

## Initiative, Referendum, and Recall



The majority of the decisions made in today's democracy are indirect, that is we elect someone to represent us in government. However, there is still some form of a direct democracy today when the people vote locally for issues under **Initiative, Referendum, and Recall**.

An **INITIATIVE** is a power reserved to the voters to propose legislation, by petition, that would enact, amend or repeal a City Charter or Code provision.

An initiative is the first in a series of actions. Initiative can also mean a personal quality that shows a willingness to get things done and take responsibility, therefore, an initiative is the start of something, with the hope that it will continue. Government and business start initiatives all the time.

The people reserve to themselves the power to propose laws and to enact and reject laws, called the initiative, and the power to approve or reject laws enacted by the legislature, called the referendum. The power of initiative extends only to laws which the legislature may enact under this constitution.

The first step in the process of qualifying an initiative measure is to write the text of the proposed law. Proponent(s) may seek the assistance of their own private counsel to help draft the text of the proposed law, or they may choose to write the text themselves.

If 5 to 15% of all voters sign a petition proposing a new law, that law must appear on the ballot to be approved or rejected by direct popular vote.

A **REFERENDUM** (PL: referendums or referenda) is a direct vote by the electorate on a proposal, law, or political issue. This is in contrast to an issue being voted on by a representative.

If 5 to 15% of all voters sign a petition requesting it, a recently passed law must be placed on the ballot so voters can either approve or veto it.

The referendum allows citizens, through the petition process, to refer acts of the Legislature to the ballot before they become law. The referendum also permits the Legislature itself to refer proposed legislation to the electorate for approval or rejection.

A referendum usually asks a question or questions to which all eligible electors must vote either 'yes' or 'no'. For electors, referendums are very similar to elections. On polling day, electors go to a polling place and cast their vote on a ballot paper.

**RECALL** is a power reserved to the voters that allows the voters, by petition, to demand the removal of an elected official. Voters have the power to vote an elected official out of office before his or her term ends.

A recall election (also called a recall referendum, recall petition or representative recall) is a procedure by which, in certain polities, voters can remove an elected official from office through a referendum before that official's term of office has ended.

**PROPOSITIONS:** Ballot measures or ballot propositions are proposals to enact new laws or constitutional amendments or repeal existing laws or constitutional amendments that are placed on the ballot for approval or rejection by the electorate.

### How are they different?

- **Recall**
  - Provides the general public with a mechanism to remove elected officials from office prior to the end of their term
- **Veto Referendum**
  - Provides the general public with a mechanism to challenge legislative actions
- **Voter Initiative**
  - Provides the general public with a mechanism to get around legislatures that refuse to take action desired by a majority of the voters



# 2019 BOND REFERENDUM

November 5th

**School District Question 1**  
**Approval of School Building Bonds**  
**Elementary/Middle Schools; Auditoriums; Security**

- YES**    Shall the board of Independent School District No. 535 (Rochester), Minnesota be authorized to issue general obligation school building bonds in an amount not to exceed \$171,400,000 for acquisition and betterment of school sites and facilities, including reconstruction of Bishop and Longfellow elementary schools, construction of a new elementary school and a new middle school, security upgrades at all school buildings, auditorium upgrades at all three high schools, and land acquisition?
- NO**

**BY VOTING "YES" ON THIS BALLOT QUESTION, YOU ARE VOTING FOR A PROPERTY TAX INCREASE**

**School District Question 2**  
**Approval of School Building Bonds**  
**Swimming Pool Construction and Upgrades**

- YES**    If School District Question 1 is approved, shall the board of Independent School District No. 535 (Rochester), Minnesota be authorized to issue general obligation school building bonds in an amount not to exceed \$9,500,000 for acquisition and betterment of school sites and facilities, including the construction of a swimming pool at Century High School and upgrades to the existing swimming pool at Mayo High School?
- NO**

**Referendum on the United Kingdom's membership of the European Union**

Vote only once by putting a cross  in the box next to your choice

Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?

Remain a member of the European Union

Leave the European Union

Environmental Bond Act (EBA) <https://bit.ly/EBAAct>

Another useful site to see important documents is: [www.nassaucountyny.gov](http://www.nassaucountyny.gov)

