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CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF CLERKS AND ELECTION OFFICIALS

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April 19, 2023

The Honorable Assemblymember Chris R. Holden
 Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
 1021 O Street, Suite 8220
 Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: AB 1219 (Berman) Elections: ballots - SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Holden:

The California Association of Clerks and Election Officials (CACEO) Elections Legislative Committee is pleased to support Assembly Bill 1219 (Berman), relating to ballot layouts, voter instruction requirements, and printing requirements for casting and counting of ballots.

Existing law provides layout specifications, including specific requirements relating to the placement of certain contests, the size and font of text, and the instructions provided to voters. AB 1219 would specify the font and location of certain text and would revise the ballot instructions provided to voters. The bill would require those instructions to communicate to voters, in plain language, how to cast a vote in a contest, how to write in a candidate, and what to do if a mistake is made.

Existing law also requires that a ballot for a recall election for a state officer to include the names of the candidates nominated to succeed the officer sought to be recalled and a space to enter the name of a write-in candidate. AB 1219 would require a ballot for a recall election for a state officer to include instructions explaining that the recall election includes two contests, one for whether to recall the officer and the other for the officer's successor if the recall is successful, and that voters may cast a vote in either or both of those contests.

Additionally, existing law prohibits casting or counting in any election ballots not printed in accordance with the ballot layout specifications prescribed in state law. AB 1219 would instead prohibit casting or counting ballots not printed in substantial compliance with the ballot layout specifications.

CACEO greatly appreciates Assemblymember Berman's desire to improve the ballot design process and instructions to ensure voters can easily understand how to mark their ballot while helping to ensure that relevant election code is up to date. We respectfully request the committee's AYE vote on AB 1219.

If you or your staff has any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at tricia.webber@santacruzcounty.us or (831) 454-2409, or my co-chairs James Kus, at jkus@fresnocountyca.gov or (559) 600-1730 or Bob Page at bob.page@ocvote.gov or (714) 567-7620.

Respectfully,

Bob Page
 Co-Chair, CACEO Elections Legislative Committee
 California Association of Clerks and Election Officials

cc: Assemblymember Berman (Author)
 Rob Grossglauser, Pinnacle Advocacy LLC
 James Kus and Tricia Webber, Co-Chairs, CACEO Elections Legislative Committee

