



DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Nicole Winger
(916) 653-6575

Criminal Sentencing Initiative Enters Circulation

Criminal Sentences. Misdemeanor Penalties. 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:

CRIMINAL SENTENCES. MISDEMEANOR PENALTIES. INITIATIVE STATUTE. Requires misdemeanor sentence instead of felony for petty theft, receiving stolen property, and forging/writing bad checks when value or amount involved is \$950 or less. Requires misdemeanor sentence instead of felony for certain drug possession offenses. Allows felony sentence for these offenses if person has previous conviction for crimes such as rape, murder or child molestation or is a registered sex offender. Requires resentencing for persons serving felony sentences for these offenses unless court finds unreasonable public safety risk. Applies savings to mental health and drug treatment programs, K-12 schools, and crime victims. Summary of estimate by Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of fiscal impact on state and local government: **Net state criminal justice system savings that could reach the low hundreds of millions of dollars annually, which would be spent on truancy prevention, mental health and substance abuse treatment, and victim services. Net county criminal justice system savings that could reach the low hundreds of millions of dollars annually.** (13-0060.)

The Secretary of State's tracking number for this measure is 1645 and the Attorney General's tracking number is 13-0060.

The proponents for the measure, William Lansdowne and George Gascon, must collect signatures of 504,760 registered voters (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 measure, meaning the signatures must be submitted to county elections officials by July 14, 2014. The proponents can be reached at (510) 346-6200.

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