

**ELECTRONIC PETITIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS:
APPROXIMATE LEGAL MODEL**

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The article considers idea of the development of the institute of electronic petitions in the Republic of Belarus. There is a necessity of borrowing some mechanisms from foreign states. The article provides a new mechanism for supplying and considering petitions at the legislative level.

The institute of petitions is dynamically developing in foreign countries. This trend is explained by processes of globalization and modernization, development of the Internet and its dissemination. Having considered the experience of foreign countries, we can create a project of making electronic platforms to supply petitions in the Republic of Belarus.

Nowadays, a definition of "open government" is ever more often used. It appeared under the influence of the development of informational technologies and their introduction into politics. This concept implies governance's system which has free information exchange between the state and the citizens, active participation of the society in the preparation and the implementation of the authorities' conclusions, improvement of quality and accessibility of state's services to satisfy the needs of population, development of civil control over the authorities. The state must adopt laws, which recognize this concept on the legal level and regulate it with a goal of achieving success in this kind of activity. The open government encompasses such concepts as e-government, e-budget, e-filing and consideration of citizens' appeals, the system of e-identification of the citizens, e-government services. All these are necessary to improve the conditions and activate the democracy in the country [1].

In foreign countries, the experience in working with electronic petitions has been used for more than 10 years. During this period, legislative regulators were created, the means of action and implementation processes were improved and changed. Foreign mechanisms, which are now developed at a sufficiently high level, can serve as a model for creating our electronic petitioning platform.

In general, the procedure for presenting and considering a petition can be represented as follows:

1. Presenting a petition on a specifically created website;
2. Collection of signatures (25 thousand votes of citizens) for the consideration by a special commission (administration of the website).

The administration of the website is authorized to:

- Conduct the initial review;
- Submit a petition for further consideration to the authorities (taking into account the required scope of the issue);
- Place advertisements, responses on the website.

3. Commission's consideration of the petition in within one year from the date of submission if there is the required number of votes. The petition must be considered by the commission within 30 days from the date of receiving the required number of signatures. The procedures for considering petitions may be extended up to another month by the commission's decision, if its members have any problems during the deliberation.

For considering the petition, the following conditions must be fulfilled:

- The required number of citizens' signatures (within a year after submission);
- Relevance of the issue (comments, citizens' feedback, repetition of petitions of the same content);
- Presence of the necessary evidence, if the petition is about any serious incident (thereby showing relevance of this issue);
- The question (content) must be in the context of the permitted topics.

If the required number of signatures is not collected or the petition does not meet the "parameters", the petition will be rejected (there will be a notification on the website).

4. Filing a petition to the authorized bodies or other officials in case of having all necessary conditions;
5. Consideration of a petition.

The deadline for consideration of the petition by the competent government agency is 90 days from the date of filing. But if more time is needed to consider the petition, then it is necessary to notify the citizens about this (the maximum period is 2 months).

6. Consideration results announcement. The answer (positive or negative) will be given on the website, where all interested parties can learn about it.

Such a procedure is not so complicated, but it can be quite effective. Also on this electronic platform, a “dislikes” system can be created so that it would be clear whether it is necessary to accept some innovations or change some existing objects or whether the system of the website is comfortable for citizens and understandable for communication with the government.

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