



DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

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Criminal Penalties Initiative Enters Circulation

Criminal Penalties and Laws. State Spending. Statute.

SACRAMENTO – Secretary of State Debra Bowen today announced that the proponents of a new initiative may begin collecting petition signatures for their 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 proponents and to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State then provides calendar deadlines to the proponents and to county elections officials, and the initiative may be circulated for signatures. The Attorney General's official title and summary for the measure is as follows:

CRIMINAL PENALTIES AND LAWS. STATE SPENDING. STATUTE.

Requires significant new state spending on various programs to combat crime and gangs, and to operate prison and parole systems. Substantially increases penalties for several crimes, including violating gang injunctions, using or possessing to sell methamphetamine, or carrying loaded or concealed firearms by certain felons. Eliminates bail for illegal immigrants charged with violent or gang-related felonies, and changes evidence rules to allow use of certain hearsay statements as evidence when witnesses are unavailable. Summary of estimate by Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of fiscal impact on state and local government: Net state costs likely to exceed a half billion dollars annually primarily for increased funding of criminal justice programs, as well as for increased costs for prison and parole operations. Unknown one-time state capital outlay costs potentially exceeding a half billion dollars for prison facilities. Unknown net fiscal impact for state trial courts, county jails, and other local criminal justice agencies. (Initiative 07-0076.)

The Secretary of State's tracking number for this measure is 1312 and the Attorney General's tracking number is 07-0076.

The proponents for this measure, George C. Runner, Jr., Gary Ovitt, and Mike Reynolds, must collect signatures of 433,971 registered voters – the number equal to 5% of the total votes cast for governor in the 2006 gubernatorial election – in order to qualify it for the ballot. The proponents have 150 days to circulate petitions for this measure, meaning the signatures must be collected by June 2, 2008.

The initiative proponents can be reached at 925 University Avenue, Sacramento, California, 95825. No phone number was provided.

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