

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

JOINT RESOLUTION

TO APPROVE AND PUBLISH AND SUBMIT TO THE ELECTORS A PROPOSITION OF AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION -- OF SUFFRAGE

Introduced By: Representatives Alzate, Giraldo, Stewart, Voas, Cruz, Potter, Boylan, Batista, Vella-Wilkinson, and Morales

Date Introduced: February 02, 2024

Referred To: House State Government & Elections

(Secretary of State)

1 RESOLVED, That a majority of all members elected to each house of the general  
2 assembly voting therefor, the following amendment to the Constitution of the state be proposed to  
3 the qualified electors of the state in accordance with the provisions of Article XIV of the  
4 Constitution, for their approval, and that it take the place of Article II, Sections 1 and 2, which are  
5 hereby amended, effective January 1, 2025, to read as follows:

6 ARTICLE II

7 OF SUFFRAGE

8 SECTION 1. Persons entitled to vote.

9 Every citizen of the United States of the age of eighteen years or over who ~~has had~~  
10 ~~residence and home in~~ is a resident of this state ~~for thirty days next preceding the time of voting,~~  
11 ~~who has resided thirty days~~ and resides in the town or city from which such citizen desires to  
12 vote, and whose name shall be registered ~~at least thirty days next preceding the time of voting~~ as  
13 provided by law, shall have the right to vote for all offices to be elected and on all questions  
14 submitted to the electors, except that no person who has been lawfully adjudicated to be non  
15 compos mentis shall be permitted to vote. No person who is incarcerated in a correctional facility  
16 upon a felony conviction shall be permitted to vote until such person is discharged from the  
17 facility. Upon discharge, such person's right to vote shall be restored. The general assembly may  
18 provide by law for ~~shorter state and local~~ residence and registration requirements to vote for all  
19 offices to be elected and on all questions submitted to the electors ~~for president and vice president~~

1 ~~of the United States.~~

2 Section 2. Nomination of candidates -- Voter registration -- Absentee voting -- Conduct  
3 of elections -- Residency.

4 The general assembly shall provide by law for the nomination of candidates, but no  
5 person shall be eligible to file a declaration of candidacy who has not been a qualified elector in  
6 Rhode Island for at least thirty (30) days; for a uniform system of permanent registration of  
7 voters; for the exemption from such registration of persons in the active service of the nation and  
8 their families absent from the state because of such service, and, in time of war, members of the  
9 Merchant Marine; for absentee and shut in voting; for the time, manner and place of conducting  
10 elections; for the prevention of abuse, corruption and fraud in voting; and may define by law  
11 residence for voting purposes, but no person shall acquire such residence merely by being  
12 stationed or assigned in this state in the active service of the United States.

13 RESOLVED, That this amendment shall take, in the Constitution of the State, the place  
14 of Section 1 and Section 2 of Article II of the Constitution;

15 It is further

16 RESOLVED, That said proposition of amendment shall be submitted to the electors for  
17 their approval or rejection at the next statewide general election. The voting places in the several  
18 cities and towns shall be kept open during the hours required by law for voting therein for general  
19 officers of the state; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the secretary of state shall cause the said proposition of amendments  
21 to be published as a part of this resolution in the newspapers of the state prior to the date of the  
22 said meetings of the said electors; and the said proposition shall be inserted in the warrants or  
23 notices to be issued previous to said meetings of the electors for the purpose of warning the town,  
24 ward, or district meetings, and said proposition shall be read by the town, ward, or district  
25 meetings to be held as aforesaid; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That the town, ward, and district meetings to be held aforesaid shall be  
27 warned, and the list of voters shall be canvassed and made up, and the said town, ward, and  
28 district meetings shall be conducted in the same manner as now provided by law for the town,  
29 ward, and district meetings for the election of general officers of the state.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
JOINT RESOLUTION  
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AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION -- OF SUFFRAGE

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1           This Joint Resolution would propose to the voters of the state a constitutional amendment  
2   which would remove the thirty (30) day state and local residency requirements, and require that a  
3   voter be registered by, or on election day. It would also provide that no person would be eligible  
4   to file a declaration of candidacy who has not been a qualified elector in Rhode Island for at least  
5   thirty days.

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