



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CONSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVE SUBMITTED TO SECRETARY OF STATE

BISMARCK, ND – Secretary of State Michael Howe announced today that petitions with signatures for the constitutional initiative related to funding of school lunches were submitted by the sponsoring committee to the Office of the Secretary of State for review and approval for placement on the November 3, 2026, General election ballot.

Robin Anderson Nelson Peterson, Fargo, North Dakota, is the chairperson of the sponsoring committee.

The sponsoring committee delivered 1,884 petition packets to the Office of the Secretary of State, which the committee stated contained approximately 57,000 signatures. 31,164 valid signatures are needed for the measure to be placed on the ballot.

The Secretary of State has thirty-five days, or until Thursday, May 14, 2026, to decide the sufficiency of the number of signatures to determine whether the measure will be placed on the November 3, 2026, General election ballot. The state law that applies to this process is as follows:

N.D.C.C. § 16.1-01-10-Secretary of state to pass upon sufficiency of petitions – Method-Time Limit
The secretary of state shall have a reasonable period, not to exceed thirty-five days, in which to pass upon the sufficiency of any petition mentioned in section 16.1-01-09. The secretary of state shall conduct a representative random sampling of the signatures contained in the petitions by the use of questionnaires, postcards, telephone calls, personal interviews, or other accepted information gathering techniques, or any combinations thereof, to determine the validity of the signatures. Signatures determined by the secretary of state to be invalid may not be counted and all violations of law discovered by the secretary of state must be reported to the attorney general for prosecution.

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The Office of Secretary of State oversees a variety of functions, including elections, business registrations, licensing for certain occupations, Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) lien filings, and combative sports, as well as serving as the custodian of the Great Seal, and attesting official documents and acts of the Governor.