Grand Junction, Vail and Greeley to pay state taxes and abide by the constitution, but they have no say in deciding what amendments are considered.**

**By contrast, half the states that allow the citizen-initiative process require some form of geographic distribution in their petition signature process.**



# What's the solution?

## **Amendment 71 proposes:**

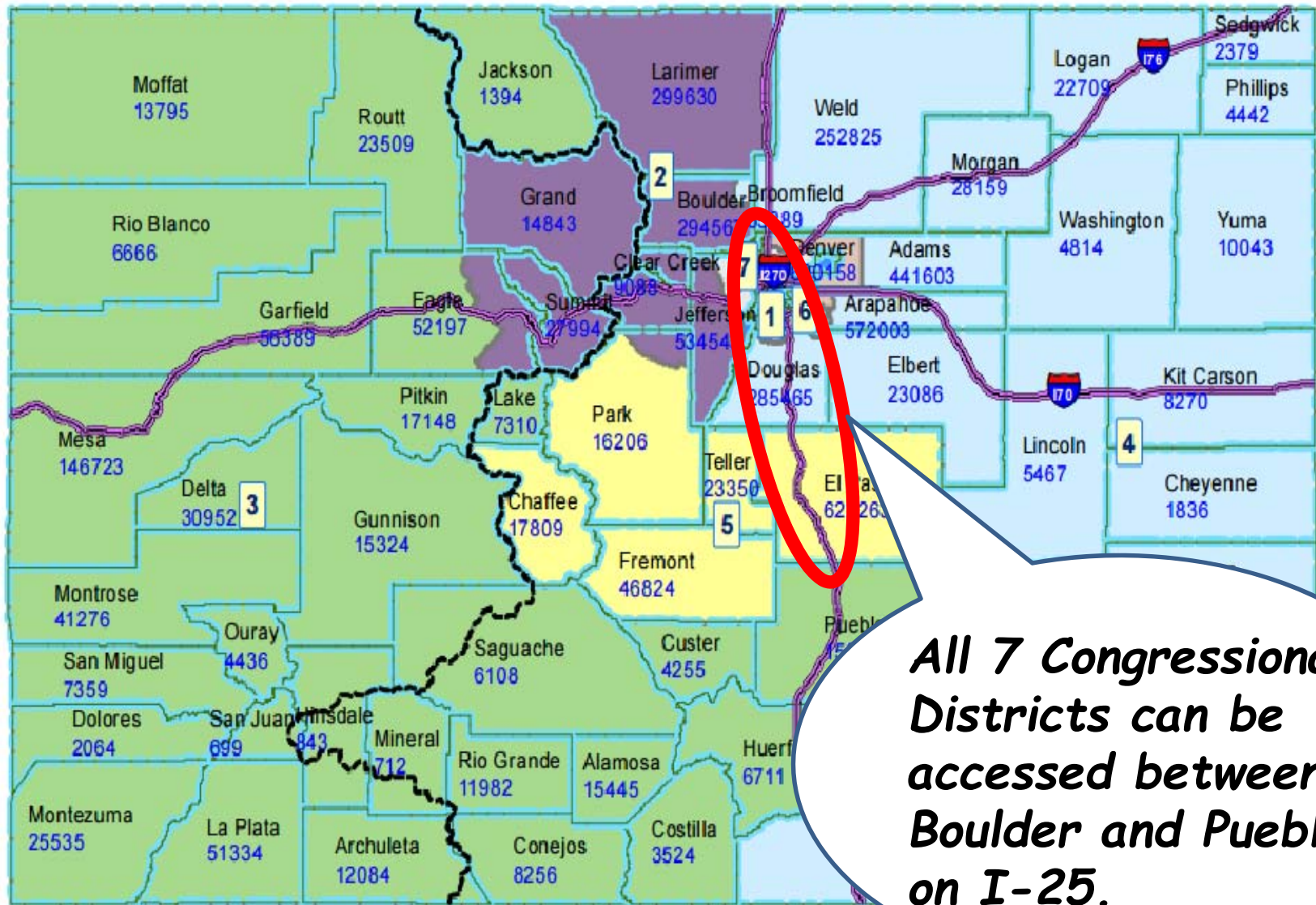
### **1. We should be more inclusive in our signature process.**

- Proponents of future amendments to our constitution should gather signatures from at least 2% of registered voters in each of our 35 State Senate Districts.

### **2. We should require a higher threshold for of adopting amendments to our constitution.**

- Future additions of new language to our constitution should be approved by 55% of voters instead of a simple majority.
  - In order to help allow corrections of current constitutional conflicts, this higher threshold WOULD~~N~~'T apply to proposals to repeal any part of the constitution.
  - Had this higher threshold been in place in the last 25 years, about half of the 20 amendments we've made to our constitution would NOT have passed.

# Why not use the 7 Colorado Congressional Districts?



*All 7 Congressional Districts can be accessed between Boulder and Pueblo on I-25.*



# What does Amendment 71 NOT do?

- **Amendment 71 doesn't increase the number of petition signatures required.**
- **Amendment 71 doesn't change the process for citizen-initiated amendments to state law.**

# **Responses to concerns raised about Amendment 71**

**Q: Won't A71's requirement to collect petition signatures from all 35 State Senate Districts be difficult to accomplish?**

**A: NO. Since 31 of the 35 Senate Districts are within 10 miles of the I-25 corridor between Ft Collins and Pueblo, and A71 still allows over 30% of the total required signatures to be collected in one location, the only additional effort will be to collect some of the signatures in Dillon, Vail, Grand Junction and Durango.**

**To demonstrate how easy it is to meet this requirement, the proponents of Amendment 71 voluntarily applied this same geographic requirement and gathered signatures from all 35 districts in order to qualify this measure.**

# **Responses to concerns raised about Amendment 71**

**Q: Won't A71's requirement to collect petition signatures from all 35 State Senate Districts give an advantage to big-money interests?**

**A: NO. Although out-of-state big money interests do have the advantage in our CURRENT system, Amendment 71's requirement to gather signatures from places like Durango and Grand Junction favors home-grown ballot efforts supported by Coloradoans who already have established relationships in those communities.**

**For example, it will be much easier for Colorado education advocates to get signatures in Durango than it will be for a New Jersey casino company who can't even find Durango on a map!**

# **Responses to concerns raised about Amendment 71**

**Q: Won't A71's requirement to collect petition signatures from all 35 State Senate Districts effectively shut down the citizen initiative process?**

**A: NO. In the first place, Amendment 71's geographic signature requirement ONLY applies to citizen efforts to amend our constitution; the process for citizens to amend state law doesn't change.**

**And, insofar as how this requirement applies to future efforts to amend our constitution, fully HALF the other states which allow the citizen initiative process ALREADY have a similar requirement to collect petition signatures from different geographic areas, and they STILL have multiple citizen initiatives qualifying for their ballots every year.**

# **Responses to concerns raised about Amendment 71**

**Q: Won't A71's requirement for future constitutional amendments to pass by 55% be impossible?**

**A: NO. This higher 55% threshold ONLY applies to proposed amendments to the constitution and NOT to proposed amendments to state law. And it only applies to amendments which propose to ADD language to the constitution.**

**If this same 55% standard had been applied in Colorado over the last 20 years, about half of the amendments which we've adopted to our constitution would have passed anyway.**



# **Responses to concerns raised about Amendment 71**

**Q: Isn't this just an effort by the oil & gas industry?**

**A: NO. Amendment 71 was a consensus recommendation which grew out of a statewide conversation with over 10,000 Coloradans in 2015. Although the oil & gas industry has contributed to the campaign, they were not involved in either the development of this idea in 2015 or our efforts to secure a ballot title for this idea this year. We're proud that we have one of the broadest and most bi-partisan statewide coalitions in Colorado's history in support of Amendment 71, and we welcome the oil & gas industry is a part of that coalition.**

Support for A-71 is statewide, and across the political spectrum, including all 5 living governors.



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