

TO:

Ryan Ronco, County Clerk-Recorder-Registrar of Voters
2954 Richardson Dr Auburn CA 95603

Gerald O. Carden, County Counsel
175 Fulweiler Ave Auburn CA 95603

DATE: November 28, 2018

RE: Demand to Not Certify Elections Due to Offenses Against the Elective Franchise

We are extremely disappointed that you did not respond to, much less heed, our notices of March 19, 2018 and August 4, 2018 regarding conforming school measure ballots to the mandatory requirements of the Elections Code and the Education Code.

Non-Conforming Ballot Statements

By not conforming the ballot statements to the law, you have permitted the school and college districts (and other taxing agencies) to deceive the voters about the nature of the underlying measure. When the law is ignored, the measure itself, as you well know, is never referenced in the ballot statement. That is by design. Elections Code 13119(a), if applied as written, vanquishes that deception. In addition, the printed full text of the measure is separated from the sample ballot in the voter information guide by pages and pages of material and advertisements resulting in barely one in twenty voters recognizing that they are voting, not on a marketing question, but on a contractual obligation specified in the text of the measure.

The purpose of the legislature's mandatory requirements are to improve disclosure and end deception. Both of these are substantive and not merely procedural or directory in nature.

The legislature has determined that your printing and circulation of non-conforming ballot statements is an offense against the elective franchise and subject to criminal sanctions.

The following measures appear to or are likely to exceed the constitutional threshold for passage. Each ballot statement contains one or more points of non-conformance.

Measure A (parcel tax) (Uncertain)

To keep park and recreation facilities safe, clean and well maintained, shall the measure approving Rocklin City Ordinance 1093 be adopted? This measure would allow the City to continue to collect a \$10.00 to \$30.00 per year special tax to be used only for park maintenance and development. It would raise \$600,000 annually and would extend for 10 years through June 30, 2029.

Non-conforming offenses for this ballot statement include:

- not in the form "Shall the measure (stating the nature thereof) be adopted?" - ELC 13119(a)

Measure B (transactions and use tax) (Uncertain)

Shall the measure to ensure essential City services including neighborhood police patrols, fire protection, 9-1-1 emergency response; crime suppression/investigation; street and pothole repair; libraries, parks and recreation; job creation and economic improvement programs; and unrestricted general revenue purposes by establishing a 1/2% Transaction and Use ("sales") tax, providing an estimated \$18.4M annually, until ended by voters, with independent citizens' oversight, regular audits, no money for the state, and all funds spent locally, be adopted?

Non-conforming offenses for this ballot statement include:

- benefits language to create prejudice for the measure - ELC 13119(c)[4]
- objectively false or deceptive statement in synopsis - ELC 13119(c)[1]
- word count of 76 exceeds statutory limit - EDC 5322/ELC 13247

Measure C (cannabis business tax) (Uncertain)

To fund general municipal expenses such as police, fire, roads and recreation, shall the City tax cannabis (marijuana) businesses at annual rates not to exceed \$10.00 per canopy square foot for cultivation (adjustable for inflation), 6% of gross receipts for retail cannabis businesses, and 4% for all other cannabis businesses; which is expected to generate an estimated \$8,000 to \$12,000 annually and will be levied until repealed by the voters or the City Council?

Non-conforming offenses for this ballot statement include:

- benefits language to create prejudice for the measure - ELC 13119(c)[4]
- not in the form "Shall the measure (stating the nature thereof) be adopted?" - ELC 13119(a)
- objectively false or deceptive statement in synopsis - ELC 13119(c)[1]

Measure D (Prop 39 bond) 52.05% (Uncertain)

To repair/upgrade aging classrooms/facilities at Del Oro High School; repair deteriorating roofs/plumbing; upgrade science, math, computer, engineering labs and career education classrooms; maintain safe drinking water; reduce overcrowding; improve safety/security; shall the measure for Del Oro High School Facilities Improvement District No. 2 of Placer Union High School District issuing \$40,300,000 in bonds at legal interest rates, averaging \$2,341,000 raised annually until 2050, rates estimated at \$27 per \$100,000 assessed valuation be adopted, with independent oversight/audits, funding used for Del Oro High School only?

Non-conforming offenses for this ballot statement include:

- uses argumentative language - ELC 13119(c)[4]
- benefits language to create prejudice for the measure - ELC 13119(c)[4]
- not in the form "Shall the measure (stating the nature thereof) be adopted?" - ELC 13119(a)
- omission of maximum rate of interest - EDC 15122[3]
- objectively false or deceptive statement in synopsis - ELC 13119(c)[1]
- word count of 76 exceeds statutory limit - EDC 5322/ELC 13247

Measure G (Prop 39 bond) 58.85% (Passing)

To repair/upgrade aging classrooms/labs/facilities at Placer High School; repair deteriorating roofs/plumbing/bathrooms; upgrade math/computer/engineering labs and vocational/career education classrooms; maintain safe drinking water; improve safety/security systems; shall the measure for Placer High School Facilities Improvement District No. 1 of Placer Union High School District issuing \$42,100,000 in bonds at legal interest rates, averaging \$2,447,000 raised annually until 2050, rates estimated at \$27 per \$100,000 assessed valuation be adopted, with independent oversight/audits, funding used for Placer High School only?

Non-conforming offenses for this ballot statement include:

- uses argumentative language - ELC 13119(c)[4]
- benefits language to create prejudice for the measure - ELC 13119(c)[4]
- not in the form "Shall the measure (stating the nature thereof) be adopted?" - ELC 13119(a)
- omission of maximum rate of interest - EDC 15122[3]
- objectively false or deceptive statement in synopsis - ELC 13119(c)[1]
- word count of 77 exceeds statutory limit - EDC 5322/ELC 13247

Measure H (Prop 39 bond) 39.26% (Uncertain)

Shall the measure to improve schools and student safety with funding that cannot be taken by the State, upgrade safety/security communication systems, quality for State matching funds; provide health science labs/classrooms, college/job training facilities; aquatic center/physical education facilities, shall Western Placer Unified School District issue \$60,000,000 in bonds with an average of \$3,600,000 raised annually for 32 years at average tax rates of 2.5¢ per \$100 of assessed value, requiring independent audits/oversight be adopted?

Non-conforming offenses for this ballot statement include:

- benefits language to create prejudice for the measure - ELC 13119(c)[4]
- omission of maximum rate of interest - EDC 15122[3]

Measure AA (parcel tax) 73.29% (Passing)

Tahoe Truckee Unified School District Save Our Schools Renewal Measure. To ensure all students receive a well-rounded, high quality education to prepare them for college, university and careers; maintain and prevent cuts in science, technology, music, art, honors and career/job training programs, shall Tahoe Truckee Unified School District renew and increase its expiring parcel tax at the rate of \$148 generating \$5,600,000 annually for 9 years; requiring citizens oversight, independent audits, senior exemptions, and funds used in Tahoe Truckee Unified School District, be adopted?

Non-conforming offenses for this ballot statement include:

- benefits language to create prejudice for the measure - ELC 13119(c)[4]
- not in the form "Shall the measure (stating the nature thereof) be adopted?" - ELC 13119(a)
- use of title to create prejudice for the measure - ELC 13119(c)[4]

Failure of Measures to Qualify Under the Requirements of Proposition 39

Beyond your willful failure to conform the ballot statements to the statutory requirements, you have failed to qualify the Proposition 39 measures themselves with respect to the constitutional requirements that the measures claim to avail themselves of, to wit:

- 1) prohibit the use of bond proceeds for any purpose, including salaries and operating costs, other than the construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, and replacement of school facilities [Art. XIII A, Section 1(b)(3)(A)], and
- 2) present to the voters, before they vote, a list of the specific school facility projects to be funded by the proceeds. [Art. XIII A, Section 1(b)(3)(B)]

Each and every one of the measures contains language specifically intended to avoid the limitations as to the authorized uses of the bond proceeds.

Each and every one of the measures contains language specifically intended to expend bond proceeds on purposes other than construction of school facilities. Among the unauthorized purposes, the measures explicitly purport to authorize expenditures for administration and operating costs, notwithstanding the explicit prohibition of Proposition 39.

Each and every one of the measures contains language specifically intended to expand the project list to anything and everything under the sun, all to be determined at a later date.

Your failure to qualify Proposition 39 measures appearing on the ballot is, similarly, an offense against the elective franchise.

Impartial Analysis

The allegedly impartial analysis of measures in which county counsel is required to present independent, impartial legal opinions, is merely a regurgitation, often using direct quotations, of language from the measure itself or from the tax rate statement.

A reading of the analysis provides the voting public with no insight that is not already in the other materials in the voter information guide. The highlight of the analysis appears to be that "Yes" means "Yes" and "No" means "No." Woe to those without a top-notch public education who might be confused.

Moreover, county counsel fails to address the requirements of the Elections Code and, for school bond measures, the Education Code with respect to the ballot statement. County counsel also fails to address the language that purports to override the qualification restrictions with respect to Proposition 39 measures.

The effect of a wholly uncritical opinion is that those voters who read the Impartial Analysis are misled by a putatively authoritative source.

Conclusion

By allowing proponents to avoid mandatory disclosure requirements, no one can know, with any degree of certainty, what the will of the voters might have been had they been presented with an honest ballot containing all mandatory disclosures, containing no false or misleading statements, and containing no argumentative or prejudicial language.

As one state supreme court has held:

No one can say with any certainty what the vote of the electorate would have been if the voting public had been given the whole truth, as mandated by the statute, and had been told "the chief purpose of the measure."

Those who object to forced taxation through the fraudulent and unlawful ballot statements and measures have been injured due to your foregoing willful failures to follow the law. The only adequate remedy for this total contempt and disregard of the laws enacted to guarantee a fair and impartial election process is that you not certify the elections identified above.

Sincerely,

Richard Michael
California School Bonds Clearinghouse

Alex Aliferis
Former Executive Director of Contra Costa Taxpayers Association

Bruce Boyer
Candidate for Sheriff, Ventura County

Bernadette Chenard-Hsing
Activist

Fred H. Crane
Taxpayer

Linda Davis
Advocate for Honest School Bonds

John A. Davison
Voting and Taxpayers Advocate

Alison Herson
Taxpayer in Allan Hancock College Joint Community College District

Dan Hilker
Taxpayer in Allan Hancock College Joint Community College District

Sandra Kallander
Politics Reduction Activist and Voter

Michael R. Kupperberg
Sonoma County Resident of 30 plus years

David E. Kenney, Esq.

Peter Loeb
Former Mayor, Pacifica, CA

Savina Q. Low
Taxpayer

Douglas Mills
Taxpayer

Stephen C Petzold
The Center for Truth in School Bond Measures ID 1408280

Miyo Prassas
Hermosa Beach Community Advocate

Michael Robertson
Concerned Taxpayer

Honor "Mimi" Robson
Libertarian Party of California Chair

Sally Smith
Taxpayer in San Diego Unified School District

Ludd A. Trozpek
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