



DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS RELEASE

DB14:002

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Healthcare Pricing Initiative Enters Circulation

Hospitals. Healthcare Service Charges. Initiative Statute.

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

HOSPITALS. HEALTHCARE SERVICE CHARGES. INITIATIVE STATUTE.

Prohibits hospitals from charging more than 25 percent above the estimated cost of goods and services provided to patients. Requires hospitals to refund excess charges each year, adjusted to account for unreimbursed losses from treating uninsured and low-income patients. Requires hospitals to provide annual patient care expense and revenue reports. Exempts children's hospitals, public hospitals, and veterans' hospitals. Authorizes regulations and fees assessed on hospitals to implement measure, and penalties for non-compliance. Summary of estimate by Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of fiscal impact on state and local government: **State and local government savings associated with reduced government employer-sponsored health insurance spending on hospital services, potentially ranging from the mid- to high-hundreds of millions of dollars annually, offset to an unknown degree by (1) various responses by insurers and hospitals and (2) possible pressures to increase General Fund spending on Medi-Cal hospital services. Uncertain but potentially significant state and local government costs over the next few years, due to likely decreased revenues from existing limited-term fees on certain private hospitals to (1) offset state costs for children's health coverage and (2) support state and local public hospitals. (13-0041.)**

The Secretary of State's tracking number for this measure is 1628 and the Attorney General's tracking number is 13-0041.

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The proponents for the measure, Rebecca Eve Malberg and Stanley Alan Lyles, 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 proponents have 150 days to circulate petitions for the measures, meaning the signatures must be collected by June 5, 2014.

The proponents can be reached at (916) 442-2952.

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