



TO: Members of the Senate State, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee

FROM: Douglas Holland, representing the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Sierra Club

REGARDING: Senate Concurrent Resolution SCR15-002: Requiring a Second Vote on Constitutional Amendments.

Dear Committee members;

My name is Douglas Holland. I represent the Legislative Committee of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Sierra Club. The Sierra Club has stood for conservation since 1892, with more than 50,000 members and supporters in Colorado. We are here to oppose the passage of Senate Concurrent Resolution 002.

This resolution would make it far more difficult for Colorado's citizens to participate in the lawmaking process through the ballot box. With two votes required, the first in an even-year election, the second in an odd-year election, it would mandate that amendments be voted on when voter turnout is very low, and the will of the electorate is not well represented.

The two-vote process would lock out all but the most well-funded campaigns. Citizens groups, which operate on shoestring budgets, would find it nearly impossible to conduct a campaign for a constitutional amendment. The only groups that would be able to use this process would be the most affluent.

Furthermore, SCR-002 may be unconstitutional. It has a grandfather clause, which allows amendments passed before 2016 to be repealed with a single vote. Amendments that were passed after 2016 would require two votes. Having two sets of thresholds for constitutional changes may not withstand a court challenge, because this resolution may not preserve equal protection under the law.

While Colorado's amendment process may have difficulties, this resolution would create more problems than it would solve. It would effectively lock citizens out of the amendment process, and it may not withstand judicial scrutiny. We ask this committee to reject Senate Concurrent Resolution 002. Chairman and members of the committee, I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Doug Holland  
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