

OFFICERS 2006-2008

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CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF CLERKS AND ELECTION OFFICIALS

July 21, 2008

Assembly Member Betty Karnette
State Capitol
PO Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0054

Dear Assembly Member Karnette:

The Elections Legislative Committee of the California Association of Clerks and Election Officials reviewed AB 2958, as amended April 15, 2008. This proposal requires that permanent vote by mail voters be sent a notice of polling place, a notice that the voter is a permanent vote by mail voter and that the voter's ballot will arrive by mail, and a notice that the voter's ballot must be received by either the elections official from whom it was sent or any precinct board in the county in which the voter is registered. The bill further provides that the notice of polling place may be included with the Sample ballot or with the voter's vote by mail ballot.

Many counties removed the voter's polling location from the Sample Ballot in order to provide space to inform the voter that he or she is a Permanent Vote by Mail (PVBM) voter, that his or her ballot will arrive by mail, and that he/she need not apply for a Vote by Mail ballot. This message was added in response to confusion on the part of PVBM voters, illustrated by the fact that thousands were completing and returning applications for Vote by Mail ballots unnecessarily prior to each election. This not only created a significant impact on election staff workload but also negated the convenience to the voter of obtaining PVBM status. Adding the verbiage that the voter is a Permanent Vote by Mail voter has significantly reduced the number of applications received from PVBM voters.

Unfortunately there is not sufficient space on either the Sample Ballot or the Vote by Mail envelope to both inform the voter of his or her polling location and to let the voter know that he/she is a Permanent Vote by Mail voter. Because this information is unique to each individual voter, it must be added at the same time the voter's name is applied to these mail pieces. The only other option would be to mail a separate notice of polling place to each Vote by Mail voter, at considerable expense.

Rather than require a Notice of Polling location, specific to the PVBM voter, the Committee requests that the bill be amended to allow an insert with the Vote by Mail ballot containing either a generic listing of Vote by Mail drop-off locations, a telephone number, interactive voice recognition number and/or a website where the voter can obtain Vote by Mail return information, including the voter's polling location. The other information required by the bill, including the return information is generally either included with the Vote by Mail Ballot or printed on the Vote by Mail envelope. The Committee requests that the bill be amended to allow exhaustion of

the current supply of Vote by Mail envelopes in the event they do not contain the return information as set out in the bill.

The Committee voted to adopt the position of **Oppose, unless amended** to reflect the suggested revisions. Should you or your staff have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me at (707) 565-1876.

Very truly yours,

Janice Atkinson
Correspondence Secretary
California Association of
Clerks and Election Officials

c: Assembly Member Curren Price, Chair, Committee on Elections, Redistricting and
Constitutional Amendments
Senator Ron Calderon, Chair Elections, Reapportionment and Constitutional Amendments
Committee
Deborah Seiler, Co-Chair, CACEO Elections Legislative Committee
Jill Lavine, Co-Chair, CACEO Elections Legislative Committee
Barry Brokaw and Donne Brownsey, Sacramento Advocates, Inc.