

DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS RELEASE

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Inmate Rehabilitation & Visitation Initiative Enters Circulation

Inmates. Rehabilitation and Visitation Programs. Statute.

SACRAMENTO – Secretary of State Debra Bowen today announced that 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. The Secretary of State then provides calendar deadlines to the proponents 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:

INMATES. REHABILITATION AND VISITATION PROGRAMS.

STATUTE. Eliminates certain restrictions on prisoners' participation in educational and substance dependency classes and family visitation programs. Prohibits exclusion based on sentence, custody designation, prior crimes or disciplinary offenses and commitment offenses. Provides that inmates condemned to die are not eligible for family visitation program. Allows family visitation privileges only to inmates who: (1) are not residing in reception centers or administrative segregation/security housing units; (2) are competent to and have obtained a high school diploma or equivalent; (3) agree to random drug testing; (4) pay \$25 toward cost of a visit. Summary of estimate by Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of fiscal impact on state and local government: Annual state prison operating costs that would range between several tens of millions and a few hundreds of millions of dollars annually, primarily to expand inmate educational and substance abuse programs. These costs could be more than offset by state savings due to reductions in the prison population resulting from expanding these programs. One-time capital outlay costs of between several tens of millions and several hundreds of millions of dollars to construct and renovate prison visiting, education, and substance abuse treatment facilities. (Initiative 07-0070.)

The Secretary of State's tracking number for this measure is 1299 and the Attorney General's tracking number is 07-0070.

The proponents for this measure, Catherine Langston and Danielle Swaze, must collect signatures of 433,971 registered voters – the number equal to 5% of the total votes cast for governor in the 2006 gubernatorial election – in order to qualify it for the ballot. The proponents have 150 days to circulate petitions for this measure, meaning the signatures must be collected by May 2, 2008.

The initiative proponents can be reached at P.O. Box 5095, Diamond Bar, California 91765. No phone number was provided.

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