

DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

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

SACRAMENTO – Secretary of State Debra Bowen today certified the ninth initiative for the November 4, 2008, General Election ballot. The measure involves victims' rights in the criminal justice system.

The first eight 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; a parental notification for abortion measure; a measure involving the sentencing of nonviolent offenders; a measure regarding increased criminal penalties and public safety funding; a renewable energy measure; and a measure that would amend the state Constitution to define marriage as "between a man and a woman."

In order to qualify for the ballot, the victims' rights measure needed 694,354 valid petition signatures, which is equal to 8% of the total votes cast for governor in the November 2006 General Election. The initiative proponents submitted 1,267,992 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 763,790 projected valid signatures to qualify by random sampling, and it exceeded that threshold today with 771,854 projected valid signatures.

The Attorney General's official title and summary of the initiative 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

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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 proponents for this measure, Henry Nicholas, Marcella Leach, and LaWanda Hawkins, can be reached at (916) 442-7757.

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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