

The Statesman- Journal newspaper published, on December 24, 2007, a “Monday Interview” with John Lindback, Elections Director, and presented his perspective on “reforms” to the initiative petitions process.

Let me share the opposite perspective.

Under the new law, persons who are paid to circulate initiative petitions must get an identity card from the Secretary of State, which they must carry whenever they are circulating petitions; submit a signature sample; register in advance for any petition they plan to circulate; and undergo a training program specified by the Secretary of State.

Petitions carried by paid circulators must be on colored paper specified by the government. Petitions carried by volunteers must be on white paper. The colored petitions must carry a notice that the circulator is paid.

This is all for the “protection” of the public.

Imagine similar restrictions placed upon reporters for a newspaper:

- Reporters must register with the Secretary of State and submit a signature sample.
- Reporters must specify, in writing, in advance, to the Secretary of State as to each article which they are going to write.

- When conducting interviews, reporters must carry a government identification card and must present that card to government officials who request it.
- Reporters must undergo training before they write any articles.
- Any volunteer reporter must carry a notepad with white paper.
- Any paid reporter must carry a notepad with colored paper with a notice on the notepad that the reporter is a paid reporter.

It sounds ludicrous, doesn't it? Now you have a better understanding about the absurd restrictions being placed on the rights of citizens to use the initiative process.

Just as reporters have the right to freely report the news, citizens have the right to freely access the initiative process. This is why we need to pass Initiative Petition 134 to protect initiative rights.