

**RULES AND REGULATIONS ADOPTED  
BY THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
REGARDING THE PLACEMENT OF LOCAL REFERENDA/QUESTIONS  
ON ELECTION BALLOTS**

*The Secretary of State has promulgated the within rules and regulations relative to local referenda pursuant to and in accordance with the provisions of section 17-19-7 of the Rhode Island General Laws of 1956, as amended.*

*Said rules and regulations are established pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act (R.I.G.L. Section 42-35-1, et al.) and available for public inspection, submissions or requests at the Office of the Secretary of State, Administrative and Legislative Records Division, State House, Room 43, Providence, Rhode Island.*

1. **Procedure for submission of local questions for inclusion on the ballot.**

- a) Each and every local question for entry upon the ballot for submission to the electorate shall be provided to the Office of the Secretary of State, Elections Division, 100 North Main Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903 in accordance with the time and manner constraints established by R.I.G.L. section 17-19-7 and these Rules and Regulations.
- b) All questions shall be submitted to the Office of the Secretary of State by the local board of each city or town on the form prescribed by the Office of the Secretary of State. A sample of the certification form is contained in Appendix A which is attached and incorporated by reference to these Rules and Regulations.
- c) Each local question shall be certified to the Office of the Secretary of State by the local board on said prescribed form and shall contain the signatures of the members of the local board of canvassers indicating that the question has been duly authorized for entry upon the ballot.

2. **Format for local questions.**

- a) Each and every local question shall be submitted to the secretary of state by the local board of each city or town in the following form:

- 1) Descriptive Heading. The descriptive heading shall be a brief caption of the question including the purpose of the question and the dollar amount, if applicable. The heading should be limited to 12 words and a dollar amount, if applicable.
- 2) Authorization. The authorization shall be a line containing the cite to the authority for the question to appear on the ballot.
- 3) Text of the question. The text of the question shall be the exact language of the referenda/question that shall appear on the ballot.

3. **Final form of question required.**

- a) All local questions submitted for entry upon the ballot shall be presented by the local boards to the Office of the Secretary of State in final form and contain the descriptive heading, authorization and text of the question which shall appear upon the ballot for presentation to the electorate.
- b) Sample questions are contained in Appendix B which is attached and incorporated by reference to these Rules and Regulations.

4. **Alterations or modifications to questions after submission.**

- a) No alterations or modifications shall be made by the Office of the Secretary of State or designees, subsequent to the certification of any question as provided in R.I.G.L. Section 17-19-7 and these Rules and Regulations.

5. **Time periods and constraints.**

- a) In accordance with R.I.G.L. Section 17-19-7, the local board of each city or town shall certify a copy of each question to be submitted to the electors of the city or town as follows:
  - 1) for questions to appear on the ballot for elections to be held on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November in even-numbered years, i.e. on the November general election ballot, the question must be certified in the format described above not later than four o'clock (4:00) p.m. on the ninetieth (90<sup>th</sup>) day preceding the election.
  - 2) for questions to appear on the ballot at any election scheduled at any time other than regularly scheduled November general election, the

question must be certified in the format described above not later than fifty (50) days before the city or town election.

6. **Review by the Office of the Secretary of State.**

- a) The questions submitted shall be reviewed by the Office of the Secretary of State. The review shall be limited to determining that the questions were submitted in the time and manner prescribed by state law and these Rules and Regulations.
- b) The Office of the Secretary of State will not review the legality of the question presented and will not make suggestions for amendments to the language of the question presented.