

# The California initiative process: background and perspective

1. Introduction In 1911, an amendment to the California Constitution established the California initiative process, giving voters the right to enact legislation. In other words, it gave the voters a power equal to the power of legislative branch of state government. This movement toward direct democracy was part of increasing popular demand across the country in the late 1800s for social and political reform. In California, progressives concerned about the influence that monied interests, such as the Southern Pacific Railroad, exercised over the legislature led the movement. In the Midwest, the populist movement included an effort by citizens to establish the initiative and referendum process to deal with government corruption. As the groundswell grew, in 1897, Nebraska allowed cities to include the initiative and referendum in their charters. By the end of the 19th century, states were amending their constitutions to include the initiative and referendum power. Currently there are 24 states that have some form of initiative and referendum procedures. The initiative and referendum powers are contained in Article II of the California Constitution. It states: The initiative is the power of the electors to propose statutes and amendments to the constitution and to adopt or reject them. Article II Section 8 provides the following: An initiative measure may be proposed by presenting to the Secretary of State a petition that sets forth the text of the proposed statute or amendment to the Constitution and is certified to have been signed by electors equal in number to 5 percent in the case of a statute, and 8 percent in the case of an amendment to the constitution, of the votes for all candidates for governor at the last gubernatorial election. The Secretary of State shall then submit the measure at the next general election held at least 131 days after it qualifies or at any special statewide election held prior to that general election. The governor may call a special statewide election for the measure. An initiative measure embracing more than one subject may not be submitted to the electors or have any effect. The role of the judiciary is limited to hearing challenges to proposed or approved initiatives, as well as settling disputes that may arise from the official title, ballot pamphlet, or other related material. As originally instituted in California, there were two initiative processes available: the direct initiative and the indirect initiative. The direct initiative process allows voters to place a proposed statute or an amendment to the Constitution directly on the ballot. If a majority of the -1- [The California initiative process: background and perspective](#)

I invite Christians to mention some of the countless others, and personally believe that for Christianity and Christians to survive, we must reclaim and practice the faith in an enlightened, humble, and faithful manner without changing our Scriptural belief in Christ, his teachings, or his Church. We should not be the ones who give Christianity a bad name while remembering that we also. As for Christianity apart from Christ, yes, it must re-align with the Bible or die. Christians are not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of their mind, which is a complete change in our thinking and attitudes, and really impossible for a man (or woman) to work up on their own. [Why Christianity must change or die](#)

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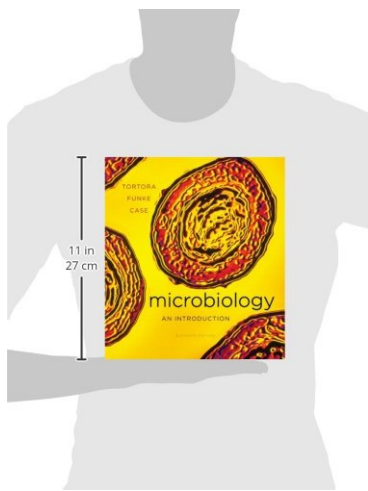
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