

**TO:**

Freddie Oakley, Registrar of Voters  
625 Court St # B05 Woodland CA 95695

Phil Pogledich, County Counsel  
625 Court St # 201 Woodland CA 95695-3490

**DATE:** November 28, 2018

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

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We are extremely disappointed that you did not respond to, much less heed, our notice of August 6, 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 H** (parcel tax) (Uncertain)

Shall Ordinance 2521, which renews the existing Park Maintenance Tax of \$49 per year on residential units and on non-residential units in amounts specified in the Ordinance, for 20 years, adds an annual 2% inflator, and is expected to generate \$1.4 million in the first year to fund maintenance of parks, street trees, greenbelts, bike paths, medians, public landscaping, urban wildlife and habitat, swimming pools, and public recreational facilities, be adopted?

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 I** (parcel tax) (Uncertain)

Shall Ordinance 2522 be adopted to add Article 15.21 to the Davis Municipal Code to establish a Street and Bike Path Maintenance Tax of \$99 per year on residential units and on non-residential units in amounts specified in the Ordinance, to fund maintenance of streets, bike lanes and paths, sidewalks, and related transportation infrastructure, which is estimated to raise \$2.8 million, with a 2% annual inflator, for a period of 10 years?

Non-conforming offenses for this ballot statement include:

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

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**Measure K** (cannabis business tax) (Uncertain)

Shall a tax be imposed on marijuana businesses in unincorporated Yolo County, between 1-15% of gross receipts, with a 4% initial rate on cultivation and 5% for other marijuana businesses, subject to a citizen's oversight committee, which can be spent for criminal enforcement of illegal cultivation, early childhood intervention and prevention, youth development, rural infrastructure and for other unrestricted general revenue purposes, with potential annual revenue of \$1,000,000 plus, for an indefinite duration?

Non-conforming offenses for this ballot statement include:

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

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**Measure M** (Prop 39 bond) 70.63% (Passing)

To update classrooms, science/innovation labs, and facilities to meet current academic standards, improve accessibility for students, upgrade school safety/security, keep schools well-maintained, and modernize classroom learning technology, shall Davis Joint Unified School District issue \$150,900,000 in bonds, at legal interest rates, raising \$21,000,000 on average annually to repay bonds while outstanding, at an estimated rate of \$60 per \$100,000 of assessed value, with citizen oversight, annual audits, no funds for administrator salaries, and funds staying local?

Non-conforming offenses for this ballot statement include:

- objectively false or deceptive statement in synopsis - ELC 13119(c)[1]
- no duration of the tax to be levied - ELC 13119(b)[3]
- 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]

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**Measure N** (transactions and use tax) (Uncertain)

To fund public safety and investments in inclusive economic development and community improvements, shall the City of West Sacramento enact a 1/4 percent transactions and use tax (sales tax) providing approximately \$3.4 million annually on an ongoing basis for general revenue purposes?

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)

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**Measure O** (Prop 39 bond) 44.33% (Uncertain)

To finance installation of a comprehensive HVAC system at Woodland High School and construction of a new practice gymnasium at Pioneer High School, shall the Woodland Joint Unified School District issue \$20,200,000 of bonds with an estimated \$4,448,000 in taxes raised annually on average for five years at average projected tax rates of 5.28 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation, with citizen oversight, annual audits, no funds for

administrator salaries, with all funds staying local?

Non-conforming offenses for this ballot statement include:

- objectively false or deceptive statement in synopsis - ELC 13119(c)[1]
- 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]

**Measure P** (Prop 39 bond) 60.30% (Passing)

To improve the quality of education; repair/replace leaky roofs; modernize outdated classrooms, restrooms and school facilities; and replace deteriorating plumbing and sewer systems; shall Winters Joint Unified School District issue \$20,000,000 of bonds, raising on average \$1,100,000 annually as long as bonds are outstanding at a rate of 6 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation, have an independent citizens' oversight committee and have NO money used for administrative salaries and all money staying local?

Non-conforming offenses for this ballot statement include:

- objectively false or deceptive statement in synopsis - ELC 13119(c)[1]
- uses argumentative language - ELC 13119(c)[4]
- benefits language to create prejudice for the measure - ELC 13119(c)[4]
- no duration of the tax to be levied - ELC 13119(b)[3]
- 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]

### **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  
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Linda Davis  
Advocate for Honest School Bonds

John A. Davison  
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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  
California resident and citizen

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