

The County of Yuba

County Clerk/Recorder/Registrar of Voters



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: County Clerk/Recorder/Registrar of Voters, Donna Hillegass

SUBJECT: Clerk/Recorder/Elections: Adopt resolution authorizing elections office to not print the list of proponents and opponents of local measures on the ballot. Pursuant to Elections Code section 9170(d)

DATE: 10/24/2023

NUMBER: 530/2023

Recommendation:

Adopt resolution authorizing the Elections Office to not list proponents and opponents of local measures on county ballot for future elections.

Background:

Assembly Bill (AB) 1416 passed by the State Legislature in 2022, effective January 1, 2023, adds the requirement that statewide measures list the supporters and opponents of measures on the ballot label or that a similar description be provided on the ballot. AB 1416 gives counties the option of printing the list of supporters and opponents for local measures on the ballot. The list could include associations, non-profit organizations, business, and individuals taken from the signers of the text of the argument in favor or against the measure printed in the voter information guide. The list of proponents and opponents are each limited to a maximum of 125 characters each.

Opting into the additional printing will result in cost increases for ballot production and printing, it will result in additional ballot space for each local measure printed on the ballot and will increase the possibility for electioneering and promotion of candidates who may be on the ballot and are also signers of the measure. The requirement would also put the Elections Office in the position of accepting or denying abbreviations of supporters/opponents that may not be clear due to the maximum character limit, and in turn may result in challenges to perceived unfair determinations.

Information regarding measure supporters and opponents is already provided in the Voter Information Guide. Additionally, this requirement would increase staff workload with no corresponding adjustment to already tight deadlines for the preparation of ballots.

Election Code 9170 allows a mechanism to opt out of printing proponents and opponents of local measures as set forth in subsection (d). The subsection states as follows:

At least 30 days before the deadline for submitting arguments for or against county measures, a county board of supervisors may elect not to list supporters and opponents for county, city, district and school measures on the county ballot and future county ballots.

The proposed action would allow the Elections Office to not list proponents and opponents of local measures in all future county ballots in accordance with section 9170.

Committee Action

Bypass committee action due to time restraints.

Fiscal Impact

If the resolution is not adopted, there is an anticipated increase in printing cost, and potentially mailing costs, to all Yuba County registered voters due to the possible increase in the number of ballot cards required. This would also result in additional staff costs for reviewing, proofing, translating, and administering the added requirement.

Attachments

Resolution