



A Place Without Hope?

December 23, 2025

“Don’t lose hope.”

That’s what Bonnie Miller, president of the League of Women Voters of Arkansas, [told](#) her fellow Arkansans after the state’s highest court overturned a 74-year precedent. The justices ruled that constitutional amendments passed by citizens’ initiative can be amended or repealed by legislators with a two-thirds vote of both chambers.

Without the issue ever going back to voters.

Sure, this might seem to follow from a constitutional provision: “No measure approved by a vote of the people shall be amended or repealed by the General Assembly ... except upon a yea and nay vote on roll call of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house of the General Assembly ...”

But in 1951, the Arkansas Supreme Court [declared](#) it “inconceivable” that “the General Assembly could amend or repeal a constitutional amendment initiated by the people,” concluding that the term “measure” simply did not apply to a constitutional amendment. Today’s Supremes reversed this bedrock understanding, thereby empowering the legislature. (Note that the legislature is not seeking to overthrow their own constitutional amendments.)

For more than a decade, the Natural State’s solons have passed statute after statute—and even proposed several constitutional amendments—designed to destroy the citizen initiative process. Their attempts have been consistently defeated by voters at the polls. In addition, last month a federal judge finally [struck down](#) several burdensome restrictions that legislators had passed on petitioning.

Now there are also two ballot initiatives—[one](#) by Protect AR Rights and [another](#) by the League of Women Voters—petitioning for a vote next November to restore the state’s once fair and accessible ballot initiative process.

How long can politicians thwart the will of the people and get away with it? The people of Arkansas are finding out.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.