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Ecuador: Correa Supporters Seek Referendum on Reelection

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Ecuador's constitutional court received a citizen's petition on Thursday that seeks judicial approval to hold a national referendum on removing a constitutional clause that prevents current President Rafael Correa from running again next year.

"This petition must first be approved by the country's constitutional court," political analyst Ramiro Galarza explained to teleSUR. "The primary objective of this citizen's initiative ... (is) a proposal to modify certain aspects of the constitution that would allow the president to run in the 2017 elections."

The referendum initiative was launched by a citizen's group known as, "Always With Rafael." If the court approves its proposal, the group would need to collect signatures from more than 5 per cent of the country's electoral population, or 580,000 citizens.

The Ecuadorean National Assembly approved a package of constitutional changes last December that including removing term limits on public officials. However, the changes approved by lawmakers will not go into effect until after May 24, 2017.

That transitional provision was proposed by President Correa in an effort to silence critics who accused him of seeking to extend his time in office.