



Legislation Text

File #: 2198-2022, Version: 1

This ordinance provides for the submission to the electors of the city of Columbus the question of amending the Charter of the City of Columbus, as relates to the initiative process. These amendments are based on the recommendations of the 2022 Columbus Charter Review Commission.

On July 6, 2022, the Charter Review Commission, appointed by Mayor Andrew J. Ginther and Council President Shannon Hardin, adopted five (5) comprehensive recommendations. A report summarizing those recommendations was submitted to Council on July 9, 2022 and is attached to this ordinance.

Based on council's consideration of the commission's recommendations, council proposes a ballot question regarding the initiative process. Proposed Charter Amendment No. 1, Initiative Process, addresses the following:

- Ban on initiatives that create a monopoly, oligopoly, or cartel; or otherwise confer a special privilege that is not available to similarly situated persons or nonpublic entities
- Ban on initiatives that authorize the City to become a stockholder in any joint stock company, corporation, or association; or interact with such in violation of Article VIII, Sec. 6 of the Ohio Constitution
- Should initiative petitions that violate either of these bans be found legally sufficient by city council, council would be required to pass ordinances to place two issues on the ballot: the first asks voters if the committee should be allowed to initiate the ordinance or charter amendment in violation of the Charter; the second would be the initiative ordinance or charter amendment itself
- Requires that any initiative petition submitted in violation of either ban include the names and addresses of all who would stand to gain commercial benefit from the initiative, and an estimate of how much public money they would likely receive in the three years following passage
- Lengthens the period that a petition committee may gather signatures from one (1) year to two (2) years
- Provides an additional ten (10) days during which a petition committee may collect more signatures, should the petition be found by the Board of Elections to lack the required number of valid signatures

To submit to the electors of the city of Columbus at a special election to be held concurrently with the regular general election on November 8, 2022, the question of amending the Charter of the City of Columbus, such question to be known as "Proposed Charter Amendment No. 1, Initiative Process"; and to declare an emergency.

WHEREAS, on January 10, 2022, Council President Shannon Hardin and Mayor Andrew J. Ginther appointed a five-

member Charter Review Commission to conduct a review of the city's charter; and

WHEREAS, the highly regarded community leaders who served on the commission held eleven public working meetings, solicited public comment via two public hearings, an online portal, and a dedicated email address, and, based on such deliberations, submitted recommendations to the mayor and council president on July 9, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the Charter Review Commission made five comprehensive recommendations, all of which necessitate changes to the charter; and

WHEREAS, this council finds that the residents of Columbus will be well-served by proposed charter amendments detailing the city's initiative process; and

WHEREAS, An emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the various departments of the city, in that it is immediately necessary to authorize submission of Proposed Charter Amendment No. 1, Initiative Process to the electors to assure timely filing with the boards of elections for placement on the November 8, 2022 ballot, thereby preserving the public health, peace, property, safety and welfare; **NOW, THEREFORE**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

SECTION 1. The city council hereby finds that a regular municipal election will not be held in 2022. Therefore, pursuant to City Charter Section 45-2, a special election is hereby called to place the question hereinafter set forth on the November 8, 2022 ballot at a special election to be held concurrently with the general election, a date not less than 60 nor more than 120 days from passage of this ordinance.

SECTION 2. That there be submitted to the electors of the city of Columbus the question of amending the Charter of the City of Columbus, such question and proposed amendments being set forth as an attachment (FINAL PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER Initiative Process) hereto and hereby made a part hereof.

SECTION 3. That the question submitted in Section 2 be and hereby is known as "Proposed Charter Amendment No. 1, Initiative Process."

SECTION 4. That the city clerk is directed to forthwith serve a certified copy of this ordinance upon the boards of elections of Franklin County, Delaware County, and Fairfield County, Ohio.

SECTION 5. That the boards of elections of Franklin County, Delaware County, and Fairfield County, Ohio be and hereby are requested to place the question, "Proposed Charter Amendment No. 1, Initiative Process" upon the ballot to be submitted to the electors as provided for and upon the date set forth herein.

SECTION 6. That for the reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after passage and approval by the Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor does not approve the same.