



<b>November 8, 2016 Election</b>	
<b>Ballot Issue: State</b>	<b>Amendment 71: Raise the Bar</b>
<b>Ballot Language</b>	<p>Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado constitution making it more difficult to amend the Colorado constitution by requiring that any petition for a citizen-initiated constitutional amendment be signed by at least two percent of the registered electors who reside in each state senate district for the amendment to be placed on the ballot and increasing the percentage of votes needed to pass any proposed constitutional amendment from a majority to at least fifty-five percent of the votes cast, unless the proposed constitutional amendment only repeals, in whole or in part, any provision of the constitution?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">_____YES _____NO</p>
<b>Chamber Position</b>	The Chamber is Recommending a YES vote.
<b>The Basics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The "Protect our Constitution" measure seeks to make it harder to amend Colorado's constitution by requiring future constitutional ballot initiative proponents to gather signatures across the state including at least two percent of all registered voters in each of Colorado's 35 state senate districts.</li> <li>• The proposal also requires approval from 55 percent of voters before a constitutional ballot amendment can be added to the constitution.</li> </ul>
<b>Connection to Business</b>	Colorado's Constitution has become somewhat of a jumbled mess...By raising the bar on constitutional changes, backers of the plan hope to encourage citizens to seek statutory changes rather than race straight to the state's foundational underpinnings, resulting in a more business friendly environment.
<b>Arguments for the Proposal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statutes vs Amendments - Constitutions are meant to protect fundamental rights and outline the framework of government. Statutes, on the contrary, are intended to address specific issues with how government functions and how citizens interact with that framework. Over time, laws more appropriately classified as statutes have been tagged on to the end of an ever-growing Constitution. One of the primary reasons for this trend is the relative ease of amending the Constitution.</li> <li>• Confusing and Unsustainable Policies - At times, narrowly focused</li> </ul>

	<p>amendments have created conflicting and unsustainable policies embedded in the Colorado Constitution. Under current law, there is no incentive to make a statutory change as opposed to a Constitutional amendment. Once a proposal has collected the requisite signatures, why not attempt to embed that policy in the Constitution when the requirements are no different than passing a statute? This fact has made the Colorado Constitution a special interest playground over time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special Interests Entering Colorado - Because of the ease of amending the Constitution and subsequently embedding those “amendments” in state law, many special interest groups (often from out of state) abuse the process. According to the Initiative &amp; Referendum Institute, Colorado has seen more citizen initiatives than all but California and Oregon.</li> </ul>
<b>Arguments Against the Proposal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Its already hard for a citizen to place something on the state ballot, this raises an already high bar.</li> <li>• It will cost even more for the state to manage elections and for proponents of issues to place an item on the ballot.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<a href="http://raisethebarco.com/">http://raisethebarco.com/</a>
<b>Where We Stand</b>	<p>CONSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVES: The Chamber is opposed to the over-use of State Constitutional initiatives when the issue can be resolved legislatively. The Chamber supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increasing the signature requirements for a constitutional amendment to be placed on the ballot,</li> <li>• requiring initiative proponents to gain signatures from the entire state such as a percentage requirement from each congressional district or county, and</li> <li>• requiring a super-majority vote for the passage of constitutional amendments.</li> </ul>