

The Direct Legislation Bill

Representative A. H. Field of Lancaster has the honor of having introduced House Roll No. 1 of the present session, and the added honor of being permitted to introduce it as the proposed initiative and referendum law. The bill as introduced was drawn under the direction of the Nebraska Direct Legislation league, and is the work of experts who are devoted to the reform sought. The bill should be enacted into law promptly and without change. The bill as introduced is a joint resolution, reading as follows:

Be it resolved and enacted by the legislature of the state of Nebraska:

Section 1. That at the general election for state and legislative officers to be held on the Tuesday succeeding the first Monday in November, 1912, the following provisions be proposed and submitted as amended to section 1 and section 10 of article 3 of the constitution of the state of Nebraska:

Sec. 2. That section 1 of article 3 of the constitution of the state of Nebraska is hereby amended to read as follows:

Sec. 1. The legislative authority of the state shall be vested in a legislature consisting of a senate and house of representatives, but the people reserve to themselves power to propose laws, and amendments to the constitution, and to enact or reject the same at polls independent of the legislature, and also reserve power at their own option to approve or reject at the polls any act, item, section, or part of any act passed by the legislature.

Sec. 1A. The first power reserved by the people is the initiative. Ten per cent of the legal voters of the state, so distributed as to include five per cent of the legal voters in each of two-fifths of the counties of the state, may propose any measure by petition, which shall contain the full text of the measure so proposed. Initiative petitions (except for municipal and wholly local legislation) shall be filed with the secretary of state and be by him submitted to the voters at the first regular state election held not less than four months after such filing. The same measure, either in form or in essential substance, shall not be submitted to the people by initiative petition (either affirmatively or negatively) oftener than once in three years, except upon petition of twenty per cent of the legal voters of state. If conflicting measures submitted to the people at the same election shall be approved the one receiving the highest number of affirmative votes shall thereby become law as to all conflicting provisions. The constitutional limitations as to scope and subject matter of statutes enacted by the legislature shall apply to those enacted by the initiative.

Sec. 1B. The second power reserved is the referendum. It may be ordered by a petition of five per cent of the legal voters of the state, distributed as required by initiative petitions. Referendum petitions against measures passed by the legislature shall be filed with the secretary of state within ninety days after the legislature enacting the same adjourns sine die or for a period longer than ninety days; and elections thereon shall be had at the first regular state election held not less than thirty days after such filing.

Sec. 1C. The referendum may be ordered upon any act except acts making appropriations for the expenses of the state government, and state institutions existing at the time such act is passed. When the referendum is ordered upon an act or any part thereof it shall suspend its operation until the same is approved by the voters; provided, that emergency acts, or acts for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety shall continue in effect until rejected by the voters or repealed by the legislature. Filing of a referendum petition against one or more items, sections, or parts of an act shall not delay the remainder of the measure from becoming operative.

Sec. 1D. Nothing in this section shall be construed to deprive any member of the legislature of the right to introduce any measure. The whole number of votes cast for governor at the regular election last preceding the filing of any initiative or referendum petition shall be the basis on which the number of legal voters required to sign such petition shall be computed. The veto power of the governor shall not extend to measures initiated by or referred to the people. All such measures shall become the law or a part of the constitution when approved by a majority of the votes cast thereon, and not otherwise, and shall take effect upon proclamation by the governor, which shall be made within ten days of the completion of the official canvass. The vote upon initiative and referendum measures shall be returned and canvassed in the same manner as is prescribed in the case of presidential electors. The method of submitting and adopting amendments to the constitution provided by this section shall be supplementary to the method prescribed in article fifteen (XV) of this constitution, and the latter shall in no case be construed to conflict herewith. This amendment shall be self-executing, but legislation may be enacted especially to facilitate its operation. In submitting petitions and orders for the initiative and the referendum, the secretary of state and all other officers shall be guided by this amendment and the general laws until additional legislation shall be especially provided therefor.

Sec. 3. That section 10 of article 3 of the constitution of the state of Nebraska be amended to read as follows:

Sec. 10. The style of all bills shall be "Be it enacted by the people of the state of Nebraska," and no law shall be enacted except by bill. No bill shall be passed by the legislature unless by assent of a majority of all the members elected to each house of the legislature and the question upon final passage shall be entered upon the journal.

Sec. 4. That at said election on the Tuesday succeeding the first Monday in November, 1912, on the ballot of each elector voting thereat there shall be printed or written the words: "For proposed amendment to the constitution reserving to the people the right of direct legislation through the initiative and referendum," and "Against proposed amendment to the constitution reserving to the people the right of direct legislation through the initiative and referendum." And if a majority of all voters at said election shall be in favor of such amendment the same shall be deemed to be adopted. The returns of said election upon the adoption of this amendment shall be made to the state canvassing board and said board shall canvass the vote upon the amendment herein in the same manner as is prescribed in the case of presidential electors. If a majority of the votes cast at the election be in favor of the proposed amendment the governor, within ten days after the result is ascertained, shall make proclamation declaring the amendment to be part of the constitution of the state, and when so declared the amendment herein proposed shall be in force and self-executing.

What the Office Boy Says

I don't know nuttin' about dis female suffrage business, but if de skoits couldn't do better at de governin' game dan de men have, den dey suttinly are not much good.

Guess de guaranty o' bank deposits ain't worryin' mutch th' man wo't's tryin' t' support a big family on a average o' 400 bones a year.

Ain't you ever noticed dat de blokes w'ot knows de most about runnin' de gov'ment knows de least about runnin' their own bus'ness successful?

So fur as I kin learn de men w'ot favor organized charity ain't never been up against de proposishun.

De summer me dad wus hoited me mudder took in washin', an' I guess she was just as much a loidy as de woman dat wore silks an' kep me mudder waitin' weeks f'r de money she earned.

De feller dat makes young girls work f'r four bones a week may t'ink his books show a profit, but he'd better wait till God balances 'em before he brags mutch.

I ain't no feenawncier, but I guess dat if I spent me woiges here at home I stand a better show o' gittin' 'em back again dan if I spent 'em with Roars-Seabuck or Montwardery Gumm.

Some blokes w'ot I know t'ink de are religious; I reckon dey are simply sufferin' from dispepsy o' de t'inkery.

I ain't studied soshiology mutch, but de blokes w'ot say dat intemperance is de cause o' poverty has got their t'inkeries twisted. It's de odder way 'round.

De odder day de foreman said I wasn't worth me salt. But when he said it he was pickled.

Depends on the Viewpoint

The supreme court's recent decision upholding the bank guaranty act recalls to mind a little story that may have some bearing upon the case.

Several years ago a farmer went into the Bank of Maitland, at Maitland, Mo., and struck Cashier Donovan for a loan of \$500.

"All right," said Donovan. "We'll gladly make the loan, but you will have to get some one to endorse with you."

"But ain't I good for \$500?" asked the applicant.

"Certainly you are, but our rules demand two names upon a note."

"Well, when I come in here and deposit money you don't give me any security, but when I want to borrow some from you I have to put up security. I can't see why that is."

"You would see if you looked at it from this side of the wicket," retorted Donovan.

All of which again impresses us with the truth of the assertion that "all depends upon the point of view."