

DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Kate Folmar
(916) 653-6575

Fifth Victims' Rights Initiative Enters Circulation

*Criminal Justice System. Victims' Rights.
Parole. Constitutional Amendment and 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 JUSTICE SYSTEM. VICTIMS' RIGHTS. PAROLE. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AND STATUTE. Requires notification to victim and opportunity for input during phases of criminal justice process, including bail, pleas, sentencing and parole. Establishes victim safety as consideration in determining bail or release on parole. Increases the number of people permitted to attend and testify on behalf of victims at parole hearings. Reduces the number of parole hearings to which prisoners are entitled. Requires that victims receive written notification of their constitutional rights. Establishes timelines and procedures concerning parole revocation hearings. Summary of estimate by Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of fiscal impact on state and local government: Unknown potential increases in state prison and county jail operating costs due to provisions restricting early release of inmates. To the extent that any such costs were incurred, they could collectively amount to hundreds of millions of dollars annually. A potential net savings in the low tens of millions of dollars for the administration of parole reviews and revocations if the changes related to parole revocation procedures were not overturned by potential legal challenges. (Initiative 07-0100.)

The Secretary of State's tracking number for this measure is 1325 and the Attorney General's tracking number is 07-0100.

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The proponents for this measure, Henry Nicholas, Marcella Leach, and LaWanda Hawkins, must collect signatures of 694,354 registered voters – the number equal to 8% 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 July 7, 2008.

The initiative proponents can be reached at (916) 442-7757.

For more information about other victims' rights initiatives, go to http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_j.htm.

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