

Letter to the Editor: Protect your rights

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Missouri legislators are hard at work trying to pass bills to take away citizens' rights.

At the end of March, the Missouri House Elections and Elected Officials Committee heard multiple bills to make it harder for citizens to use the initiative petition process to make change.

If you supported Amendment 1 last fall [to clean up Missouri politics in limiting campaign contributions, in limiting lobbyist gifts, in fairer redistricting and in more government transparency] and if you hope that Missouri might be able to expand Medicaid through a ballot initiative, you are the target of these bills.

What are these bills? Bills such as HB 1055, HB 290, HJR 45, HJR 25, HJR 6, HJR 7, HJR 10, HJR 11, and HR 50 would do one or more of the following things: 1) Impose fees on citizens wishing to file or qualify an initiative petition process; 2) Make it harder for citizens to qualify constitutional amendments for the ballot; and/or 3) Make it harder for Missourians to pass constitutional amendments on Election Day.

For example: One of the bills proposes that 50% of all eligible voters have to vote for any petition for it to pass. I think only 30% of eligible voters vote in any election. So no petition could ever be passed.

It's urgent that we stop these bills from becoming law. Contact your state representative now.

Ed Shew

