

## Initiative-Crippling Law Clobbered

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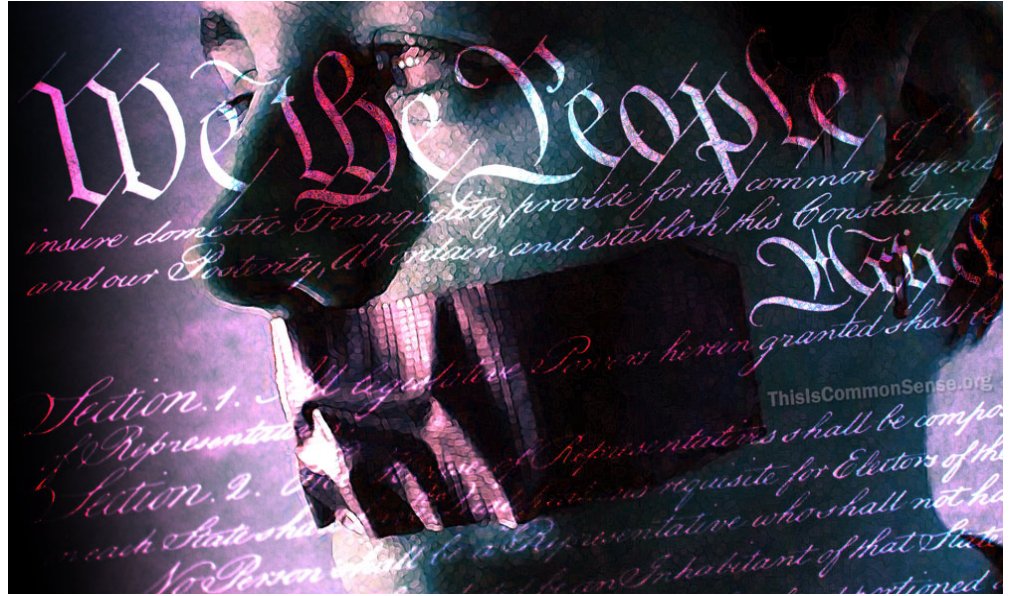
The right of citizen initiative is the right of voters to petition to get a measure on the ballot; then, if that happens, to vote on it and pass it.

Many politicians hate this right and work to weaken it.

A few years ago, Florida's Constitution Revision Commission considered sending a measure to the state ballot to treat voters who abstain from voting on a ballot question as having voted No. The proposal died on the vine, thankfully. But this is the kind of encroachment politicians fantasize about.

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The latest attack on Floridians' right of citizen initiative — a law to cap donations to such campaigns at \$3,000 during the signature-gathering phase — has just suffered a less definitive setback.



Judge Allen Winsor in the Northern District of Florida halted the new law from going into effect on the very day it was scheduled to do so. (Cutting it a little close, aren't you, judge?) He ruled that contributions to an initiative campaign are obviously a form of political expression and that the law would inflict irreparable harm if even briefly in force.

True.

If petition organizers can't raise the funds needed to collect the required 891,589 signatures, it becomes enormously harder to get a measure on the ballot and let voters have their say. A say that foes of citizen initiative rights certainly do not want voters to have.

The ruling blocks the law only until the court reaches a final resolution on its constitutionality, so this legal battle isn't over yet.

What is most certainly determined, however, is that Florida legislators don't care about the Constitution.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.