
Amendment V
Lower Age Requirement for Members of the State Legislature
(This measure requires at least 55 percent of the vote to pass.)

ANALYSIS

Amendment V proposes amending the Colorado Constitution to:

- ◆ lower the age requirement for serving in the state legislature from 25 to 21.

Summary and Analysis

Requirements for serving in the state legislature. The state constitution requires that a representative or senator in the state legislature be at least 25 years old, be a U.S. citizen, and reside in the district from which he or she is elected for at least 12 months prior to being elected. Amendment V lowers the minimum age requirement to 21.

Comparison of state age requirements. Every state, with the exception of Vermont, has minimum age requirements ranging from 18 to 30 years old for members of the state legislature. In Colorado, an individual must be at least 25 years old to become a state representative or state senator. Forty-three states set the minimum age requirement for state representatives at either 18 or 21. For state senators, about half of the states set the minimum age requirement between 25 and 30, and the other half set it at either age 18 or 21.

*For information on those issue committees that support or oppose the measures on the ballot at the **November 6, 2018**, election, go to the Colorado Secretary of State's elections center web site hyperlink for ballot and initiative information: <http://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/elections/Initiatives/InitiativesHome.html>*

Argument For

- 1) Excluding 21- to 24-year-olds from seeking election to the state legislature is an unnecessary restriction. A 21-year-old is considered an adult under the law. Voters can judge whether a candidate possesses the maturity, ability, and competence to hold political office. In addition, allowing younger candidates to run for office encourages the civic engagement of young people.

Argument Against

- 1) The current age requirement strikes an appropriate balance between youth and experience. Younger candidates may lack the maturity and expertise to be effective legislators. The policy decisions and political pressures that legislators face are best handled by people with more life experience. Lack of experience could hinder a young legislator's ability to represent his or her constituents effectively.

Estimate of Fiscal Impact

This measure has no impact on state or local government revenue or spending.