



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE ALEX PADILLA

AP15:067

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 22, 2015

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Proposed Initiative Enters Circulation

Initiative and Referendum Petitions. Electronic Signature Gathering. 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:

INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM PETITIONS. ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE GATHERING. INITIATIVE STATUTE. Authorizes electronic signature gathering for initiative and referendum petitions. Requires county elections officials to establish a digital platform to accept and process registered voters' digital signatures, scanned thumbprints, and personal identification numbers for use in signing petitions. Prohibits election officials from discriminating between handwritten or electronic signatures. Permits proponents, at their own cost, to translate and circulate petitions in any language. Requires legislators to pay, from personal funds, the same fee to introduce legislation as proponents pay to obtain a title and summary from the Attorney General. Summary of estimate by Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of fiscal impact on state and local government: **Increased costs to state and local governments to administer the initiative process. These costs include (1) one-time costs—possibly tens of millions of dollars—to state and local governments to develop new information technology systems and (2) ongoing costs to local governments of possibly millions of dollars each year. Ongoing fiscal effect on state government is not certain and depends on future decisions and actions by lawmakers.** (15-0042.)

The Secretary of State's tracking number for this measure is 1703 and the Attorney General's tracking number is 15-0042.

The proponent for the measure, Barton C. Gilbert, must collect the 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 March 21, 2016. The proponent can be reached at bartgilbert@sovereignca.org. No phone number was provided.

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