



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **KEVIN SHELLEY**

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Proposed Initiative Enters Circulation

Limitations on "Three Strikes" Law. Sex Crimes. Punishment. Initiative Statute.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA --- Secretary of State Kevin Shelley announced today the proponent of a new initiative received clearance to begin collecting petition signatures.

The Attorney General's official title and summary is as follows:

LIMITATIONS ON "THREE STRIKES" LAW. SEX CRIMES. PUNISHMENT. INITIATIVE STATUTE. Amends "Three Strikes" law to require increased sentences only when current conviction is for specified violent and/or serious felonies, brought and tried separately, would qualify for second and third "strike" sentence increases. Allows conditional re-sentencing of persons with sentences increased under "Three Strikes" law if previous sentencing offenses, or prior convictions used to increase sentences, would no longer qualify as violent and/or serious felonies. Increases punishment for specified sex crimes against children. Summary of estimate by Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of fiscal impact on state and local governments: State costs potentially ranging from several tens of millions of dollars to in excess of \$100 million annually. Local costs potentially ranging from a couple million to several millions of dollars statewide. Both the state and local costs could be partially offset by unknown savings to the extent the measure deters offenders from committing specified sex offenses.

The proponent, James R. "Jim" Benson, must collect 373,816 signatures of registered voters, 5 percent of the total votes cast for governor in the 2002 gubernatorial election, for his measure. The 150-day deadline to circulate petitions is May 3, 2004. The initiative proponent can be reached at 714-547-9842.

For a copy of the complete text, title & summary, and circulation calendar, please contact the Secretary of State's Press Office at 916-653-6575.