NEWS RELEASE
CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE KEVIN SHELLEY

KS04:025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, April 8, 2004

Contact: Doug Stone
Carol Dahmen
916-653-6575

Proposed Initiative Enters Circulation

School Vouchers. Initiative Constitutional Amendment.

SACRAMENTO, CA --- Secretary of State Kevin Shelley announced today that the proponent of a new initiative may begin collecting petition signatures for his measure.

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

SCHOOL VOUCHERS. INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.

- Authorizes state-funded scholarships, for parents of children attending underperforming public schools only, to enroll children in eligible nonpublic schools.
- Determines K through 12 scholarship values at lesser of per pupil state funding for school or district in which child resides, or actual tuition and fees at eligible nonpublic school.
- Requires scholarship-redeeming schools to agree not to compel scholarship students to profess specific ideology or to worship.
- Requires two-thirds vote of Legislature to amend measure.

The summary of the estimate by the Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of the fiscal impact on state and local governments indicates an unknown impact on overall state spending for K-12 education. State would incur costs potentially over a billion dollars annually in the long run to provide scholarships to eligible pupils who would otherwise have attended private schools absent this measure. Per pupil funding for pupils remaining in public schools is likely to grow more slowly over time.

The proponent, Stanley Lee Harper, must collect 598,105 signatures of registered voters, which is eight percent of the total votes cast for governor in the 2002 gubernatorial election. The 150-day deadline to circulate petitions is September 7, 2004. The initiative proponent can be reached at 213-624-6200.

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.

-30-