March 25, 2021

To: CACEO County Clerks Legislative Committee

From: Matt Siverling, Legislative Advocate

Re: Monthly Report

The introduction deadline is now officially 30 days behind us, meaning that all measures that have been introduced are now officially eligible for amending and setting for hearing. The deadline to submit language for amending spot bills has also passed; meaning that many bills on our radar may be morphing into substantive bills soon, if not already. Further, a large amount of bills that weren’t ready for primetime will be designated as “two-year bills” if that aren’t populated with substantive language.

Policy committees have begun to crank through the bills that Authors were prepared to present. Appropriations committees have also begun to set bills for hearing in an effort to get a head start on the process.

The key deadline to be aware of is not until April 30th, which is the last day for policy committees to hear bills and pass to Appropriations. This deadline includes a week of dead time during Spring Recess, which precedes Easter.

**SPONSORED BILLS**

CACEO County Clerks Legislative Committee opted to sponsor one bill this year.

**ASSEMBLY BILL 583 (Chiu) Remote Marriage and Electronic Issuance of Licenses**

In response to the pandemic and subsequent “stay at home” order issued by the State, we pursued an Executive Order in 2020 to allow for the waiving of select Family Code provisions to allow for the remote/electronic issuance of marriage licenses and solemnization of ceremonies.

As 2021 began, we determined that, although the Executive Order is still in effect for the foreseeable future, it would be advisable to move forward with permanent changes to law to allow for the continuation of the service. Many counties have received positive feedback from constituents about the convenience and ease of the new process, and recommended that it become an option going forward; even after the COVID-19 pandemic is in the rear view mirror.

We secured an Author in Assemblyman David Chiu, who is the former Mayor of San Francisco. Senator Nancy Skinner, from Berkeley, has signed on as a Principal Co-Author.

The measure was subjected to its first hearing in the Assembly Judiciary Committee earlier this week. As expected, we received a number of questions and requests for information regarding how this program will work, and what our solutions are to various issues. We were pushed by the committee to consider making the program a statewide mandate; but after a survey which demonstrated that only a dozen counties are currently moving forward with remote marriages/electronic issuance of licenses, we rejected the effort and insisted that it remain as a county option. We also were requested to consider allowing for participants in the ceremonies to appear “in state” rather than together, which we also kept out of the bill.

After all the pre-debate, we enjoyed a relatively smooth hearing. The bill was unanimously approved by all members, including Republicans, who ignored the recommendation from staff to oppose. Their opposition was rooted in a dedication to traditional marriage and solemnization.

The measure now moves directly to the Floor, since it is optional and non-fiscal.