



# NEWS RELEASE

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## CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE ALEX PADILLA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Proposed Initiative Enters Circulation

#### *Religious Organizations. Initiative Statute.*

**SACRAMENTO** – Secretary of State Alex Padilla today announced the proponent of a new initiative may begin collecting petition signatures.

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, and the initiative may be circulated for signatures. The Secretary of State then provides calendar deadlines to the proponent and to county elections officials. The Attorney General's official title and summary for the measure is as follows:

**RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS. INITIATIVE STATUTE.** Rescinds religious tax exemptions for religious organizations that interfere with legal proceedings by not complying with court orders, concealing or failing to report criminal activity, promoting false testimony, or using intimidation to prevent others from taking legal action against them. Rescinds religious tax exemptions for religious organizations that lobby government or that are associated with terrorist groups. Prohibits such religious organizations, and religious organizations that commit or are involved in other crimes, from asserting ecclesiastical privilege and/or the rights of free speech and freedom of religion as defenses to liability in legal proceedings. Summary of estimate by Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of fiscal impact on state and local government: **If implemented, possible minor increase in state or local government revenues if any entities are found to violate the measure's provisions and a possible minor increase in state or local government costs to investigate claims arising under the measure.** (15-0023.)

The Secretary of State's tracking number for this measure is 1686 and the Attorney General's tracking number is 15-0023.

The proponent for the measure, Jonathan D. Cobb, must collect signatures of 365,880 registered voters (five percent of the total votes cast for governor in the November 2014 general election) in order to qualify it for the November 2016 ballot. The proponent has 180 days to circulate petitions for the measure, meaning the signatures must be submitted to county elections officials by December 22, 2015. The proponent can be reached at 828 Weeks Street, East Palo Alto, CA 94303. No phone number was provided.

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