

Initiative 2023-24 # 286
Limit Length of Legislative Session

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Be it Enacted by the People of the State of Colorado:

Section 1. Declaration.

We, the voters of the state of Colorado, hereby find and declare that:

The Colorado Legislature currently meets full-time for 120 days each year from January to May, so an elected representative must be able to commit 240 days every two years to public service; and

Thirty-nine states limit the session length of their Legislative bodies and thirty states have specific limits on the number of days a Legislature can meet in a two-year election cycle. The average limit is 126 days over two years making Colorado's 240 days nearly double the average of all the other states; and

Long sessions are a barrier to working Coloradans who want to serve in the Legislature. This narrows the kind of people who can serve and puts special interests in charge of the government, controlling an agenda that is out of touch with a majority of Colorado's voters; and

The outcome of special interest control are government policies that increase the cost of housing, energy and food, increase property taxes, make it harder for small businesses to survive, and increasingly restrict Coloradans right to choose how to live their lives; and

The current Legislature has now passed a law exempting themselves from Colorado's Open Meetings Law that allows them to conduct much of their business behind closed doors without public notice or participation;

THEREFOR, shorter sessions will promote better public engagement, involve people from more diverse backgrounds in the political process, and enable citizen legislators to serve who have careers outside of politics. Shorter sessions will lead to better representation in the Legislature, which will ensure the public interest is prioritized over special interests.

Section 2. In the constitution of the state of Colorado, **amend** Section 7 of Article V as follows:

Section 7. GENERAL ASSEMBLY - SHALL MEET WHEN - TERM OF MEMBERS – COMMITTEES

The general assembly shall meet in regular session at 10 a.m. no later than the second Wednesday of January of each year. The general assembly shall meet at other times when convened in special session by the governor pursuant to section 9 of article IV of this constitution or by written request by two-thirds of the members of each house to the presiding officer of each house to consider only those subjects specified in such request. The term of service of the members of the general assembly shall begin on the convening of the first regular session of the general assembly next after their election. The committees of the general assembly, unless otherwise provided by the general assembly, shall expire on the convening of

the first regular session after a general election. Regular sessions of the general assembly shall not exceed ~~one hundred twenty~~ SIXTY calendar days IN ODD YEARS AND THIRTY CALENDAR DAYS IN EVEN YEARS.

Section 3. In the constitution of the state of Colorado, **amend** Section 19 of Article V as follows:

Section 19. WHEN LAWS TAKE EFFECT - INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

An act of the general assembly shall take effect on the date stated in the act, or, if no date is stated in the act, then on its passage. IN LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS TAKING PLACE IN ODD YEARS, A BILL MAY ONLY BE INTRODUCED IF IT CONCERNS REVENUE, APPROPRIATIONS, OR THE BUDGET. A bill may be introduced at any time during the session unless limited by action of the general assembly. No bill shall be introduced by title only.