

DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

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Marriage Initiative Enters Circulation

SACRAMENTO – Secretary of State Debra Bowen today announced that the proponent of a new initiative may begin collecting petition signatures for his measure.

The Attorney General prepares the legal title and summary that is required to appear on initiative petitions. When the official language is complete, the Attorney General forwards it to the proponent and to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State then provides calendar deadlines to the proponent and to county elections officials, and the initiative may be circulated for signatures. The Attorney General's official title and summary for the first measure is as follows:

ELIMINATES THE LAW ALLOWING MARRIED COUPLES TO DIVORCE. INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT. Changes the California Constitution to eliminate the ability of married couples to get divorced in California. Preserves the ability of married couples to seek an annulment. Summary of estimate by Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of fiscal impact on state and local government: Savings to the state of up to hundreds of millions of dollars annually for support of the court system due to the elimination of divorce proceedings. (09-0026.)

The Secretary of State's tracking number for this measure is 1379 and the Attorney General's tracking number is 09-0026.

The proponent for this measure, John Marcotte, must collect signatures of 694,354 registered voters – the number equal to 8% of the total votes cast for governor in the 2006 gubernatorial election – in order to qualify it for the ballot. The proponent has 150 days to circulate petitions for this measure, meaning the signatures must be collected by March 22, 2010.

The initiative proponent can be reached at 5228 21st Avenue, Sacramento, California 95820. No phone number was provided.

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