



DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

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Genetically Engineered Foods Initiative Enters Circulation

Genetically Engineered Foods. Mandatory Labeling. Initiative Statute.

SACRAMENTO – Secretary of State Debra Bowen today announced that the proponent of a new initiative may begin collecting petition signatures for his 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 proponent and to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State then provides calendar deadlines to the proponent 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:

GENETICALLY ENGINEERED FOODS. MANDATORY LABELING. INITIATIVE STATUTE. Requires labeling on raw or processed food offered for sale to consumers if made from plants or animals with genetic material changed in specified ways. Prohibits labeling or advertising such food as "natural." Exempts foods that are: certified organic; unintentionally produced with genetically engineered material; made from animals fed or injected with genetically engineered material but not genetically engineered themselves; processed with or containing only small amounts of genetically engineered ingredients; administered for treatment of medical conditions; sold for immediate consumption such as in a restaurant; or alcoholic beverages. Summary of estimate by Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of fiscal impact on state and local government: **Potential increase in state administrative costs of up to one million dollars annually to monitor compliance with the disclosure requirements specified in the measure. Unknown, but potentially significant, costs for the courts, the Attorney General, and district attorneys due to litigation resulting from possible violations to the provisions of this measure.** (11-0099.)

The Secretary of State's tracking number for this measure is 1570 and the Attorney General's tracking number is 11-0099.

The proponent for this measure, James Wheaton, must collect signatures of 504,760 registered voters – the number equal to five percent of the total votes cast for governor in the 2010 gubernatorial election – in order to qualify it for the ballot. The proponent has 150 days to circulate petitions for this measure, meaning the signatures must be collected by July 13, 2012.

The initiative proponent can be reached at (510) 444-4710, extension 309.

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