

RESOLUTION 5:

CHANGE IN OHIO CONSTITUTION AND CALL FOR SPECIAL ELECTION

WHEREAS the Ohio 135th General Assembly approved Senate Joint Resolution 2 (SJR2) on Wednesday May 10, 2023. The Joint Resolution is to put before voters in an August special election a decision on whether to make it harder to amend the constitution. And

WHEREAS This resolution raises the passage threshold to 60% in lieu of the current requirement of 50% plus one. It also requires petition signatures from all 88 counties. Right now, petitioners only have to collect in 44 counties. And this resolution eliminated what is known as the "cure period" when more signatures can be collected and added to the total after petitions are initially submitted. May 10th was the last date to pass the resolution to be able to put it on the August 8 ballot. And

WHEREAS according to an article in the Ohio Statehouse News Bureau, by Jo Ingles and Karen Kasler published on May 10, 2023 reported: "The effort to pass the resolution was hard fought. It started last November when Secretary of State Frank LaRose first brought forward the plan to increase the voter approval threshold for constitutional amendments, along with fellow Republican Rep. Brian Stewart (R-Ashville). Both claimed it was about protecting Ohio's founding document from big money and out-of-state special interests. But in a letter to his Republican lawmakers that surfaced in December, Stewart made it clear that the main drivers were defeating abortion and gerrymandering amendments." And

WHEREAS on May 12, 2023 Morgan Trau of the Ohio Capital Journal reported: "A lawsuit has been filed challenging the state's legally questionable August election meant to stop abortion from becoming legal. One Person One Vote, a nonpartisan coalition, announced it filed a lawsuit in the Ohio Supreme Court challenging the controversial election. Dennis Willard, spokesperson for One Person One Vote, said, "Our complaint asks the Ohio Supreme Court to call this election what it is: illegal. Just five months ago, the General Assembly specifically prohibited all statewide special elections in August. Secretary (Frank) LaRose explained that August elections have 'embarrassingly low' turnout and are bad for taxpayers, election officials, voters, and the civic health of our state. To that end, the General Assembly revised Ohio law to allow elections only during November, March, or May and they've done nothing since that time to change the law. Constitutional amendments may be voted on in November, March or May – not August – and we're confident the Court will agree."

WHEREAS the Ohio Supreme Court must decide relatively soon, as the County boards of election are required to prepare the first batch of ballots for the August 8, 2023, election by June 23, 2023, and the voter registration deadline for the August election is July 10, 2023.

WHEREAS if the SJR2 resolution is allowed to stand then it will just open the doors for the State to continue to silence the voters and citizens of this state.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Ohio Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW/OHIO) will educate themselves and others regarding the proposed amendment.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that if the Ohio Supreme Court decision regarding special elections is confirmed and the August election is held, the 2023-24 BPW/OHIO Legislative Chair and the 2023-24 BPW/OHIO Legislative Consultant are hereby directed to monitor proposed amendment and the Ohio Supreme Court litigation and keep the membership of BPW/OHIO informed of any developments regarding the efforts to have the amendment and a special election on August 8, 2023.

FURTHER BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that the 2023-24 BPW/OHIO Legislative Chair, in conjunction with the 2023-24 Regional Legislative Chairs shall encourage the membership to vote their conscience regarding the constitutional amendment to change the threshold and voter signature gathering to the Ohio Constitution.

AFFIRMED AND ADOPTED THIS 21st **DAY OF** May, **2023.**