

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

JOINT RESOLUTION

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

Introduced By: Representatives Alzate, Ajello, Cortvriend, Batista, Cruz, Potter, Stewart, Boylan, Giraldo, and Voas

Date Introduced: February 21, 2023

Referred To: House State Government & Elections

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 by~~
13 or on election day as provided by law, shall have the right to vote for all offices to be elected and
14 on all questions submitted to the electors, except that no person who has been lawfully
15 adjudicated to be non compos mentis shall be permitted to vote. No person who is incarcerated in
16 a correctional facility upon a felony conviction shall be permitted to vote until such person is
17 discharged from the facility. Upon discharge, such person's right to vote shall be restored. ~~The~~
18 ~~general assembly may provide by law for shorter state and local residence requirements to vote~~
19 ~~for electors for president and vice president of the United States.~~

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

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

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

14 It is further

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

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

25 RESOLVED, That the town, ward, and district meetings to be held aforesaid shall be
26 warned, and the list of voters shall be canvassed and made up, and the said town, ward, and
27 district meetings shall be conducted in the same manner as now provided by law for the town,
28 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
TO APPROVE AND PUBLISH AND SUBMIT TO THE ELECTORS A PROPOSITION OF
AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION -- OF SUFFRAGE

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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