



State of Wisconsin Eligibility to Vote Referendum Talking Points

On the November 5, 2024 ballot, Wisconsinites will have the opportunity to determine whether only citizens may be authorized to vote in state and local elections.

Where is the referendum located on the ballot?

Make sure to check for the referendum on the back side of the ballot.

What is the actual language of the referendum?

Vote for One

"Eligibility to vote. Shall section 1 of article III of the constitution, which deals with suffrage, be amended to provide that only a United States citizen age 18 or older who resides in an election district may vote in an election for national, state, or local office or at a statewide or local referendum?"

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Who is currently allowed to vote in state and local elections according to the Wisconsin State Constitution?

"Every United States citizen age 18 or older who is a resident of an election district in this state is a qualified elector of that district." Section I of Article III, Wisconsin State Constitution

What change in the Wisconsin State Constitution would the referendum make?

If approved, the referendum would essentially change the text from "*every* citizen..." to "*only* a citizen...". This change would exclude anyone other than a citizen from being eligible to vote in Wisconsin elections.

Isn't it already illegal for non-citizens to vote?

It is illegal nationwide for non-citizens to vote in federal elections. However, state constitutions and statutes govern who is deemed to be an eligible voter in state and local elections. State statutes can be changed by any future Governor and Legislature. Changes to the Wisconsin State Constitution can only be made by the people.

Are there places in the United States where non-citizens are authorized to vote?

Many are surprised to learn that non-citizens are authorized to vote legally in communities in Vermont, Maryland, Illinois, and California. Non-citizens are even authorized to vote in [Washington, D.C.](#), our nation's capital.



Why isn't the current constitutional language enough to ensure that non-citizens cannot be authorized to vote in Wisconsin?

In other states with similar constitutional language, some courts have ruled that the text authorizes "every citizen," but is silent in terms of prohibiting non-citizens. An analysis of Wisconsin's state constitution and statutes indicates there is nothing that would prohibit certain municipalities from authorizing non-citizens to vote locally.

Shouldn't non-citizens be allowed to vote if they are paying taxes and/or have children in the schools?

Anyone who buys nearly anything in nearly any country pays taxes on goods—and sometimes services. The freedom to vote is perhaps the most fundamental right of a citizen. The United States of America has welcomed immigrants for centuries. As in other countries, citizenship carries both rights and responsibilities that are reserved only for citizens, including the ability to elect the officials who represent us and decide the direction of our government through referenda. Non-citizens who enter our country legally are welcome to become citizens and gain the right to vote through the naturalization process, just as so many others have done.

Isn't the citizens-only voting amendment just another effort to make it more difficult for people to vote?

No. The citizens-only voting amendment simply ensures that only citizens are eligible to vote in state or local elections. Its effect would be to prohibit the state government and local government from authorizing non-citizens to vote in state or local elections. The citizens-only voting amendment does not change any aspect of voter registration, nor does it create any new procedures.

How many states are considering referenda limiting voting rights to only citizens this November?

In addition to Wisconsin, seven other states are considering similar constitutional amendments to ensure only citizens are authorized to vote in their state and local elections. Those states are:

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|------------|------------------|
| ▪ Idaho | ▪ North Carolina |
| ▪ Iowa | ▪ Oklahoma |
| ▪ Kentucky | ▪ South Carolina |
| ▪ Missouri | ▪ Wisconsin |

Is there a website to learn more about the importance of citizens-only voting amendments, also referred to as COVA?

Please visit www.OnlyCitizens.Vote for more information about the movement to protect the vote.

Need more information about Wisconsin's movement to approve the citizens-only voting amendment?

Please feel free to contact:

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