

DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Secretary of State Debra Bowen Certifies Fifth Measure for November 4, 2008, General Election

SACRAMENTO – Secretary of State Debra Bowen today certified a fifth initiative for the November 4, 2008, General Election ballot. The measure relates to the sentencing, parole, and rehabilitation of nonviolent offenders.

The first four propositions to qualify for the November ballot were a high-speed rail bond, a measure relating to the treatment of farm animals, a children's hospital bond, and a parental notification for abortion measure.

In order to qualify for the ballot, the sentencing measure needed 433,971 valid petition signatures, which is equal to 5% of the total votes cast for governor in the November 2006 General Election. The initiative proponents submitted 761,183 signatures in an attempt to qualify the measure, and it qualified through the random sample signature check.

County elections officials have 30 working days to verify the validity of the signatures filed with their offices using a random sampling method. The state Elections Code requires elections officials to verify 500 signatures, or 3% of the number of signatures filed in their county, whichever is greater. Counties receiving fewer than 500 petition signatures are required to verify all the signatures filed in their offices.

A measure can qualify via random sampling, without further verification, if the sampling projects a number of valid signatures greater than 110% of the required number. This measure needed at least 477,369 projected valid signatures to qualify by random sampling, and it exceeded that threshold today with 483,278 projected valid signatures.

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

NONVIOLENT OFFENDERS, SENTENCING, PAROLE AND REHABILITATION. STATUTE. Requires State to expand and increase funding and oversight for individualized treatment and rehabilitation programs for nonviolent drug offenders and parolees. Reduces criminal consequences of nonviolent drug offenses by mandating three-tiered probation with treatment and by providing for case dismissal and/or sealing of records after probation. Limits court's authority to incarcerate offenders who violate probation or parole. Shortens parole for most drug offenses, including sales, and for nonviolent property crimes. Creates numerous divisions, boards, commissions, and reporting requirements regarding drug treatment and rehabilitation. Changes certain marijuana misdemeanors to infractions.

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Summary of estimate by Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of fiscal impact on state and local government: Increased state costs that could exceed \$1 billion annually primarily for expanding drug treatment and rehabilitation programs for offenders in state prisons, on parole, and in the community. Savings to the state that could exceed \$1 billion annually due primarily to reduced prison and parole operating costs. Net savings on a one-time basis on capital outlay costs for prison facilities that could exceed \$2.5 billion. Unknown net fiscal effect on expenditures for county operations and capital outlay. (Initiative 07-0081.)

The initiative proponents, Daniel N. Abrahamson, can be reached at (510) 229-5211.

The last day to qualify a measure for the November General Election ballot is June 26.

For more information about how an initiative qualifies for the ballot in California, go to http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/initiative_guide.htm.

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