

Referendum submissions expected

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Members of the Tokyo Olympics for Taiwan Name Rectification Action Working Group are pictured outside Douliou Train Station in Yunlin County on Aug. 15.

Photo: Chan Shih-hung, Taipei Times

Documentation supporting 20 referendum questions that have entered the second-stage signature drive are yet to be submitted to the Central Election Commission, with time running out before the Nov. 24 local elections, the commission said yesterday.

Since the Referendum Act (公投法) was amended last year to lower thresholds to launch a referendum, 20 proposals have entered the second stage.

The proposals will need to be submitted to the commission by Friday to have a good chance of being on ballots in the elections, the commission said, adding that if the number of valid signatures is found to be below the 281,745 minimum, it might be too late to have the proposed question put to voters in the November elections.

The commission said it was contacted on Friday last week by two groups that are sponsoring proposals yet to be handed over, Taiwan Family and the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), which said they would submit their petitions by the end of this month.

A proposal to change how the nation's Olympic team is named, originally planned for submission on Friday next week, is now expected to be submitted before the weekend, the commission said.

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Taiwan Family and Christian organization Stability of Power are sponsoring petitions that call for banning same-sex marriage, the removal of content related to homosexuality from school curricula and a bar on legislative amendments that would safeguard the rights of gay couples in committed relationships.

Stability of Power convener You Hsin-yi (游錫堃) said the group was in the final stage of preparation to submit its petitions and would host a news conference next week on the matter.

The referendums are a “battle over values,” You said, adding that they were not an attack on any particular group of people.

He said he was confident the proposals would be approved.

The KMT is to submit proposed referendums calling for the rejection of a proposed power plant in New Taipei City’s Rueifang District (瑞芳), the rejection of plans to resume food imports from Japanese prefectures that were banned after the 2011 Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear disaster and the rejection of amendments to air pollution regulations.

KMT Legislator Lin Te-fu (林德福), who helped lead the referendum proposals, said its signature drive was successful, with each of the proposals garnering at least 350,000 signatures.

The party’s central headquarters has been preparing the petitions for submission, which he said would be done by Friday.

The proposed Olympic name-change referendum has received a lot of attention after China last month pressured the East Asian Olympic Committee to revoke Taichung’s right to host the first East Asian Youth Games, which were planned for next year, CNA quoted a sponsor of the proposal as saying.

Tokyo Olympics for Taiwan Name Rectification Action Working Group member Liu Ching-wen

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([Link](#)) said the proposal has already reached the threshold for submission and the group is working to have its proposal ready for submission sometime this week.

While proposals received after the end of this month cannot be guaranteed to be ready for the November elections, any proposal that passes the threshold would be put to a vote within the following six months, the commission said.

Because petitions are submitted in duplicate, a single proposal meeting the threshold will have more than 500,000 documents that need to be verified, it said.

A sponsor with multiple proposals means more than 1 million documents, it said, adding that the commission encourages sponsors to contact it in advance to schedule time to process the paperwork.

The verification process involves contacting family registry offices to confirm the validity of signatures and proposals that are to be put to voting need to go through application with the Executive Yuan, the commission said, adding that the entire procedure would take time and a considerable effort.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2018/08/27](#)