



The Initiative, Second Edition: Citizen Lawmaking

Joseph F. Zimmerman

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The Initiative, Second Edition: Citizen Lawmaking

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Examines the origins, spread, and effectiveness of the initiative.

The initiative is the product of the populist movement, which in the late nineteenth century sought to increase voter control of what were viewed as unrepresentative state and local governments. Today, twenty-four states allow registered voters to place proposed state laws on the referendum ballot, and eighteen states authorize voters to place proposed state constitutional amendments on the referendum ballot by collecting a specified number of valid voter signatures. Numerous local governments have a charter provision or a state law provision allowing voters to employ the popular lawmaking device. In *The Initiative, Second Edition*, Joseph F. Zimmerman traces the origin and spread of the initiative in the United States. The initiative has been a controversial device since first being introduced in South Dakota in 1898, with arguments both in support and in opposition. Zimmerman examines and evaluates both the legal foundation of the initiative, and the arguments against its use. He then concludes with a chapter that develops model constitutional, statutory, and local government charter provisions to assist jurisdictions and their voters contemplating adoption of the initiative or amendment of already existing constitutional, statutory, and charter initiative provisions.

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