

## **Protect Your Right to Vote delivers 146,000 signatures to refer HB2305 to the ballot**

PHOENIX – The Protect Your Right to Vote Committee today delivered approximately 146,000 petition signatures to the Arizona Secretary of State’s to put the Legislature’s attempt to get tough on Arizona voters to a vote of the people. An unprecedented coalition of more than 25 non-profit civic engagement organizations joined together to stand up for Arizona voting rights and put House Bill 2305 on the Nov. 2014 ballot. The Legislature passed the bill -- which changed almost 20 separate areas of election law with virtually no public testimony-- by a near party-line vote in June. The Committee is confident it has enough valid signatures to exceed the 86,405 threshold to put the referendum on the ballot, said Chairwoman Julie Erfle.

“Voters will have their say after all,” said Erfle, “It was wrong for career politicians to try and influence elections by putting up roadblocks for voters who might not agree with them and to make criminals out of dedicated campaign volunteers. As we gathered signatures, even in the heat of an Arizona summer and in the face of blocking efforts, we were inspired by the willingness of Arizonans to stand up for voting rights. We found strong support from voters of all political stripes, persuasions and backgrounds. That does not bode well for the authors and supporters of HB2305.”

### **BACKGROUND:**

- HB2305 would make it a crime for volunteers to collect and drop off ballots at the polls. These efforts help elderly, homebound, disabled and economically disadvantaged citizens to participate in elections.
- HB2305 would kick voters off the Permanent Early Voting List if they fail to vote in two consecutive elections. This would decrease participation and disproportionately impact newly registered Latino voters who are not likely vote if removed from this list.
- HB2305 would keep third parties off the ballot by raising the signature requirement to put a candidate on the ballot for all political parties except Republicans. Ballot access for third party candidates will become nearly impossible. For example, the number of signatures required for Libertarian candidates would increase by 4,000 percent.
- HB2305 makes it more difficult for Arizona citizens to overturn the Legislature through citizen initiatives. By instituting a host of minor technical requirements – including the margin size on petitions – that can be challenged in court, politicians are trying to take away the citizens’ veto that’s been part of Arizona’s constitution since statehood.

Petition circulators began working July 1 to gather the required signatures. If qualified, HB2305 will be put on hold until voters have their say in November of 2014. Supporters of the referendum effort will be encouraging Arizona voters to vote “no.”

The Protect Your Right to Vote Committee is a coalition of more than 25 non-profit organizations working together to put HB2305 to a vote of the people. These include civic engagement organizations, Latino voter engagement groups, conservation organizations, animal welfare groups and labor organizations. It also includes leaders and members of the Libertarian, Green and Democratic parties.

**Member organizations include:**

AFL-CIO, AFSCME, Animal Defense League of Arizona, Arizona Center for Empowerment, Arizona Education Association, Arizona List, Arizona Pipe Trades, AZ Community Action Association, AZ Advocacy Network, Central Arizonans for a Sustainable Economy, Citizens for a Better Arizona, Communication Workers of Arizona, Equality Arizona, Humane Society of the United States, Humane Voters of Arizona, League of Women Voters, Living United for Change in Arizona, Mi Familia Vota, NARAL Arizona, One Arizona, PAFCO, Planned Parenthood, Promise Arizona, SEIU, Sierra Club, and UFCW.

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