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MISSOURI SENATE  
JEFFERSON CITY

SENATOR JILL CARTER  
DISTRICT 32

August 17, 2023

The Honorable Michael L. Parson  
Governor, State of Missouri  
201 West Capitol Ave., Office 216  
Jefferson City, Missouri, 65101

Dear Governor Parson,

**We, the undersigned Senators, urge you to take immediate action and call an extraordinary session of the legislature; with the goal of proposing an amendment that reforms the standards by which our Missouri Constitution is altered or replaced.**

**We further beseech you to use your powers under Article XII, Section 2(b) and consistent with historical precedent, to place whatever proposed amendment that results from that effort on a special election ballot with no other distracting issues.**

During the first regular session of the 102nd General Assembly, Initiative Petition (IP) Reform was identified as one of the top priorities of the Senate Republican Caucus, and it is still a top priority.

We respect and support the right of the “people of this state” to “regulate the internal government” of our state and to “alter or abolish” our Constitution whenever the people “may deem it necessary to their safety and happiness,” as is stated in Article I, Section 3 of the Missouri Constitution. However, with increasing frequency, moneyed out-of-state interests are using the petition process the people of Missouri have reserved for *themselves* in Article III Section 49 of the Missouri Constitution to change *our* Constitution.

Making matters worse, the current standards for ratification of proposed amendments, or an entirely new constitution, allow for just a few areas of the state to decide the matter without securing broad consensus from across our state.

The challenge before us is to establish a standard that truly protects the power of the people of this state to direct their future and that of their posterity without undue influence from the outside, and do so in a way that protects minority interests from the “tyranny of the majority.”

We are confident that the General Assembly is up to that task, but we need the opportunity to focus on it in ways that only you can provide by calling an extraordinary legislative session.

Last session, there was a debate between protecting our Missouri Constitution by **Concurrent Majority Ratification (CMR)**, or by raising the threshold from a 50 percent simple majority to 54 percent or 60 percent.

However, in every state that IP Reform increasing the percent threshold required to adopt constitutional amendments has been proposed, it has failed. In the last few years, this type of IP Reform has been rejected by voters in Arkansas, twice in South Dakota, and again just last week in Ohio.

Voters seem to be committed to the idea that “majority rules,” so in order to be successful, Missouri’s proposal should not raise the approval percentage, but, instead, should apply the “majority rules” concept to both a statewide popular vote and also geographically.

In addition to meeting the current simple majority threshold, CMR would require amendments to be approved by a majority of voters in more than 50% of the House Legislative Districts, necessitating broad support across all areas of Missouri. Twenty-two county Republican Central Committees adopted resolutions last session to support CMR using State House Districts.

As the Governor of the great state of Missouri, you do not have the unilateral power to protect our Constitution, but the people have entrusted you with the power to give them that opportunity through their representatives’ debate in a *special session* focused on one issue, and through the people’s focused decision at a *special election* called for one single purpose.

Missouri’s past leaders understood the need for voters to focus on one issue when making such serious generational decisions. They placed these grave questions on the following polling dates: Tuesday, June 6, 1865 (new Constitution), Saturday, October 30, 1875 (new Constitution), Tuesday, February 26, 1924 (21 amendments proposed by constitutional convention), Tuesday, February 27, 1945 (new Constitution).

**Therefore, we, the undersigned representatives of the people, respectfully request that you call an extraordinary legislative session for the express purpose of changing the standards by which Missourians either ratify amendments to our Constitution or ratify a totally new constitution proposed by some future constitutional convention.**

**We further request that you commit to following historical precedent by putting any proposal for ratification changes on a special election ballot no earlier than February 2024, and no later than April 2024.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jill Carter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "C".

Senator Jill Carter – District 32



Senator Bill Eigel – District 23



Senator Denny Hoskins – District 21



Senator Andrew Koenig – District 15



Senator Rick Brattin – District 31



Senator Mike Moon – District 29



Senator Nick Schroer – District 2



Senator Ben Brown – District 26