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Affirmative action ban collects required signatures

LINCOLN – Nebraska Secretary of State John Gale announced today that the initiative petition to enact a proposed constitutional amendment to ban affirmative action had collected enough valid signatures to be placed on the ballot for the Nov. 4 election.

With all 93 counties completing the verification process, the initiative had 136,589 valid signatures of registered voters.

The initiative needed 112,152 valid signatures – equal to 10 percent of registered voters statewide – to be placed on the ballot. In addition, the initiative had valid signatures from 5 percent of registered voters in each of 88 counties, far surpassing the threshold of 38 counties needed.

Approximately 83 percent of the submitted signatures were found to be valid.

The initiative, headed by the Nebraska Civil Rights Initiative, seeks to ban public agencies from considering race, ethnicity or gender when hiring, selecting contractors or enrolling students.

After a petition is submitted to the Secretary of State's Office, county election offices have the job of verifying whether petition signatures are those of registered voters.

Once the initiative is certified for the ballot, the Secretary of State's Office is required to produce an informational pamphlet on the issue. There also is a requirement that a public hearing on the initiative be held in each congressional district prior to the election

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