

Pro-Abortion Initiative Petitions in Missouri in 2024

(Prepared by Samuel H. Lee, Campaign Life Missouri, on 3/8/2024. Contact: samuelhlee@mindspring.com)

- **The Words of Pope St. John Paul II Are as True and Demanding Today as They Were 25 Years Ago When He Visited St. Louis.**
 - “There are times of trial, tests of national character, in the history of every country. America has not been immune to them. One such time of trial is closely connected with St. Louis. Here, the famous Dred Scott case was heard. . . . America faces a similar time of trial today. Today, the conflict is between a culture that affirms, cherishes, and celebrates the gift of life, and a culture that seeks to declare entire groups of human beings – the unborn, the terminally ill, the handicapped, and others considered “unuseful” – to be outside the boundaries of legal protection.” – [The Holy Father’s Address on Jan. 26, 1999, at his arrival](#)
 - “The new evangelization calls for followers of Christ who are unconditionally pro-life: who will proclaim, celebrate and serve the Gospel of life in every situation.” – [Pope St. John Paul II’s Homily during the Eucharistic Celebration, Jan. 27, 1999](#)
 - Something that is done **unconditionally** is done or given freely, without anything being required in return. To do something **unconditionally** means there are no conditions, requirements or stipulations at all.
 - Each of us individually – as well as in our families, parishes and larger groups – must ask ourselves:

During this time of trial, during this test of character, how will I serve the Gospel of Life by serving mothers and their unborn babies, so that they are not thrown outside the boundaries of legal protection through the passage of a pro-abortion state constitutional amendment?
- **Pro-Abortion Groups Announced on Jan 18, 2024, That They Have Chosen One of 11 Initiative Petitions to Attempt to Put On the Ballot for the Nov. 5 General Election.**
 - [Missourians for Constitutional Freedom](#) – a pro-abortion group [supported by Abortion Action Missouri, the ACLU of Missouri and Planned Parenthood affiliates in Kansas City and St. Louis](#) – announced on January 18 that they are getting behind [one of 11 initiative petitions](#) the group had filed in March 2023.
 - MCF and its supporters have chosen initiative petition [2024-086](#), which would allow abortions in Missouri up until the unborn child is viable but states that the “general assembly may enact laws that regulate the provision of abortion after Fetal Viability”.
 - Note that the legislature would only have permission to “regulate” – **but not “restrict,” “prohibit,” “outlaw,” etc., abortions of unborn babies.** “Regulate” after viability might mean that the abortion can only be performed or induced by a physician. But before viability, abortions could be legally performed or induced without “discriminat[ing] against persons providing . . . reproductive health care” (subsection 6).
 - But as a practical matter, the initiative petition would effectively allow abortions until birth because:

[U]nder no circumstance shall the Government deny, interfere with, delay, or otherwise restrict an abortion that in the good faith judgment of a treating **health care professional** is needed to protect the life or physical or **mental health** of the **pregnant person**. (Subsection 4)
 - Thus any “treating health care professional” (not just a physician) could determine in a “pregnant person[’s]” seventh, eighth or ninth month that an abortion is needed for “mental health” reasons. The [World Health Organization says “mental health”](#) is “a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community.”

- **Pro-Abortion Initiative Petition Signature Gathering Began February 1, 2024. Deadline to Collect Signatures is May 5, 2024.**

- Rep. Deb Lavender (D-Manchester) wrote in her [Jan. 21 newsletter](#): “Signature Collection will Begin February 1, 2024.” On February 6, Missourians for Constitutional Freedom had a [signature collection kickoff in five cities](#): in Columbia, Kansas City, Springfield, St. Joseph, and St. Louis.
- Petitions to amend the constitution must be signed by eight percent of legal voters in any six of the eight congressional districts. That is a minimum of 171,592 signatures.
- Signatures must be submitted to the Missouri Secretary of State by 5:00 PM, May 5, 2024. As a practical matter, supporters of any pro-abortion initiative petition must get 300,000 or more signatures by the deadline, since many signatures are invalid, or the signer is in the “wrong” congressional district.

- **Recent Polling.**

- [Remington/MOScout Poll: Survey conducted Jan. 24–Jan. 25, 2024](#). 719 likely November Election voters participated in the survey. Survey weighted to match expected turnout demographics for the 2024 November Election. Margin of Error is +/-3.9% with a 95% level of confidence.

Do you want to amend the Missouri Constitution to remove Missouri’s ban on abortion, but allow abortions to be restricted or banned after Fetal Viability except to protect the life or health of the woman?

Yes: 52%

No: 30%

Not sure: 18%

- **Missouri Law Permits Someone Who Signs an Initiative Petition to Withdraw His or Her Signature.**

- [Section 116.110](#) provides that: “Any voter who has signed an initiative or referendum petition may withdraw his or her signature from that petition by submitting to the secretary of state, before the petition is filed with the secretary of state, a sworn statement requesting that his or her signature be withdrawn and affirming the name of the petition signed, the name the voter used when signing the petition, the address of the voter and the county of residence. ...”

- **Missouri Stands with Women – a New Coalition of Pro-Life Groups Devoted Solely to Defeating Pro-Abortion Initiative Petitions in Missouri – Has Been Formed.**

- **Missouri Stands with Women** (mostandswithwomen.org) – a new coalition of pro-life groups (including the [Missouri Catholic Conference](#), [Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America](#) and [Thrive Nation](#), a St. Louis-based pregnancy resource organization) – has been formed with the sole purpose keeping any pro-abortion initiative petitions off the ballot in Missouri, and defeating them if they get on.
- **Missouri Stands with Women** is educating voters to not sign any petitions, and if it can raise enough funds, will proactively reach out to voters in key areas of the six most likely congressional districts to “Decline to Sign” – before those voters are even approached for signatures. Donations are not tax-deductible.
- **Missouri Stands with Women** has retained a public communications expert who has worked on many campaigns, as well as a spokeswoman from Columbia, Mo., who is active on radio and other media.
- Contact information (including for donations not made online):

Missouri Stands with Women

P.O. Box 11792

St. Louis, MO 63105

<https://mostandswithwomen.org/>