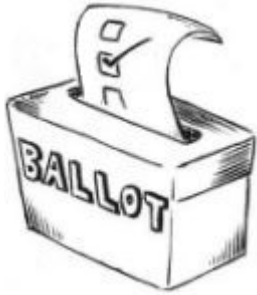


CITIZENS' INITIATED REFERENDUM (CIR)

Initiative and referendum procedures enable people to have a direct say in government. With CIR the community has the right to initiate a vote by petition, and thus have a publicly BINDING REFERENDUM held to repeal an existing law, halt a proposed law, or to introduce new legislation.



Why do we need CIR?

- Liberal-Labor-National governments are power-hungry and have little concern for the will of the people. CIR returns power back to where it belongs - to the voters
- Initiated Referendum encourages greater community participation in government because the referendum vote affects the community directly.
- Debate in parliament is a sham, as legislation is usually passed or failed depending on political party lines.

CIR brings political parties under the people's control.

Initiated referendums in action

In the USA, 23 states have some form of CIR. In California, the people rejected a government move to dispose of waste toxins in the ground. Four US states have voted to bring back the death penalty through referendum. In Florida, the people forced their government to balance the budget by law.

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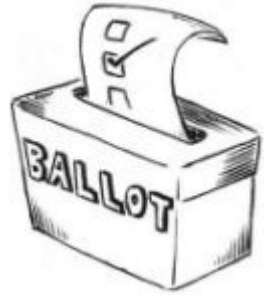
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In Switzerland they have had over 100 years of Citizens' Initiated Referendum. After voting on 300 issues, the Swiss people have approved approximately 50% of issues placed before them. In 1977 the people rejected a value added tax; in 1986 they rejected a proposal to join the United Nations; and in 1984 the people rejected the government's proposal to reduce the working week from 42 hours to 38 hours. Switzerland today is one of the most prosperous places in the world.

How CIR works

- Voters gather signed petitions from 2% of electors, from the majority of electorates.
- The Electoral Office spot-checks the petition, to confirm validity of signatures.
- The proposal is presented to parliament, who may make it law.
- If the politicians reject the law, it goes to a referendum – for the entire people to decide whether to accept it or reject it.
- If the referendum is passed, then the proposed legislation becomes law – binding upon the government. **Democracy prevails.**

CIR is a valuable supplement to existing representative government. The mere existence of CIR gives politicians an incentive to take more notice of public opinion and reduces the chance of bad legislation. It has the power to ensure ordinary people's opinions are taken into account. Australia First presents this policy in the firm belief that voters, though not infallible, are eminently capable of responsible self-government and will make fewer mistakes than the governing elites.

Australia First Party

Read the full text of this leaflet on the internet:

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