



AMENDMENTS TO THE CONNECTICUT CONSTITUTION SINCE THE 1955 REVISION

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AMENDING THE STATE CONSTITUTION

The state constitution provides two methods by which it may be amended. One method is for the legislature to pass a proposed amendment that is subsequently ratified by the state's electors at a regular state election. To appear on the state election ballot, a proposed amendment must be approved by (1) a three-fourths majority in both chambers or (2) a simple majority in both chambers in two successive legislative terms (Conn. Const. Art. XII).

The other method is for a constitutional convention to pass a proposed amendment that is subsequently ratified in a statewide referendum held no later than two months after the convention adjourns. The proposals may be presented as a whole or in such parts and with such alternatives as the convention may determine (Conn. Const. Art. XIII).

ISSUE

How many times has the state constitution been amended since the 1955 revision? Describe the amendments.

SUMMARY

In 1953, Connecticut electors passed a proposal, effective January 1, 1955, incorporating into the state constitution its 47 amendments prior to that point. Since the 1955 revision, electors have ratified 43 of 45 proposed constitutional amendments. Electors rejected a proposed amendment in 1970 concerning the qualifications of electors and in 2014 concerning absentee voting.

In addition to ratifying 43 proposed amendments since 1955, electors approved two proposals from the 1965 Constitutional Convention. The convention considered numerous changes to the constitution and presented its recommendations to the electors in these two proposals, which resulted in the Constitution of 1965. (For more information on amending the state constitution and on the 1965 convention, see OLR reports [2015-R-0240](#) and [2008-R-0456](#).)



Table 1 lists the 43 amendments by year and provides the ballot designations or questions as they appeared on the secretary of state’s statement of vote. Before 1984, proposed amendments appeared on the ballot as designations. PA 83-335 required them to appear on the ballot as questions.

The information in the table was provided to us by the Office of the Secretary of the State, Connecticut State Library, and Legislative Library.

**Table 1: Amendments to the State Constitution
Since the 1955 Revision**

Year Appeared on Ballot	Ballot Designation or Question
1955	Constitutional Amendment Concerning the Method of Amendment
1958	Constitutional Amendment Concerning the Salary of Members
1958	Constitutional Amendment Concerning Adjudication of Claims Against the State
1958	Constitutional Amendment Concerning the Holding of Other Office by Members of the General Assembly
1962	Constitutional Amendment Concerning Absentee Balloting on Constitutional Amendments
1962	Constitutional Amendment Concerning Privileges of Electors in Towns Throughout the State
1962	Constitutional Amendment Concerning the Election of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor
1962	Constitutional Amendment Concerning the Admission of Electors
1962	Constitutional Amendment Concerning Admission as Electors in Absentia of Servicemen and Related Groups
1964	Constitutional Amendment Concerning Voting Requirements in the General Assembly for the Amendments to the Constitution
1964	Constitutional Amendment Providing for Voting of Absentee Ballots on Religious Holidays
1964	Constitutional Amendment Concerning the Residence Requirements of Electors
1965	<i>Electors approved two proposals from the 1965 Constitutional Convention resulting in the Constitution of 1965</i>
1970	For Constitutional Amendment Concerning Qualifications for State Office (21 year minimum age requirement)
1970	For Constitutional Amendment Providing for Annual Sessions of the General Assembly (requires state legislature to meet each year)
1970	For Constitutional Amendment Concerning the Office of Attorney General (makes election of Attorney General a constitutional requirement)
1972	For Constitutional Amendment Concerning Challenges and Number of Jurors
1974	For Constitutional Amendment Prohibiting Discrimination on Account of Sex
1974	For Constitutional Amendment Concerning the Method of Amendment of the Constitution
1974	For Constitutional Amendment Concerning Forfeiture of the Right to be Made an Elector
1974	For Constitutional Amendment Concerning the Elimination of the Requirement that Justices of the Peace be Elected
1976	For the Constitutional Amendment Streamlining the Reapportionment Procedure
1976	For the Constitutional Amendment Concerning Qualification of Electors
1976	For the Constitutional Amendment Concerning Pre-Registration of Seventeen Year Old Citizens as Electors
1976	For the Constitutional Amendment Concerning Judicial Removal
1980	For the Constitutional Amendment Concerning the Age of Eligibility for State Office

Table 1 (continued)

Year Appeared on Ballot	Ballot Designation or Question
1980	For the Constitutional Amendment Concerning the Timetable for Reapportionment
1980	For the Constitutional Amendment Concerning Pre-Registration of Seventeen Year Old Citizens as Electors
1980	For the Constitutional Amendment Concerning Admission of Electors After Removal From the Town of Residence
1982	For the Constitutional Amendment Concerning Compensation of Elected Officials
1982	For the Constitutional Amendment Concerning the Requirement of a Grand Jury for Capital Offenses
1982	For the Constitutional Amendment Concerning Regulations of State Agencies
1982	For the Constitutional Amendment Concerning an Appellate Court
1984	For the Constitutional Amendment Prohibiting Discrimination Against a Person Because of His or Her Physical or Mental Disability
1984	Shall the Constitution be Amended to Provide a Procedure for the Lieutenant Governor to Exercise the Powers and Perform the Duties of the Office of Governor When the Governor is Unable to Do So?
1984	Shall the Constitution of this State be Amended to Establish a Division of Criminal Justice within the Executive Department and to Provide For the Appointment of State's Attorneys by a Criminal Justice Commission?
1986	Shall the Constitution of the State be Amended to Eliminate the Use of Party Levers on Voting Machines?
1986	Shall the Constitution of the State be Amended to Establish a Commission to Recommend Candidates to the Governor for Nomination as Judges?
1990	Shall the Constitution of the State be Amended to Extend the Timetable for Reapportionment?
1992	Shall the Constitution of the State be Amended to Impose a Limit on State Expenditures?
1992	Shall the Constitution of the State be Amended to Authorize the Enactment of Legislation to Make Procedures for Absentee Admission as an Elector Available for All Applicants?
1996	Shall the Constitution of the State be Amended to Provide Certain Rights to Victims of Crime?
2000	Shall the Constitution of the State be Amended to Eliminate County Sheriffs?
2008	Shall the Constitution of the State be Amended to Permit Any Person Who Will Have Attained the Age of Eighteen Years On or Before the Day of a Regular Election to Vote in the Primary for Such Regular Election?

KS:cmg