From: Catherine Hatch
To: Carly Dennis
Cc: Liz Clark
Subject: SJR to amend Constitution
Date: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 12:07:21 PM
Attachments: image001.png
image002.png

Hi Carly,

Thank you for your call to our office. You asked what the requirements are to pass a Senate Joint Resolution to amend the Alaska Constitution, and whether it is subject to Governor veto. The fastest way to find this (as I've just learned) is in the Voting Requirements Chart in the Uniform Rules (p. vii), as Uniform Rule 49(a)(5) addresses joint resolutions constitutional amendments:

Rule No.	Question	Vote Requirement	Minimum No. Votes Needed	
			HOUSE	SENATE
49(a)(5) (Art. XIII, sec. 1)	Joint resolution proposing amendment to Alaska constitution	2/3 of full house	27	14

Per Article XIII, Section 1 of the Alaska Constitution, "Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by a **two-thirds vote of each house of the legislature**. The lieutenant governor shall prepare a ballot title and proposition summarizing each proposed amendment, and shall place them on the ballot for the next general election. If a majority of the votes cast on the proposition favor the amendment, it shall be adopted. Unless otherwise provided in the amendment, it becomes effective thirty days after the certification of the election returns by the lieutenant governor."

Mason's Manual Sec. 512.2 provides the following definition for a two-thirds vote: "A two-thirds vote means that the affirmative vote must be equal to twice the negative vote." And goes on to clarify that vacancies are to be disregarded and the vote cannot be aggregate:

Sec. 512.4. "Where the constitution requires a two-thirds vote of all members, a vote of less than that number, although two-thirds of a quorum, is not sufficient. Even though there are vacancies, **a vote equal to two-thirds of the total membership is required**."

Sec. 512.5. "A constitutional provision providing that a certain action requires a two-thirds vote of both houses means a **two-thirds vote of each house**, and not merely an aggregate two-thirds of the members of both houses."

In conclusion, in order to propose an amendment to the Alaska Constitution, which is subject to a vote by the general population, the Legislature must first pass a Senate Joint Resolution by two-thirds vote of each house, i.e. 14 yeas from the Senate and 27 Yeas from the House, which is not subject to veto, and if passed, will be placed on the ballot for the next general election by the Lieutenant Governor.

--Catherine

Catherine Hatch
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