

## I&R Historical Timeline

Year	Event
1775	In his proposed 1775 Virginia state constitution, Thomas Jefferson includes a requirement that the constitution must be approved by the voters in a statewide referendum before it can take effect. Unfortunately, because he was hundred of miles from Virginia at the time attending the Continental Congress, delegates to the Virginia Convention did not receive the proposal until after the convention was already over.
1776	Georgia delegates gather in Savannah to draft their state's constitution. The constitution includes a provision that would allow amendments whenever a majority of voters in each county signed petitions calling for a convention, but the provision is never invoked.
1778	Massachusetts becomes the first state to hold a statewide legislative referendum to adopt its constitution. The voters reject it by a five-to-one margin, forcing the legislature to rewrite its proposal.
1792	New Hampshire becomes the second state to hold a statewide legislative referendum to adopt its constitution.
1830	Voters in Virginia demand the power to veto amendments to their state constitution and are given it.
1834	Alabama, Connecticut, Georgia, Maine, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, and Rhode Island adopt provisions preventing their state constitutions from being amended without the approval of the voters.
1848	The 1848 Swiss Constitution includes provisions for initiative and popular referendum.
1857	Congress requires that voters must approve all state constitutions proposed after 1857.
1885	Father Robert Haire, a priest and labor activist from Aberdeen, South Dakota, and Benjamin Urner, a newspaper publisher from New Jersey become the first Americans to propose giving the people statewide initiative and popular referendum power.
1897	Nebraska becomes the first state to allow its cities to use initiative and popular referendum.
1897	South Dakota becomes the first state to adopt statewide initiative and popular referendum.
1900	Utah becomes the second state to adopt statewide initiative and popular referendum.
1901	The Illinois legislature creates a statewide non-binding advisory initiative process.

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1902	Oregon becomes the third state to adopt statewide initiative and popular referendum. In Illinois, using a statewide non-binding advisory initiative process, citizens place an advisory question on the ballot asking whether or not Illinois should adopt a real initiative and referendum process – voters say yes, but the legislature ignores them.
1904	Oregon is the first state to place a statewide initiative on the ballot. In Missouri, voters defeat a measure that would have established statewide initiative and popular referendum.
1905	Nevada adopts statewide popular referendum only.
1906	Montana adopts statewide initiative and popular referendum. Delaware voters approve an advisory referendum put on the ballot by the state legislature, asking whether they want the initiative process -- but the legislature ignores the mandate.
1907	Oklahoma becomes the first state to provide for statewide initiative and popular referendum in its original constitution.
1908	Michigan and Maine adopt statewide initiative and popular referendum. Unfortunately, Michigan's initiative procedures are so difficult that, under them, citizens are unable to place a single initiative on the ballot. Missouri adopts statewide initiative and popular referendum.
1910	Arkansas and Colorado adopt statewide initiative and popular referendum. Kentucky adopts statewide popular referendum. Illinois voters again approve a citizen-initiated non-binding advisory question in support of statewide initiative and popular referendum – and the legislature again ignores them.
1911	Arizona and California adopt statewide initiative and popular referendum. New Mexico adopts only statewide popular referendum.
1912	Idaho, Nebraska, Ohio and Washington adopt statewide initiative and popular referendum. Nevada adopts a statewide initiative process, complementing its statewide popular referendum process adopted in 1905. A majority of Wyoming voters voting on a constitutional amendment to adopt statewide initiative and popular referendum approve the amendment; but Wyoming's constitution requires that all amendments also receive a majority vote of all voters voting in the election, regardless of whether or not they vote on the actual amendment itself – so the measure fails. A majority of Mississippi voters voting on a constitutional amendment to adopt statewide initiative and popular referendum also approve the amendment; but, like Wyoming, a constitutional requirement that all amendments also receive a majority vote of all voters voting in the election, defeats the measure.
1913	Michigan initiative and popular referendum supporters lobby the legislature to pass amendments simplifying its statewide initiative and popular referendum process, a process so difficult that it is unusable. The legislature passes the amendments and voters approve them.

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1914	Mississippi and North Dakota adopt statewide initiative and popular referendum. Wisconsin and Texas voters defeat measures creating a statewide initiative and popular referendum process. A majority of Minnesota voters voting on a constitutional amendment to adopt statewide initiative and popular referendum approve the amendment; but Minnesota's constitution requires that all amendments also receive a majority vote of all voters voting in the election, regardless of whether or not they vote on the actual amendment itself – so the measure fails.
1915	Maryland adopts the popular referendum process.
1916	A majority of Minnesota voters voting on a constitutional amendment to adopt statewide initiative and popular referendum again approve the amendment; but the Minnesota constitution's requirement that all amendments also receive a majority vote of all voters voting in the election, regardless of whether or not they vote on the actual amendment itself – again dooms the measure.
1918	Massachusetts adopts statewide initiative and popular referendum. North Dakotans vote and approve a more lenient initiative process. The amendment passed by the North Dakota legislature and adopted by the voters in 1914 had such strict procedures that no initiatives qualified for the ballot in the following election, so initiative proponents put an initiative on the 1918 ballot to ease the procedures.
1922	Mississippi Supreme Court overturns Mississippi's initiative and popular referendum process.
1956	Alaska adopts statewide initiative and popular referendum as part of its new constitution.
1968	Wyoming adopts statewide initiative and popular referendum.
1970	Illinois adopts a very limited initiative process.
1972	Florida adopts statewide initiative.
1977	<b>Hardie v. Eu</b> is decided by the California Supreme Court that finds unconstitutional the Political Reform Act's cap on expenditures for qualifying ballot measures since it violates the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The District of Columbia adopts initiative and popular referendum. The U.S. Supreme Court rules in <b>First National Bank of Boston v. Bellotti</b> that state laws prohibiting or limiting corporate contributions or spending in initiative campaigns violates the First and Fourteenth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution.

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1980	For the third time, a majority of Minnesota voters voting on a constitutional amendment to adopt statewide initiative and popular referendum approve the measure; but for the third time the Minnesota constitution's requirement that all amendments also receive a majority vote of all voters voting in the election, regardless of whether or not they vote on the actual amendment itself dooms the measure. The U.S. Supreme Court rules in <b>Pruneyard Shopping Center v. Robins</b> that state constitutional provisions that permit political activity at a privately- owned shopping center does not violate federal constitutional private property rights of owner.
1981	The U.S. Supreme Court rules in <b>Citizens Against Rent Control v. Berkeley</b> that a California city's ordinance to impose a limit on contributions to committees formed to support or oppose ballot measures violates the First Amendment.
1986	Rhode Island voters defeat a measure establishing statewide initiative and popular referendum.
1988	The U.S. Supreme Court rules in <b>Meyer v. Grant</b> that states cannot prohibit paid signature gathering, saying that initiative petitions are protected political speech.
1992	Mississippi adopts statewide initiative for the second time.
1996	Rhode Island voters approve a non-binding advisory question put on the ballot by the legislature asking if they would like to have a statewide initiative and popular referendum process – but the legislature ignores them.
1998	The Initiative & Referendum Institute is formed to study and defend the I&R process on the 100 year anniversary of the adoption of statewide initiative and popular referendum process in the United States.
1999	The Minnesota House of Representatives approves a constitutional amendment that would establish the initiative and popular referendum process; the Senate voted against it. The U.S. Supreme Court declares in <b>Buckley v. American Constitutional Law Foundation</b> that, among other things, states cannot require that petition circulators be registered voters.
2000	The Initiative & Referendum Institute files suit against the U.S. Postal Service's prohibition on collecting signatures on postal property. The voters of Oregon reject the state legislatures attempt to increase the number of signatures for initiatives.
2001	The Oklahoma legislature passes legislation requiring that animal protection initiatives must gather more signatures than any other type of initiatives. The Montana legislature passed legislation that would increase the distribution requirement for initiative petitions.
2002	The Federal District Court for Idaho invalidates Idaho's draconian distribution requirement for initiative petitions. The Minnesota House of Representatives pass an I&R amendment. The New York Senate passes an I&R amendment.